



Talking Health and Health Disparities

How to Conduct an Effective Town Hall Meeting and Roundtable Discussion at Your Senior Center

Introduction

Group discussions can have powerful impacts on our communities. This guide is designed to help community-based organizations conduct a town hall meeting and help them facilitate an effective discussion on health and health disparities within the community. While the guide was created for a specific topic (overweight and obesity), the elements can be transferred to other topic areas.

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NCOA would like to thank the following senior centers for their collaboration and for hosting the roundtable events that informed the creation of this resource.

- West Suburban Senior Center (Bellwood, IL)
- Willowbrook Senior Center (Los Angeles, CA)
- Clayton County Senior Services Department /Frank Bailey Senior Center (Riverdale, GA)
- VIDA Senior Center (Washington, DC)

Purpose

A town hall meeting is a great way to bring people together to share information about a topic, talk about what's important, and get feedback on what's working and what could be better. This type of forum typically includes community members as well as civic leaders, politicians, and subject matter experts. This toolkit, created around the topic of overweight and obesity, explores how to:

- Support self-advocacy; and
- Examine how older adults feel about the quality of their health and the care and treatment that is available to them in their community, especially those who are living with overweight and obesity.

Many of the principles in this toolkit could be applied to conversations and town hall meetings about other subjects and chronic conditions.

Getting Started: Town Hall on Obesity Care

Know your “why?” Whether this convening is exploratory in nature or a call to action, establish a clear understanding of the purpose of the town hall. Ask yourself, “why” are we having this town hall? Creating an initial vision for town hall expectations will make it easier to set SMART goals.

Specific – Measurable – Attainable – Realistic – Timely

Consider doing some preliminary research.

- Think about your objectives.
- What specific perspectives do you want to hear?
- Identify the specific topic(s) for the town hall and research-related activities and information.
- Are you an expert on this topic, or do you need to bring in someone with expertise to facilitate conversation effectively?

An event gains credibility if experts are present to address the issues.



Background

Obesity affects more than 40% of adults 60 years and older. Three decades ago, this figure was around 24%. Prevalence is higher in non-Hispanic Black, Hispanic, Mexican American, and American Indian/Alaskan Native populations than in non-Hispanic whites.

The National Council on Aging (NCOA) identified [10 drivers of inequities](#) that contribute to challenges when it comes to following a healthy lifestyle and addressing obesity disparities. These inequities range from limited access to appropriate treatment, weight bias and stigma, unrecognized complexities, and the fact that the older adult population is varied when it comes to socioeconomic status, race and ethnicity, culture, and other factors, to name a few. Many of these drivers have a direct effect on older adults—especially older adults of color—and also reflect how systemic oppression and discrimination are exacerbated as someone ages.

In partnership with the American Society on Aging (ASA) and the ASA Rise Fellow Program, NCOA collaborated with senior centers across the nation to listen, learn, and work together to close these health equity gaps. We developed this toolkit after gathering the insights of community members, legislators, health care providers, and other professionals in the field of aging.



Objective

The focus of the town hall session: address equity gaps that affect the well-being of older adults of color living with overweight and obesity.

The goal: cultivate an atmosphere that encourages dialogue about these health inequities among older adults of color and long-term and short-term goals that address them.

Discussion should involve:

- A diverse audience from different walks of life.
- A safe space for expression.
- A willingness to learn and understand our roles in equity gaps and how to identify solutions.

Planning Steps to Consider Two to Three Months Before the Event:



Step # 1. Gather Your Planning Committee

Decide on the expertise needed and build a planning team for the town hall. Develop a timeline that will allow the planning team to secure a venue, create marketing materials, invite attendees, and handle any other event needs. A sample timeline may include:

