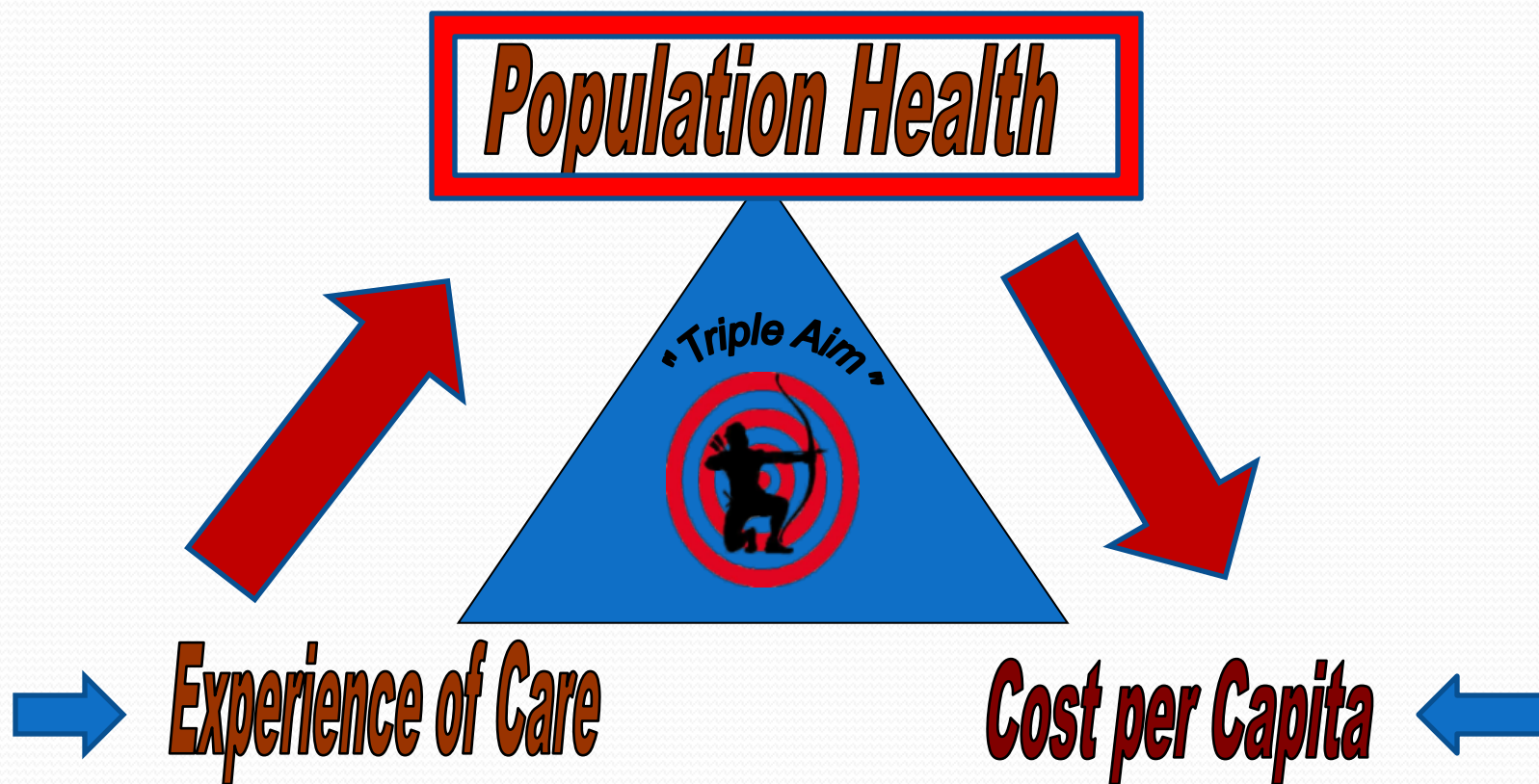# An Age Friendly Public Health System for Colorado

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What is Public Health?

Public health is the practice of preventing disease and promoting good health by providing the resources and creating environments that help people stay healthy.

