

FINANCIAL WELLNESS FOR LONGER LIVES: NEW APPROACHES TO WORKING AND SAVING SYMPOSIUM INSIGHTS AND ACTION ITEMS

Thursday, January 18, 2018

Bank of America Conference Center

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ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS FROM SYMPOSIUM ORGANIZERS

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On January 18, 2018, “Financial Wellness for Longer Lives: New Approaches to Working and Saving,” a symposium hosted by The New York Academy of Medicine, The Global Coalition on Aging and AARP New York, and sponsored by Bank of America Merrill Lynch, gathered a distinguished group of leaders to discuss the complex issues of financial wellness and new approaches to retirement. With business, government and non-profit voices all “at the table,” progress was made toward advancing solutions for our growing aging population.

The report that follows includes a summary of our discussion as well as key insights and actions that the financial services sector, employers of all sizes, and the government can take to improve the financial wellness of millions of aging Americans now and in the future.

We would like to offer special thanks to New York City Comptroller Scott M. Stringer and NYC Department for the Aging Commissioner Donna Corrado, for their opening remarks. We are also grateful to our keynote speakers, moderators and panelists for the generous contributions of their time and expertise. Finally, thank you to our Organizing Committee Co-Chairs Robert Kaufman, Proskauer Rose LLP, and Carol Raphael, Manatt Health Solutions, and the Committee members for their guidance and support in the development of this event.

Our goals for this forum were to 1) understand the dynamic between demographic and financial trends associated with a growing older population, 2) examine strategies for age-friendly business practices to better promote retirement savings and financial management, and 3) define the role of financial institutions in managing the risks associated with cognitive decline. By convening leaders from financial services institutions, employers, community-based organizations, policymakers and regulators in this discussion, we elevated the importance of these issues.

We now shift our focus to continued action to implement the powerful ideas we heard. We look forward to working with you and collectively pursuing opportunities for financial wellness across the life course.



Judith A. Salerno, MD, MS
President, The New York
Academy of Medicine



Michael W. Hodin, PhD
CEO, The Global Coalition
on Aging



Beth R. Finkel, LMSW
State Director, AARP NY

KEY INSIGHTS FROM THE SYMPOSIUM

Increased Longevity Demands New Approaches to Health, Working, and Saving

In the U.S., life expectancy has increased more than 50 percent over the past century. With this extended longevity, we have witnessed changes to the traditional “three-phased lifespan”—childhood, working age, and retirement—and the emergence of non-traditional and flexible work paths, semi-retirement, entrepreneurship, and the gig economy. Some older adults are choosing to work well past traditional retirement age, and countries around the world are exploring policies and practices that will help ease barriers to working later in life.

“We are seeing changes to the model of ‘three phases’ to life, and new phases are being added in... People 50 to 70 are seeing particular changes. Only 26 percent of surveyed baby boomers said they were going to retire and stop working. There are a large number of entrepreneurs [in the baby boomer generation], and there are going to be people entering and exiting the workforce much more rapidly and repeatedly.” – *Bruce Wolfe, Executive Director, BlackRock Retirement Institute (BRI)*

Not surprisingly, there is an irrefutable link between health and wealth. Maintaining one's health plays a critical role in enabling a longer and productive life, yet financial security also plays a critical role in this equation.

Planning for one's later years is increasingly important given increasing lifespans. Often health care and long-term care costs, which increase with age, are not accounted for adequately when planning for the retirement phase of life, with economic consequences for families and caregivers as well. Additionally, social security retirement benefits are frequently inadequate and are unavailable for some older adults, particularly new immigrants.

Kevin Crain, Bank of America Merrill Lynch



Financial services providers can all speak about saving for retirement from our own perspectives, but as an industry we need to lead. Financial wellness correlates to physical wellness, and they need to come together as a concept.
– Kevin Crain, Managing Director, Bank of America Merrill Lynch

Evidence shows that people with sufficient means are able to support better health and to live longer and more comfortably in their later years. Because of this important connection between health and financial security, strategic approaches to empowering people to plan better will be necessary to ensure economic stability for Americans at all income levels and fiscal sustainability for our nation.