- **Three months before the event**—The committee may choose to focus on establishing the topic(s), committee’s roles, date, time, venue, budget, and target audience. This is a great time to explore sponsorship opportunities if funding is needed. By the end of the month, there should be enough information to send “Save the Date” notices to key stakeholders.
- **Two months before the event**—The committee should focus on refining overall logistics. This may include developing an invitation list, identifying vendors, and choosing the preferred room layout. Once logistics are refined, the committee should be prepared to start outreach with a final flyer/marketing plan and confirm any event-related purchases.
- **One month before the event**—The committee should focus on the day-of logistics and responsibilities and address any outstanding planning needs. This includes assigning day-of responsibilities, preparing the run of show, and tracking attendance. Speakers and special guests should be confirmed or communicated with the planning committee to confirm attendance.
- **Two weeks before the event**—The committee should have all plans and people confirmed. If it has been at least a week since anyone has connected with the speakers, reconfirm attendance. A prep call should be conducted for all the speakers to get aligned and on the same page. If possible, send speakers the questions ahead of time.
- **One week before the event**—The committee should focus on ensuring the event is ready. This includes event reminders, getting supplies to the venue, finalizing the agenda ([see Appendix C](#)), and preparing the room.

Step #2. Schedule the Town Hall

A town hall should take place when participants are likely to be available. You can leverage previous experience and feedback from well-attended events at the senior center. Having an event on a Monday, Friday, or adjacent to a holiday may cause challenges in maintaining engagement when sending reminders and follow-ups.

Step # 3. Consider Who to Invite and How

Some ideas about who to invite:

Senior center participants, community members, local health care providers, mental health providers, pharmacists, insurance providers, area agency on aging representatives, state and local government officials, food banks, churches, chamber of commerce representatives, university and college students interested in social services, nurses, gerontologists, physical therapists, public policy civic leaders, and medical doctors.

Invitations:

An invitation should cover all the essentials—event name, event description, date, time, location, and how to attend ([See Appendix H](#)). Invitations should be easy to read and understand. Remember, the method you choose to advertise will impact the audience receiving the information. For example, if the flyers are posted at a bus station, you may attract older attendees who commute using public transportation. Similarly, marketing through online platforms would require an older adult audience to be tech-savvy or have access to technology.

Think about how to monitor growing interest in the event and gather real-time marketing feedback. For example, if you interact with prospective participants in an in-person setting, you can have a sign-up sheet at the front desk or a common gathering space. For remote or digital locations, you can offer interested participants a phone number, email address, QR code, and registration link to respond to.

RSVP:

There should be at least one dedicated team member responsible for monitoring RSVPs and communications from prospective attendees. Consider troubleshooting alternative ways to connect when a targeted audience is not responding to the invitation. Adjustments can include using a translator to share the message in a preferred language or collaborating with a community partner.

Step #4. Prioritize Diversity and Inclusion

Outreach: To target specific community audiences, this requires strategic planning that considers the unique needs of a particular population. Will the flyer be available in multiple languages, and will a translator be on site? Do you have trusted messengers who will invite the right people to the town hall?

Partnerships: Partners can help increase awareness, enhance visibility, expand networks of older adults, and access to community resources. Come up with a list of partners in Step #3 ([see suggestions in Appendix A](#)).

Funding: Know your budget and be creative about covering financial needs. There may be opportunities to solicit sponsors, grants, or in-kind donations. Consider offering an honorarium if working with another senior center or community partner.

Town Hall Logistics

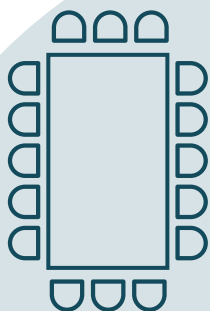
Step # 5 Consider Room Layout and Logistics

Define the Engagement Style

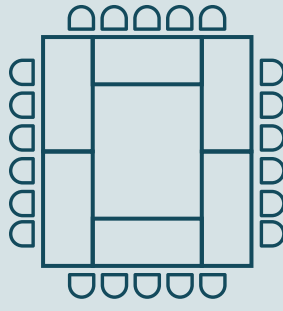
Think about your goal and decide whether you want to collect information, educate the participants or persuade them to take a different point of view, or inspire them to take action. This will impact the style. Here are brief descriptions ([See Appendix E](#)):

- **Briefing Panel**—Consider a panel with community members with lived experience sharing stories and a second panel that includes health experts from the community.
- **Themed Series**— If you have multiple goals, remember people may not be comfortable sitting for more than 90 minutes, so hosting a series of roundtables may be a better option.
- **Panel Led Discussion**—The most interesting panels usually feature experts who have a broad range of experience, including academic researchers, community leaders, those with clinical backgrounds, elected officials, treatment providers, and/or counselors.