The "Triple Aim"

Factors Influencing Health Status

Biology 20%

Lifestyle 51% Smoking Obesity Nutrition Alcohol Use

Health Care 10%

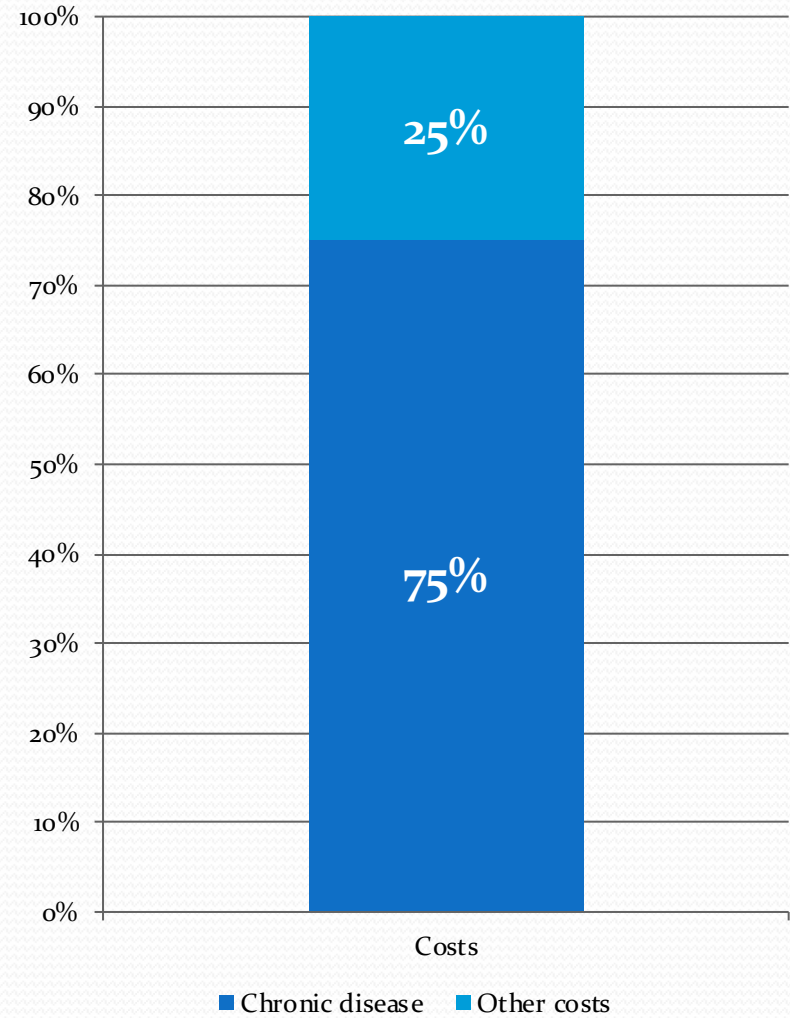**Environment 19%**
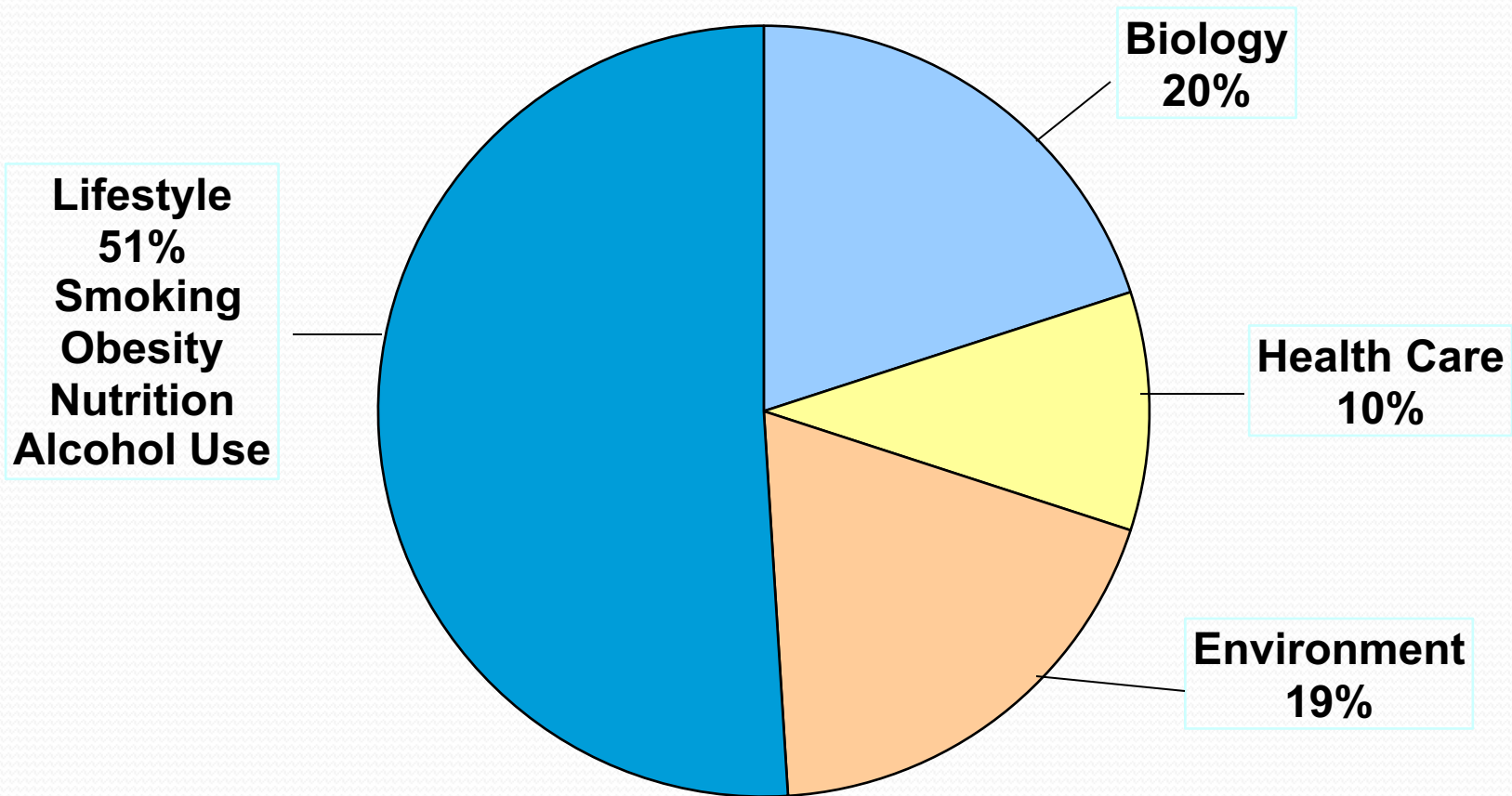
Source: McGinnis, J.M and Foege, W.H. (1993). "Actual Causes of Death in the United States," Journal of the American Medical Association.