Workers in excellent health (78 percent) are more likely to say they are very/somewhat aware of the need to plan financially for retirement compared with workers in poor health (63 percent). They are also seven times more likely to say they are extremely/very confident of achieving a comfortable retirement (49 percent compared with 7 percent).ⁱ

Aegon Retirement Readiness Survey 2017: Successful Retirement – Healthy Aging and Financial Security



Donna Corrado,
Commissioner, New York
City Department for the
Aging

Preparing for the “New Retirement” Is a Lifelong Process

The landscape of later life is shifting, and age-related expectations regarding work and lifestyle are changing. To support this interest in a vibrant later life, there is a pressing need to engage people at all ages and stages of life in retirement planning. Education programs should encourage savings that help people of all ages balance day-to-day expenses, establish financial resiliency, and take advantage of long-term opportunities.

We need to build wealth from an earlier age, so that we can live a ‘dignified existence.’ – Donna Corrado, PhD, Commissioner, New York City Department for the Aging

Innovative Financial Planning and Management Tools Are Needed to Promote Lifelong Financial Wellness

According to the most recent data from the Investment Company Institute, retirement assets in the United States are close to \$25 trillion—representing more than a third of all household financial assets. In 2016, older adults contributed \$7.6 trillion in economic activity in the U.S., while accounting for 70 percent of charitable donations. Older adults are increasingly taking on entrepreneurial roles instead of retiring, creating opportunities for themselves through new business endeavors.

Despite the collective accumulated wealth of the aging population, according to the U.S. Census Bureau, nearly 10 percent of older adults over 65 years of age are in poverty, and many are without sufficient means to retire. Factors such as low wages that limit savings, declines in health, labor market changes, and a lack of equity in access to non-retirement financial vehicles (such as real estate) can further disadvantage some people of retirement age from accumulating sufficient savings.

Only 48 percent of households age 55 and older report having some amount of retirement savings. Twenty-three percent report having a defined benefit plan, but no savings, while 29 percent report having neither a defined benefit plan nor savings.ⁱⁱ

– Government Accountability Office, Retirement Security: Most Households Approaching Retirement Have Low Savings

Further, costs that arise as we age, such as out-of-pocket health care expenses and long-term care, can be significant and are often unanticipated in financial planning. Today, often the “best” option to pay for long-term care is to be without financial resources and therefore qualify for public assistance, which over time, makes for an unsustainable health care system. Health care costs are often also combined with other debt, such as underwriting a student loan burden of a child or grandchild. Expenses that come later in life can be better planned for and made more affordable for families with financial instruments that provide greater accessibility to funds—including mandatory savings and short- and long-term savings accounts promoted through tax incentives.

Retirement is not an event; it's a journey. People need multi-purpose products to cover all the things that might arise. – Dave Paulsen, Executive Vice President, Chief Distribution Officer, Transamerica

Cognitive Decline Is Now a Must-Address Issue for Financial Institutions

The financial services sector—from banks and financial planners to regulators and policymakers—should recognize that mismanagement of finances can be an early warning sign of cognitive decline, possibly caused by a neurodegenerative disease such as Alzheimer's. The exploitation of vulnerable people is a significant issue for the financial services sector, as is incapacity to make sound financial decisions, and both are more likely to impact people with low levels of financial literacy. Working with financial institutions, family members, and the health care system, professionals in the financial services field require better communications and technology to identify signs of decline and prevent instances of fraud and abuse before they happen. Meanwhile, regulators, legislators, first responders (law enforcement and adult protective services), and the justice system should continue working to provide safety and realize justice for those who have been victimized.

CALLS TO ACTION

This section includes actionable recommendations that emerged during keynote presentations, panel discussions, and post-conference surveys. The recommendations reflect the multi-sector approach to financial wellness promulgated throughout the conference and are organized by and specific to the diverse groups of stakeholders who participated. The recommendations propose some areas for additional inquiry and innovation by public and private sector industry leaders to support financial health throughout the life course.

The Role of the Financial Services Industry

Longevity is a new normal affecting how businesses approach their workforces and serve their customers, and all employers should address these trends as part of smart business practice. Leaders in the financial services industry, for example, are exploring new tools, partnerships, and pathways to deliver on financial wellness, and have a unique role to play.

FOR CUSTOMERS:

There needs to be a **collective effort by the industry** to embrace flexible approaches and products for essential financial functions—spending, saving, borrowing and planning—that maximize opportunities to plan for the future, and help people to be resilient in a financial emergency. Financial tools can employ tweaks and nudges that make up for human tendencies for short-term priorities at the expense of long-term planning.