While we recognize some community-based organizations may not be able to shift around furniture, changing the layout of the room can impact the intimacy level of the conversation. A formal program may have subject matter experts speak from a podium or a panelist table. Audiences that are more relaxed or comfortable may enjoy a community-centered layout like a circular layout.



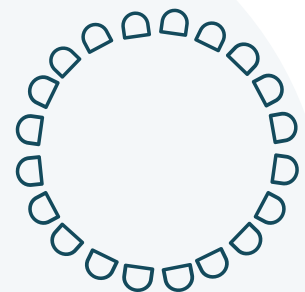
A. Conference Style



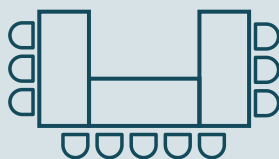
B. Hollow Square



C. Semi Circle of Chairs



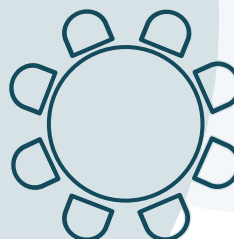
D. Circle of Chairs



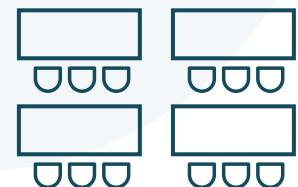
E. U-Shaped



F. Theater Style



G. Banquet



H. Classroom Style

Transportation

The town hall's geographic location can impact older participants' transportation needs. Consider what accessibility means for the target neighborhoods. This can include arranging pickups, stipends for public transportation, rideshare partnerships, or selecting a walkable venue.

Establishing Roles

Moderator: The moderator will initiate the conversation and be responsible for staying on topic and on time. A moderator should be attentive and focus on eliciting different viewpoints while maintaining neutrality, pacing, and energy. Please note that this town hall is structured to obtain honest input and participation from senior center constituents and community members as they are the people most impacted by current structures. As such, they are the experts and should be included in as many roles as possible, including as panelists, within the town hall.

Timekeeper: Thought-provoking topics can gain excitement from speakers and attendees. Identifying a person in the room to keep track of time will allow more participants to share their perspectives. Timekeeping can be the additional responsibility of the moderator.

Storyteller/Person with Lived Experiences: Personal stories make lasting impressions. A story can share a success or a problem but make it clear how it relates to a specific issue. Most importantly, be concise but also genuine. Learn more from our [storytelling tips](#). A personal story can be read to the group if the storyteller cannot attend or wishes to remain anonymous.

Subject Matter Expert: Having an expert in the room adds credibility to the topic. Town hall participants can bring unique insight and questions into the conversation. A subject matter expert can validate statements' accuracy, answer complex questions, and offer insight into existing solutions.

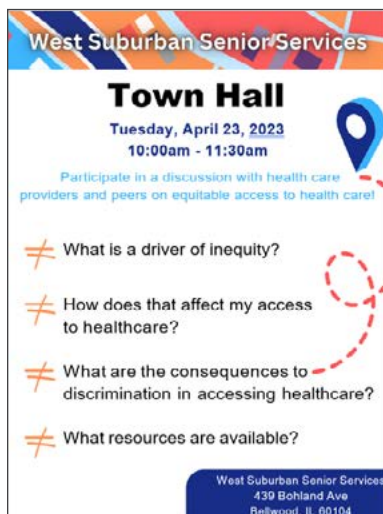
Staying in regular communication with the volunteers assigned to each role is important. We recommend confirming the logistics at time of commitment, a week before, and the week of the town hall. Make sure on the day of the event someone is prepared to greet them upon arrival.