Spending on Health Care vs. Public Health
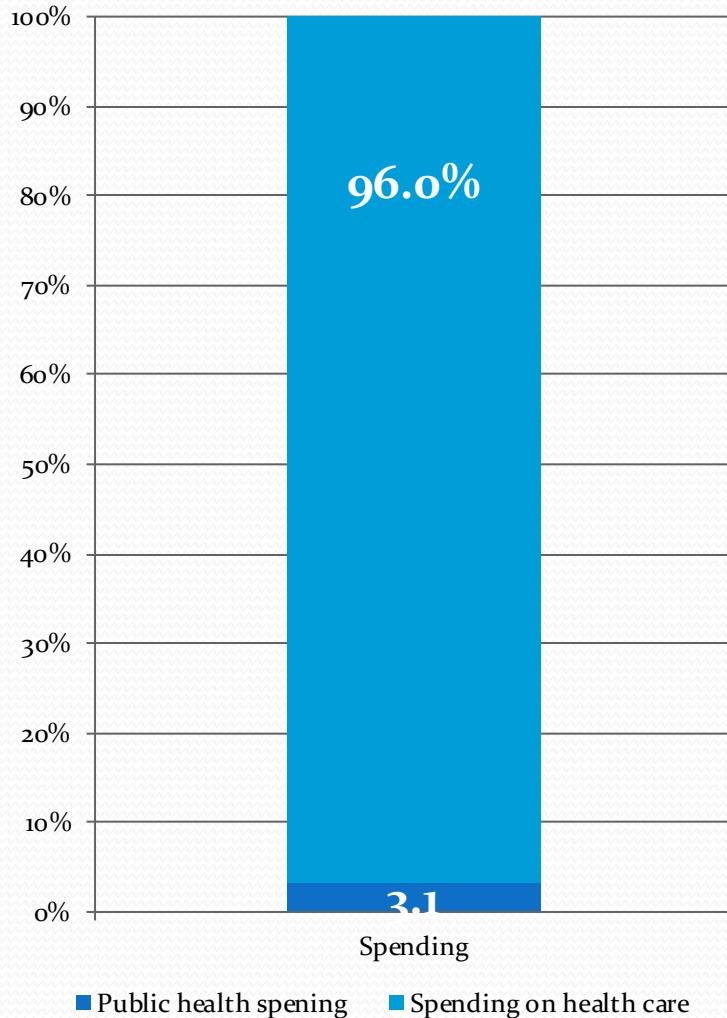
John Snow