Financial managers should be educated in the ways longevity changes people's priorities (e.g., increased elder caregiving responsibilities) and therefore **be better equipped to assist with financial decision-making**. Customers value feeling empowered but supported in complex financial decisions they may not be fully equipped to manage.

Educational tools for customers must be combined with tools that help people take immediate action for their financial wellness.

Protective **measures against fraud and abuse** must be balanced with legitimate financial planning measures in the context of the subjective measures of cognitive function that currently exist.

FOR THEIR BUSINESS MODEL:

The industry needs proactive asset managers with longevity training to support a **multi-pronged lifelong relationship with customers**.

Personalized service provides the **opportunity to identify people at risk of fraud** but increasing training in other customer service models can help raise awareness as well.

Realizing the “longevity dividend” is a **means of increasing revenue while reducing risks**—for institutions and their customers.

FOR SOCIAL GOOD:

The industry is responsible to shareholders and investors, but also has a broader **responsibility to society to anticipate and address emerging financial issues** such as a developing retirement savings shortfall.

In order to combat fraud against older people, the industry needs to support **accurate, fair and secure data collection** and serve as a partner with other stakeholders in protecting customers. Improving financial literacy can support better outcomes— including better preparation for the future and a decreased risk of being victimized by fraud.

The Role of Employers

Increasingly, employers of all sizes are taking an active role in the financial wellness of their employees, including innovations in financial planning and stability, supporting caregivers, providing student debt relief and emergency savings. Employers should continue to provide benefits and promote practices that give them a competitive advantage while promoting employee retention and recruitment.

FOR EMPLOYEES:

Employer benefits for caregiving should mirror benefits for care of children, parents or spouses, including emergency back-up care, flexible time, senior care assessments and access to legal advice for employees.

Employees value **1:1 training and actionable financial guidance** from their employers or experts made available to them by their employers. The most effective financial advice provides actionable guidance that is highly personalized.

Research shows that employees are also willing to pay for access to **financial planning and legal assistance**, and support employers making available trusted resources in those areas.

Job type and seniority level can have a significant impact on the ability to manage unplanned financial or personal issues, due to inequitable benefits, and more consideration needs to be given to **how to support people in all fields and at all levels** with financial planning needs.

Family caregivers provide 37 billion hours of care annually.ⁱⁱⁱ

–AARP Public Policy Institute, Valuing the Invaluable 2015 Update: Undeniable Progress, but Big Gaps Remain

FOR A COMPETITIVE ADVANTAGE:

How **business leaders** serve their employees and the communities in which they live will have a major impact on overall sustainability of their businesses.

From a business perspective, it is often preferable to retain an employee than to rehire or replace them, so it is sound practice to **support people eligible for retirement to stay in the workplace** if they choose to do so. [The Guiding Principles for Age-Friendly Businesses](#) provide a roadmap of benefits and tools to support longer working lives and ongoing productivity.

Simple accommodations and **changes to the working environment** geared toward older workers can also benefit employees of all ages.

The Role of Government

EDUCATION AND RESOURCES:

The government is positioned to provide **consumer-focused educational tools** that help older adults understand the right age to begin claiming retirement benefits and other measures to support their financial wellness, including the importance of saving early in life.

The government should actively support financial caregivers with **information on their responsibilities and obligations**, understanding conflicts of interest, and protection from fraud.

The government can also provide up-to-date guidance to financial institutions, including **privacy rules for reporting financial abuse** and protections for reporting suspected illegal activities.

The government must continue to gather and distribute resources on **best practices for the financial services industry** including training, filing of Suspicious Activity Reports, fine-tuning technology to identify possible fraud, obtaining customer consent for monitoring and sharing information with trusted friends, and for collaboration among stakeholders.

LEADERSHIP AND POLICYMAKING:

The government must continue to create **more access points for financial planning information and resources** (for example, in senior centers, libraries, public universities, and other touchpoints for older people). Improving the uptake of technology, especially among older people, and authorizing access for trusted contacts empowers people while also protecting them.