HELPFUL TIPS

1. Actively seek out older adults as community panelists for the town hall.
2. Share prepared questions in advance ([Appendix B](#)).
3. Get to know the panelists and/or introduce panelists to one another.

Marketing

Marketing is perhaps the most important part of hosting a town hall. It is the means used to notify the prospective participants of the event. Any marketing tools should cover the basics (Who, What, Where, Why, and How). Who is hosting the event, and who is the event for? What is the event? Where is the event located? Why is the event happening? How does a person get involved? You are off to a great start if your marketing accomplishes all five tasks. Flyers can be printed or shared through digital platforms like social media or email blasts. Here are three examples of town hall flyers:



See Appendix H for a template to create your own flyer.

Day-of Checklist

- Print the handouts
- Set up the venue
- Test the technology
- Greet the speakers and welcome guests
- Have a registration desk or sign-in sheet to help track event attendance and familiarize yourself with the people in the room
- Takeaway items/Giveaways

HELPFUL TIPS

1. Call participants by name.
2. Everyone's perspective should be respected. Each participant brings their own experiences and expertise to the conversation.
3. Use active listening skills:
 - Pay attention
 - Show you are listening (nodding, body language, gestures)
 - Provide feedback ("It sounds like you are saying...")
 - Defer judgment (Do not interrupt the speaker)
 - Respond appropriately (Be candid and respectful)
4. Pay special attention to differences or surprises.
5. Follow up when needed for additional context or to encourage concrete examples.
6. Keep an eye on the time. Have a timekeeper who can offer prompts.
7. As a facilitator, your role is to ask questions. If questions are presented to you by other participants, make sure to redirect the question to others.
8. If the conversation shifts from the purpose of the discussion, it is okay to redirect back to the primary goal.



After the Town Hall

Action 1: Discuss What You Learned

- Re-Engage planning staff—Convene planning committee and key panelists/older adults for a debrief on what was learned during the town hall. Solicit feedback on outcomes, concerns, positives, opportunities, and future needs. Be sure to garner open and honest feedback from those participating and assign someone to take thorough notes during the meeting.
- Establish a recurring town hall meeting cadence so your advocacy work can continue and grow (quarterly, semi-annually, etc.). This will also help to build and maintain trust within communities.
- Thank your special guest(s) for their hard work and advocacy, which helped to make the event successful.
- Assign specific “next step” tasks to planning committee members.

Action 2: Follow Up With Participants

- Send a note of appreciation to attendees who participated in the town hall. Briefly recap the meeting’s talking points and key takeaways. Share with participants the next steps to continuing the advocacy work.
- Share the recurring meeting invite/date for following town hall meetings.
- Deliver a satisfaction survey, [see Appendix F](#).

Action 3: Develop Your Action Plan

- After having your discussion, get ready to strategize. Review surveys, comments, feedback, and insights from your meeting. Brainstorm the next steps to addressing the issues and possible solutions discussed. View the town halls as building blocks, where each meeting builds off the other. [See Appendix D](#) for more townhall ideas.
- The focus should always be the self-advocacy and health of diverse older adults. Include the voices and insights of older adults themselves when developing your action plan and executing town hall meetings. Be sure to assign roles and timeframes with each action item so it gets done. Create a database that also houses your mailing list for future town halls.
- Establish check-in markers for follow-up on progress to ensure action plan implementation, meeting goals, and additional actionable items.

Appendix A

Examples of partners to invite to the town hall

- Academic Institutions, including Historically Black Colleges and Universities (HBCUs)
- Area Agencies on Aging (AAAs),
- Aging and Disability Resource Centers (ADRCs)
- Assisted Living Communities or Other Senior Residences
- Benefits Enrollment Centers (BEC)
- Centers for Independent Living (CILs)
- Community Health Centers
- Faith-Based Organizations
- Fraternity or Sorority Organizations, including National PanHellenic Council (NPHC) or National Association of Latino Fraternal Organizations (NALFO) Alumnae Chapters
- Recreation Centers
- Neighboring Senior Centers
- State Health Insurance Assistance Programs (SHIPs)
- State Units on Aging (SUAs)
- State or Local Government Agencies
- YMCAs