- Father of modern epidemiology

- London Cholera epidemic of 1854

- Closing down the Lambeth Well

Key Public Health Take-away

Dr Snow realized that the key was not to bring more doctors into central London, but to identify and shut down the source of the disease

Historical Schizm in Public Health

- Population-based health measures:
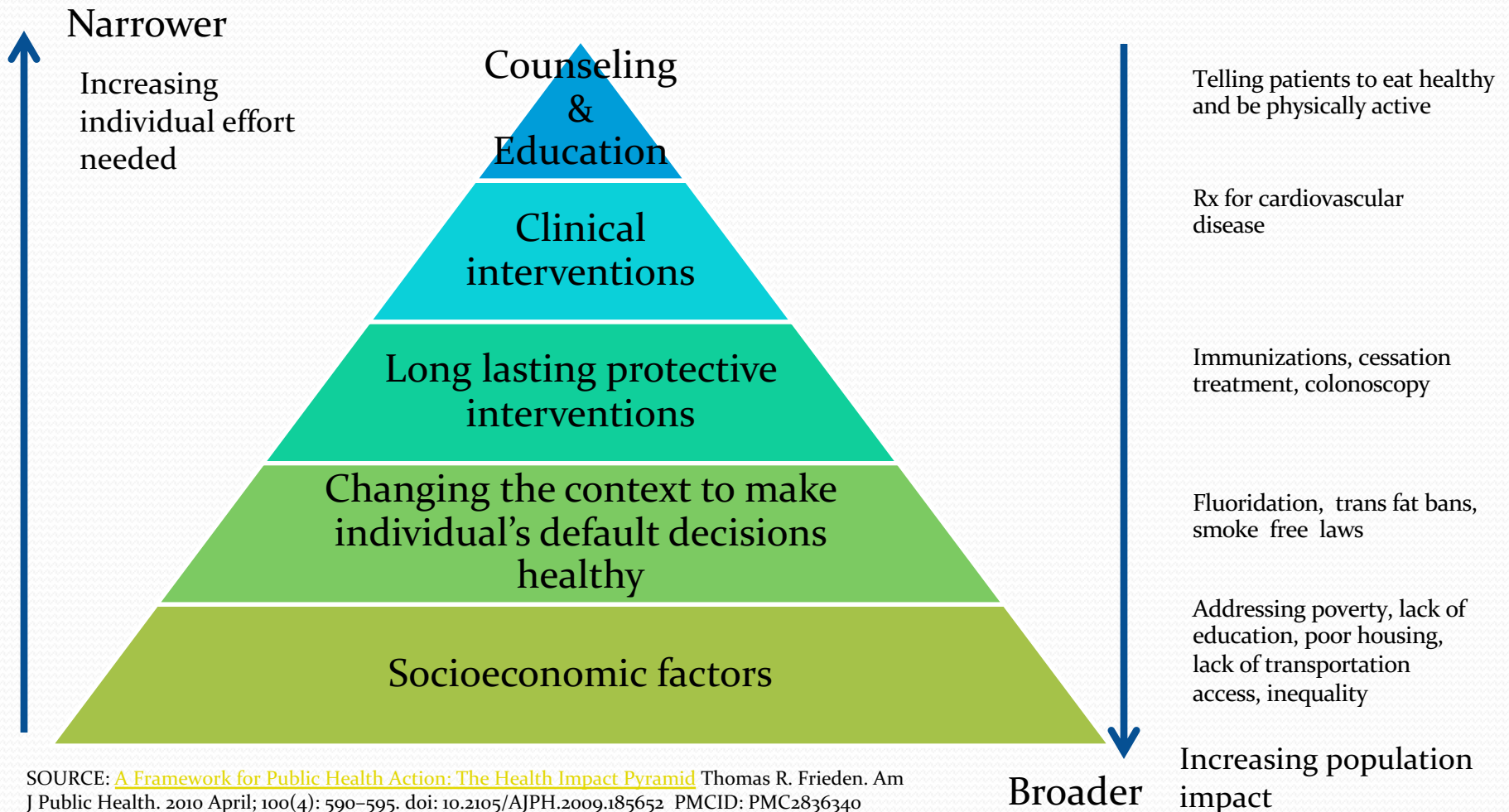 - Community water fluoridation
  - Motor vehicle safety
  - Tobacco control
- Gap-filling services
  - Immunizations
  - Family planning
  - Screening