The government should lead by example by **hiring and retaining older adults**, incentivizing businesses to hire and retain older workers, making age-friendly changes to the built environment, publicizing those changes, and reducing the stigma currently associated with older workers looking to stay in or rejoin the job market.

Research shows public support for **mandatory and default opt-in savings plans and tools** that help to overcome indecisiveness or de-prioritization of long-term savings.

*Watching older people navigate the emerging technologies is exciting, and seniors want to be an engaged part of society – **Scott M. Stringer, New York City Comptroller***

INSIGHTS FROM SYMPOSIUM SESSIONS

Financial Wellness: Why Longevity Should Be a Priority for the Financial Services Industry

Kevin Crain, Managing Director, Head of Workplace Financial Solutions, Market Integration Executive for New York City, Bank of America Merrill Lynch

Introduced by **Michael W. Hodin**, PhD, CEO, Global Coalition on Aging


“Retirement is a lifelong process, and there is a near-direct correlation between financial health and wellness with respect to them both being drivers and outcomes.” – Michael W. Hodin, PhD, CEO, Global Coalition on Aging

“There is a complex, multi-directional relationship between financial, physical and mental health throughout the life course. We must work to maximize the social, physical and economic participation of older people to improve their health and well-being and to strengthen communities.” – Judith A. Salerno, MD, MS, President, The New York Academy of Medicine

KEY TAKEAWAYS FROM THIS SESSION:

The financial services industry needs to prioritize and address the issue of financial wellness. Individual institutions can speak about their own perspectives, but the industry has a collective need to lead.

Financial wellness correlates to physical wellness, and they need to come together as a concept. There is a measurable correlation between stress and health, and people report being stressed about short-term financial pressures, even when they are optimistic about the future. Telling people what they need to do is not as productive as helping them to take action.



Caregiving will be the most important benefit evolution in the U.S. As we move away from a focus on retirement and toward a focus on financial wellness throughout the life course, caregiving commitments of children, spouses, and parents have enormous financial implications.

Innovations like automatic retirement tools such as incentives to drive action (401(k) match, HSA) or automatic increases in deferral contribution rates are helping to drive financial wellness where financial decision-making is often stalled.

Financial advisors need longevity training and information on cognitive decline, fraud, and other issues potentially facing older customers to help create a holistic approach.



pictured left to right:

Michael W. Hodin, Global Coalition on Aging
Bruce Wolfe, BlackRock Retirement Institute;
Dave Paulsen, Transamerica;
Beth Brockland, Center for Financial Services Innovation;
Drew Holzapfel, ReACT Coalition

Panel Discussion: Workplace Change and Financial Health in the New Retirement Landscape

Panelists:

Beth Brockland, Managing Director, Center for Financial Services Innovation

Drew Holzapfel, Convener, ReACT Coalition (Respect A Caregiver's Time)

Dave Paulsen, Chief Distribution Officer, Transamerica

Bruce Wolfe, Executive Director, BlackRock Retirement Institute

Moderator: **Michael W. Hodin**, PhD, CEO, Global Coalition on Aging

"People have a range of financial needs: spending, saving, borrowing and planning, and those needs are shifting and are an opportunity for innovation."

– Beth Brockland, Managing Director, Center for Financial Services Innovation

"One of the core questions is, where do we let individuals make their own decisions, and where do we nudge or have mandates regarding savings?"

– Bruce Wolfe, Executive Director, BlackRock Retirement Institute (BRI)

KEY TAKEAWAYS FROM THIS SESSION:

Older workers increasingly want and need to work longer, requiring employers to innovate so they can harness the potential of this growing demographic cohort. Only 26 percent of surveyed baby boomers said they were going to retire and stop working. There are a large number of seniors who are entrepreneurs, and there are and will continue to be people entering and exiting the workforce much more rapidly and repeatedly than in the past.

The implication of longevity as it relates to retirement is that more financial decisions need to be made. People have a shifting range of financial needs, which is an opportunity for innovation.

Many employers are helping employees with some aspect of financial wellness. But it is not just about education, it is about action, and most critically, providing people with products that they can immediately use.

The most popular financial security programs are seminars and "lunch-n-learn" programs, with 82 percent of employers participating in a recent national survey estimated to have offered these in 2017. Nearly three-fourths (74 percent) offer access to tools to support key financial decisions including mortgages, wills and income protection. Another 71 percent offer tools and resources to support emergency savings, debt management and budgeting. A quarter of employers offer student loan counseling or repayment assistance.^{iv}

—National Business Group on Health, Embracing a Broader Definition of Well-Being: Eighth Annual Employer-Sponsored Health and Well-being Survey.