Appendix B

Sample Questions for a Town Hall on Chronic Health Conditions

For Health Care Providers or Health Professionals

- Chronic health conditions, including those impacted by weight gain, are a public health crisis in the United States that are driven in large part by social inequity. What chronic health conditions do you find to be most prevalent in this community?
- As a provider, what resources are missing for this community to be successful in managing their chronic illness and accomplish their wellness goals?
- What questions would you like to hear from older adults during their wellness check-ups? Or what are some good questions already being asked by patients/clients you are seeing as examples?
- What are small steps that can move older adults to improve their health and well-being?
- For health care providers, are there common challenges or mistakes people make when trying to improve their health?
- When it comes to destigmatizing obesity, what types of policies do you wish to see within your health care setting that would make people with overweight or obesity more comfortable? Are there any health care professionals here today who have put policies and guidelines in place for this?
 - Example: some health care facilities have a zero tolerance for stereotyping language.
- Self-advocacy contributes to a healthy lifestyle. When it comes to communicating about health issues and challenges, what are strategies that can be implemented to engage patients in discussion and encourage self-advocacy?

For Older Adults

- Can you say a little about how you feel when you meet with your healthcare provider? What is the experience like for you? What would you need to feel more understood and also get your needs addressed?
- Language can often become a barrier to reinforcing labels, objectification, stigmatization and marginalization. Are there examples of when you have been concerned about the language used in your health care setting or community?
- What barriers or challenges do you face when thinking about your healthcare visit? When it comes to programming and community outreach, what would you like to see more of to help you set goals, and improve your quality of life and enhance your overall health and well-being?
- What does an ideal healthy weight management plan look like for you? What do you know now about obesity that you wish you knew in the past?

For All Audiences

- Meeting people where they are is so important as it relates to addressing issues and challenges in their lives. Can you all share what this would actually look like? For community dwelling individuals, what would you need for health care professionals to meet you where you are?
- For many of us, our implicit biases can rear their heads at any moment. These implicit biases influence how we see ourselves and others in the world. What are some ways we can all challenge our implicit biases as it relates to our personal health?
- What barriers do you face to getting the full range of care and treatment you need for chronic diseases such as obesity and diabetes?

Appendix C

Sample Agenda and Script

Issue: Health inequities in our community and how to promote self-advocacy

[Event Name]

[Insert Location]

[Insert Date]

[Insert Time]

WELCOME (5 minutes)

[Host Organization] welcomes everyone to our Town Hall meeting focusing on health inequities impacting our community. We will begin town hall by asking our panel a few questions about this issue (time spent will depend on the number of panelists and quantity of questions you ask). After the panel discussion, we will open the conversation to the audience to ask questions and add comments about today's topic.

PANEL INTRODUCTIONS (5 minutes)

We have selected a panel of community professionals and experts who will help us explore some of the health inequities they observe in their everyday practice and provide insight into how we community members can be better prepared to advocate for our health goals and needs.

Please join me in welcoming the panelist for today's town hall:

- [Name, Title, Organization]
- [Name, Title, Organization]
- [Name, Title, Organization]

Background information on the panelists helps attendees connect with the experts. Considering time priorities, this can be shared in written form, in a program or during the promotion, or verbally during the event.

PANEL DISCUSSION (15-30 minutes)

The following questions for panelists are designed to reflect key issues impacting older adults in [city, state]. Please modify as you see fit. Ask all or a few selected questions.

1. Chronic health conditions, including those impacted by weight gain, are a public health crisis in the United States that are driven in large part by social inequity. What chronic health conditions do you find to be most prevalent in this community?
2. As a provider, what other resources do you think are necessary for this community to be successful in managing their chronic illness or wellness goals?
3. What questions would you like to hear your community asking during their wellness check-ups? Or what are some good questions already being asked by patients/clients you are seeing.
4. What are some of the easier and more impactful changes an individual can do to positively impact their health and well-being?
5. What are some common challenges or mistakes people make when trying to make improvements to their health, but fall flat?