Freiden's Health Impact Pyramid

Narrower

Increasing individual effort needed

Counseling & Education

Clinical interventions

Long lasting protective interventions

Changing the context to make individual's default decisions healthy

Socioeconomic factors

Telling patients to eat healthy and be physically active

Rx for cardiovascular disease

Immunizations, cessation treatment, colonoscopy

Fluoridation, trans fat bans, smoke free laws

Addressing poverty, lack of education, poor housing, lack of transportation access, inequality

Broader

Increasing population impact

Socio-Ecological Model

The Neighborhood Context
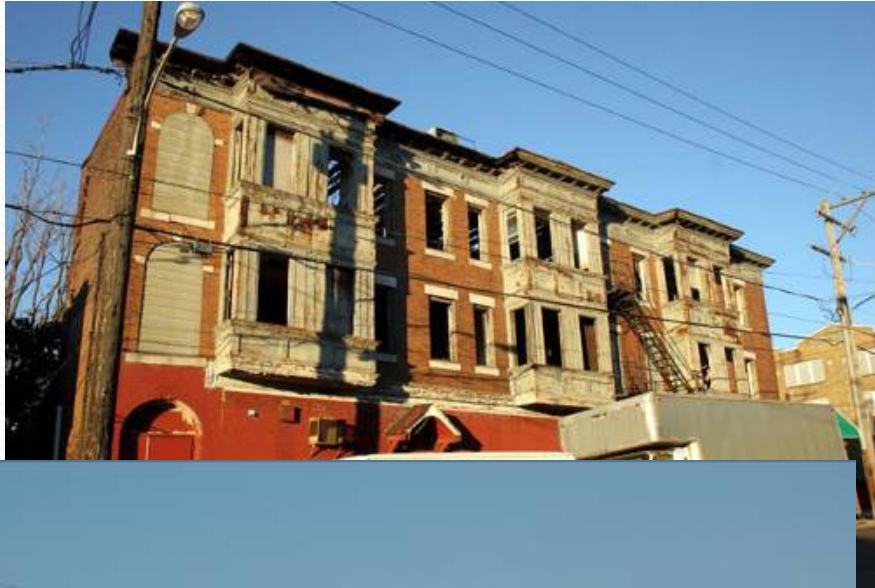
The Emergence of Public Health 3.0

Public Health 1.0
- Infection control through treatment - TB
- Clinical preventive measures – immunizations

Public Health 2.0
- Policy and environmental change – Seatbelts, tobacco tax
- Systems building – Diabetes Prevention Program

Public Health 3.0
- Social determinants of health – food, housing, transport
- Partnerships – Education, Human Services, Transportation, Housing, Revenue….

Roles of Public Health - PSE

- Gathering and analyzing data
- Building systems of care and support
- Deploying strategies of disease prevention and control
- Establishing model policies
- Demonstrating viability of new approaches
- Disseminating information and health education
- Convening allies and partners in dialogue and collaborative initiatives
- Safety net and gap-filling services

Components of an Age Friendly Public Health System

- 1) promoting health, preventing injury, and managing chronic conditions;

- 2) optimizing physical, cognitive, and mental health; and

- 3) facilitating social engagement.

"Healthy aging involves maximizing physical, mental, emotional, and social well-being, while recognizing that aging often is accompanied by chronic illnesses and functional limitations, including lifelong conditions. And it emphasizes the importance of meaningful involvement of older adults with others, such as friends, family members, neighbors, organizations, and the wider community."

