

## WHO GLOBAL NETWORK OF AGE-FRIENDLY COMMUNITIES

As part of our effort to make the Vineyard an aging-friendly Island, HAMV wants the Vineyard to be designated as a World Health Organization (WHO) and AARP Massachusetts Age-Friendly Community, and join their “global network”. In addition to the honor of being one of the few communities recognized, there are only (7) seven in Massachusetts, and we’d be the only Island in the Country. There are other benefits to becoming a member:

- Access to a global network of participating communities, as well as aging and civil society experts. This will be very helpful to our work groups as they look for new models/programs to address the needs of island elders. Instead of re-inventing the wheel, we can talk to and learn from others.
- Access to research, reports and guides on making communities age-friendly and to the latest news and information about best practices, results, challenges and new initiatives.
- Access to funding. There are many national and local foundations committed to improving communities and the well-being of older adults that see WHO recognition as a sign of approval. Tufts Health Foundation is one of those, and we told Tufts we would be trying to join when we applied for the current grant.
- Recognition by WHO and AARP is a sign to Vineyard elders that their community is serious about being more age-friendly and meeting their needs.

To be recognized by WHO/AARP a community must:

- Submit a membership application, as well as a letter of commitment, which must be signed by the jurisdiction’s highest elected official, which in our case is the Board of Selectmen. The following commitments must be addressed in the content of the letter:
  - **Establishing mechanisms to involve older people.** In addition to the strong representation of elders in HAMV itself, we’ve done this through our needs assessment and will make sure our work groups find ways to do this too.
  - **A baseline assessment of the age-friendliness of the community.** We’ve already done this with our needs assessment.
  - **The development of a community-wide action plan based on the findings of the assessment.** We have started this process with formation of the work groups.
  - **Identification of indicators so progress can be monitored against the action plan.** We will identify these for each work group and the programs they develop as part of our “Results Based Accountability” planning.
- Submit the community-wide action plan to WHO for review and endorsement.
- Implement the plan and review/evaluate its performance over a three year period.
- Submit a progress report to WHO at the end of the three years and based on the success of the plan, revise it as necessary and then implement and evaluate for another three years. The result is a cycle of continuous improvement.

We will be presenting a copy of the letter of commitment we would like the Selectmen of each town to endorse and sign, which will be submitted with a single application for the Island of Martha’s Vineyard.