Q&A WITH COMMUNITY MEMBERS AND COMMUNITY PARTNERS (15-30 minutes)

During the question and comment portion, the facilitator may need support from an additional staff member to keep track of audience members who have a comment or question.

CLOSING (5 minutes)

It is time to conclude today's town hall meeting. We would like to thank our panelist for taking the time to be here and provide their expertise. We would also like to thank the audience for their comments and feedback. We hope this discussion has given you more awareness of health inequities and how you may self-advocate for your health needs and goals.

Before you leave, please take some time to complete a survey to share your thoughts on this experience. This survey should take about 5 minutes to complete. We will be using your direct feedback and comments to guide [goal of the town hall]

This may also be an opportunity to welcome new community members who are not already connected to become more involved. If you have any activity calendars or informational brochures, be prepared to hand them out or provide them to interested participants.

If you have any sponsors at this meeting, please make sure to acknowledge and thank them for their contributions.

Appendix D

Moving On After the Town Hall

Once you have engaged a community of older adults, use these ideas to keep the conversation and activities going after the town hall.

Hosting a Themed Series of Town Halls: Sample Themes on Health and Wellness

- Creating and Sustaining Healthy Eating Habits
- Increasing Access to Fresh Fruits and Vegetables
- Maintaining a Healthy Lifestyle (Mind, Body, and Soul)
- Specific Senior Center Related Programs & Partnerships

Hosting Informal Discussions Following Town Hall: Sample Topics

- Trigger foods that negatively impact their medical conditions
- Methods in which they have lost weight in the past
- Concerns related to weight management.
- Cultural differences and implications of weight management
- Stress management and creating healthy relationships with food

Integrate Health Focused Activities for Older Adults in Senior Center Programming

- Create an exercise and meals log for center participants. Consider having participants identify an “accountability partner” from the senior center to keep them motivated as they implement healthier habits into their daily routines. You may even want to have incentives for older adults who reach their goals.
- Connect with a nutritionist or other health professionals to offer education classes on weight and chronic health conditions management.
- Create safe spaces where participants can discuss feelings regarding mental health and feelings regarding seeking treatment. Additional support from a licensed health professional may be needed.
- Apply for additional grants/funding to connect the less-advantaged with needed services to build capacity for new or growing health initiatives. Consider researching evidence-based programs addressing the needs of senior center participants.
- Start or visit a community garden workshop to share insights on how to plant fruits and vegetables. Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) allows seeds purchasing.
- Develop or update a resource catalog for older adults to include healthy food and wellness programs within the community.
- Connect with a [Benefits Enrollments Center \(BEC\)](#): Connecting older adults to benefits programs can lower health- and food-related expenses. BECs have experience enrolling Medicare-eligible beneficiaries in public benefits including Supplemental Nutrition Assistance, Medicaid, Low Income Subsidy/Part D, Low-Income Home Energy Assistance Program (LIHEAP), and Medicare Savings Program (MSP)
- Speak to local politicians regarding developing policies geared toward improving the well-being of older adults. Amplify your message by asking older adults to attend a town hall and share their experiences. Organize them to reinforce your points, or divide up topics and stories to make the best use of time. In addition to involving other aging services professionals, consider inviting older adults to tell their own stories that support your goals. [Here is a guide on how to participate in a town hall.](#)
- Reach out to mass media outlets to obtain coverage and awareness related to the senior center and the programs they provide.
- Organize and rally for changes in the community (sign petitions).
- Obesity care remains out of reach for tens of millions of older Americans because Medicare fails to recognize obesity as a serious disease—creating a gap in the full continuum of care for all older adults living with obesity. Tell your member of Congress that it’s time to recognize obesity as a serious, chronic disease so we can build a holistic and equitable approach to obesity prevention and management.

Appendix E

How Different Formats Have Been Implemented at Senior Centers

Briefing panel

This format requires two to three panelists who can bring a multidisciplinary perspective to the discussion topic. A facilitator will use 15-30 minutes to lead a question-and-answer period, allowing the audience to ask questions and bring forth comments on the issue. These questions will center around a topic of interest, (in this case, health education and self-advocacy). One senior center recommended using less time for the panelist portion to allow senior center participants and other community members to communicate in the open forum question and answer portion.