Guiding Model for Healthy Aging

PROMOTE HEALTH, PREVENT INJURY, AND MANAGE CHRONIC CONDITIONS

HEALTHY AGING

FACILITATE SOCIAL ENGAGEMENT

OPTIMIZE PHYSICAL, COGNITIVE, AND MENTAL HEALTH
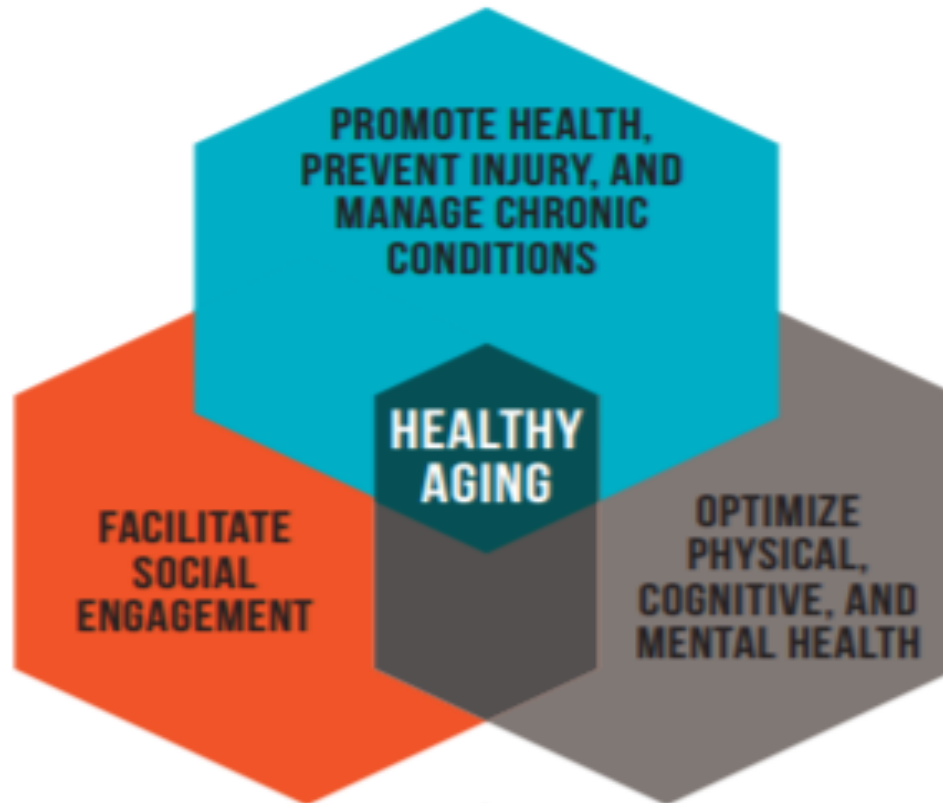
SOURCE: Modified from: Rowe JW, Kahn RL. *Successful Aging.* New York: Pantheon, 1998; and Marshal VW, Altpeter M. Health & Social Work 2005; 30(2):135-144.

Tasks for A Public Health Approach to Aging

1. Connecting and convening multiple sectors and professions that provide the supports, services, and infrastructure to promote healthy aging.

2. Collecting data to assess community health status (including inequities) and aging population needs to inform the development of interventions.

3. Conducting, communicating, and disseminating research findings and best practices to support healthy aging.

4. Identifying duplication, consolidating and encouraging coordination of services, highlighting gaps and modeling new systems of service and supports.

5. Fostering integrated, whole person health approaches focused on prevention and disease management.

FIGURE 5

Healthy Aging Actions to Advance the National Prevention Strategy

NATIONAL PREVENTION STRATEGY

HEALTHY AND SAFE COMMUNITY ENVIRONMENTS
- Increase the supply of accessible, affordable, adaptable housing
- Create more walkable communities
- Improve older driver safety
- Enhance transportation options
- Promote access to healthy food
- Develop plans to address potential vulnerability to natural disasters
- Protect from elder mistreatment
- Recruit, retain, and train a multisector and multidisciplinary workforce

ELIMINATION OF HEALTH DISPARITIES
- Educate professionals to identify and address disparities
- Collect community wide data to identify health care disparities
- Distribute information and implement programs that address age-related health issues

CLINICAL AND COMMUNITY PREVENTIVE SERVICES
- Increase access to preventive services
- Increase access to and availability of preventive dental services
- Increase access to and availability of behavioral health care
- Develop falls prevention programs
- Train physicians and other health care professionals on age-related health issues
- Expand the availability of home- and community-based services
- Support direct care workers

EMPOWERED PEOPLE
- Provide information about healthy options
- Increase access to and use of technology to support health and other needs
- Create opportunities for employment, education, and volunteer activities
- Support and empower informal caregivers to promote healthy aging
- Combat ageism

Examples

- New York initiative on respite care
- Lay health workers – health navigation
- Silver sneakers
- Built environment initiatives
- Silver cab services
- The villages