Panel-Led Discussion

A senior center hosted a panel-led discussion featuring a panel of 3-5 local health and wellness professionals (e.g., a nutritionist, family practice physician, physical therapist/trainer, etc.), each with experience providing service to older adults.

Themed Series

Rather than hosting one overarching topic, the town halls can be divided into specific items for shorter periods of time. A senior center hosted a reoccurring mini town hall series with the following themes: Creating and Sustaining Healthy Eating Habits, Increasing Access to Fresh Fruits and Vegetables, and Maintaining a Healthy Lifestyle (Mind, Body & Soul).



Appendix F: Survey

Creating Surveys Best Practices

Introduction- The following are standard components to include in your survey's introductory paragraph.

- **Event Name and Date**
- **Purpose:** State the purpose of the survey
 - *Example:* This survey aims to gather feedback from the town hall participants.
- **Use of data:** State how the information gathered will be used by the organization, including any parties the information will be shared with.
 - *Example:* "Survey responses will help inform future town hall planning" or "This information will be used in marketing materials for the town halls."
- **Confidentiality:** If it is an anonymous survey, outline the measures taken to ensure that participants' responses will not be used to identify them.
 - *Example:* All data will be kept completely confidential, and any information shared will not be associated with names or contact information. All responses will be aggregated and de-identified to protect your privacy.
- **Length:** Indicate how long it will take to complete the survey.
 - *Example:* Your feedback will take about 10 minutes.
- **Consent:** Lastly, ask participants to indicate their consent. This means they understand the information provided and agree with the terms.
 - *Example:* Do you consent to participate in this survey?
 Yes, I agree. No, I do not agree.

Themes—These are common themes of survey questions that may be used to solicit feedback about the town hall.

- Satisfaction
- Personal experience at event
- Attitudes or opinions on the event
- Utility of event materials
- Potential impact of event on participant decisions or behavior
- Likelihood of future participation
- Suggestions for future topics

Question Types

- Quantitative—These are questions that produce numeric data to measure an experience. They usually correspond with pre-selected answer choices; common examples are multiple choice questions or Likert scales.
- Qualitative—These are questions that produce descriptive data, usually in the form of open-ended questions. Qualitative questions allow participants to add narrative and detail about their experience.

Other best practices

- Use odd number answer scales – 3, 5 or 7. For town halls 3 or 5 is best.
- Try to avoid Yes/No questions, as these questions do not provide a lot of information.
- Ask only one question at a time. For example: How satisfied were you with the webinar and curriculum are TWO questions—one is webinar and one is curriculum. Ask each separately to allow you to gauge the response for each element.
- Always list the most positive or higher rated answer first: Example—extremely satisfied or extremely important.
- Use standard answer categories; try not to tweak them or make up your own. The standard answer categories are proven to be successful.
- Use balanced scales: For example, strongly agree, agree, neither agree nor disagree, disagree, and strongly disagree. There should be an equal number of positive and negative answers.
- Limit the number of open-ended questions as they are hard to analyze and respondents often will skip them.
- If you ask an open-ended question, you can drop all the responses in a Word Cloud to help see the prominent themes and learnings.
- Try to ask simple and easy to understand questions; more complex questions are often confusing and harder to answer in a survey format.
- Avoid using jargon, acronyms, and complex wording.
- Use neutral language to avoid introducing bias.
- Test your survey before you use it. Ask three or four colleagues to take the survey to see if it makes sense and is easy to answer.
- Plan the language you will send along with the survey. It should be clear and easy to understand. It should be consistent, so everyone sees the same descriptions.

POST-TOWN HALL SATISFACTION SURVEY (Senior Center Members ONLY)

Note to Staff: The satisfaction survey below is designed to gather anonymous feedback from the senior center town hall participants. You may present this survey as a hard copy or input the information into an online form (e.g., Google forms) for participants to complete on their phones or tablets. For ease of access to the online survey, you could create a QR code for participants to access the survey using their phone. Use the approach best suited for your members.

SAMPLE TEMPLATE #1

[Senior Center Name] Town Hall Survey

[Date]

Thank you for taking the time to complete this survey! Your feedback is important to us and will be used to help us put together future events and programming. Information gathered will remain anonymous and not be shared with any external parties. The survey will take about 5-10 minutes to complete.

Do you consent to participate in the survey? (Circle one) Yes No

1. What is your level of satisfaction with this town hall?

- Satisfied
- Neither satisfied nor dissatisfied
- Dissatisfied

2. Indicate your agreement with the following statement: The town hall met my expectations.

- Agree
- Neither agree nor disagree
- Disagree

3. How useful was the information (i.e., discussion, handouts) provided?

- Very useful
- Moderately useful
- Neutral
- Somewhat useful
- Not useful at all

4. How much impact will this event have on your goals to stay and feel healthy?

- A great deal
- Quite a lot
- Some
- Very little
- None at all

5. How likely are you to participate in future events on the topics presented in today's town hall?

- Likely
- Neither likely nor unlikely
- Unlikely

6. Please list any topics you would like future town halls to cover:

7. What was your impression of the length of the town hall?

- Too long
- Just right
- Too short

8. Do you have any other comments or feedback you would like to share with us?

FOR COLLECTION OF DEMOGRAPHIC INFORMATION, HERE IS A SAMPLE SURVEY:

SAMPLE TEMPLATE #2

[Senior Center Name] Town Hall Survey

[Date]

1. What is your ZIP code? _____
2. How old are you today? ____ years
3. What is your gender?
 - Male
 - Female
 - Transgender
 - Not listed, please specify: _____
4. Are you of Hispanic, Latino, or Spanish origin?
 - Yes No
5. What is your race? (Check all that apply)
 - American Indian or Alaskan Native
 - Asian or Asian American
 - Black or African American
 - Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander
 - White
 - Not listed, please specify: _____
6. Including yourself (and your spouse, if married), what is your combined monthly gross income NOW? (Consider all sources of income, including Social Security, pension, etc.).
 - Less than \$1,000
 - \$1,001 - \$1,499
 - \$1,500 - \$1,999
 - \$2,000 - \$2,499
 - \$2,500 - \$2,999
 - \$3,000 - \$3,499
 - \$3,500 - \$3,999
 - \$4,000 or more
6. Are you a veteran of the U.S. Armed Forces?
 - Yes No
7. In general, would you say that your health is:
 - Poor
 - Fair
 - Good
 - Very Good
 - Excellent

8. Which of the following best describes who you live with? Check ALL that apply.

- By myself
- With a spouse/partner
- With grown children
- With other family members
- With friends
- With an aide, housekeeper, or other staff
- With someone else, please specify: _____

9. What is the highest level of education you completed?

- Less than high school
- High school degree
- Some college
- Technical or vocational school
- College degree
- Graduate degree

10. Do you consider yourself to be:

- Heterosexual or straight
- Gay
- Lesbian
- Bisexual
- Not listed, please specify: _____

11. In the future, which way would you prefer to be contacted to share your opinions?

Check ALL that apply.

- Email Survey
- Phone Interview
- Online Focus Group
- In-Person Interview
- Don't want to be contacted to share my opinions

12. People may provide regular care or assistance to a friend or family member who has a health problem or disability. During the past 12 months, did you provide any such care or assistance to a friend or family member?

- Yes No

Appendix G

Read Article:

[A call for solutions for healthy aging through a systems-based, equitable approach to obesity: How to Care for Obesity: 5 Actions for Older Adults](#)

Watch Video: 60 Minutes:

[Promising new weight loss medication in short supply and often not covered by insurance](#)

Watch Video:

[A Courageous Conversation about Obesity, Healthy Lifestyles, and Black Women](#)

Appendix H

Create Your Own Flyer (see separate Word doc, [2023-NCOA-Template-Flyer](#))