KEY TAKEAWAYS FROM THIS SESSION:

Older people with declining cognitive function and young people with low financial education levels are being asked to make complex financial decisions. Additionally, a lack of short-term savings may be a barrier to retirement savings because of the risk of not being able to access those funds. One of the core questions for the industry is, where do we let individuals make their own decisions, and where do we nudge or have mandates regarding savings?

A growing percentage of the workforce is faced with the responsibility of caring for an aging loved one. There is an adage that if you have not been a caregiver, you will be, or you will need one. This increasingly prevalent trend costs businesses an estimated \$34 billion. The associated costs, lost opportunities and other issues related to caregiving are an important part of retirement planning and decision-making.

The estimated economic value of family and friend caregiving is roughly \$500 billion per year— three times greater than Medicaid's expenditures on professional long-term care.^v

–AARP Public Policy Institute, Valuing the Invaluable 2015 Update: Undeniable Progress, but Big Gaps Remain.



Jason Karlawish,
University of
Pennsylvania

Health and Wealth As We Age: Addressing Financial Planning and Cognitive Decline

Jason Karlawish, MD, Professor of Medicine, Medical Ethics and Health Policy, and Neurology, University of Pennsylvania

Introduced by **Philip C. Marshall**, Founder, *BeyondBrooke.org*

“A lack of financial literacy is a predictor of the likelihood of exploitation, but it is also a predictor of cognitive decline.” – Jason Karlawish, MD, University of Pennsylvania

KEY TAKEAWAYS FROM THIS SESSION:

After 50 years of age, there may be a normal decline in cognition (behavior of the brain) or no change. There is significant variability between people, but decline is common, especially in the ability to take in and process new information, particularly under time pressure.

Early signs of Alzheimer’s disease and other neurodegenerative conditions often include declining financial planning and decision-making ability. In the U.S., an estimated 5 million people are living with Alzheimer’s disease, the most common type of dementia—a disease for which there is no effective treatment.

The diagnosis process for neurodegenerative disease has not evolved significantly over time. However, because of the connection between cognitive decline and financial capabilities, **the financial services sector has a responsibility to play a leadership role.**

- There is a need to develop skills around complex communication, especially around delivering difficult news, such as a concern of fraud or loss in financial capacity.
- Technology can be used to learn about both fraud and incapacity in order to protect people who are at risk of financial problems. However, the necessary information to accomplish this needs to be captured within aggregate data and systems.
- Financial data privacy must be balanced against the desire for financial security.

The average lifetime cost of care for dementia in the U.S. is about \$322,000, with families footing about 70 percent of the bill.^{vi}

—Journal of the American Geriatrics Society, Societal and Family Lifetime Cost of Dementia: Implications for Policy



from left to right:

Judith A. Salerno, The New York Academy of Medicine
Gary R. Mottola, FINRA
Robert M. Freedman, Schiff Hardin
Joseph P. Borg, NASAA
Ramsey Alwin, AARP
Tina Gabriel, People's United Bank

Panel Discussion: Preventing Financial Fraud and Abuse Targeting Older Adults

Ramsey Alwin, Director, Thought Leadership–Financial Resilience, AARP

Joseph P. Borg, JD, President, North American Securities Administrators Association (NASAA)

Robert M. Freedman, JD, Partner, Schiff Hardin

Tina Gabriel, Director, Financial Crimes Investigations, People's United Bank

Gary R. Mottola, PhD, Research Director, FINRA Investor Education Foundation, Financial Industry Regulatory Authority (FINRA)

Moderator: **Judith A. Salerno**, MD, MS, President, The New York Academy of Medicine

"In most cases, financial abuse is connected to other forms of abuse, so [we have] a multi-agency group overseeing all touchpoints with seniors to generate [financial fraud] investigations where other types of abuse are noted." – Joseph P. Borg, JD, President, North American Securities Administrators Association (NASAA)

"We're walking a fine line of protection and allowing self-directed decision-making. Sometimes people make bad decisions, despite our attempts, and we have to embrace [fraud protection] processes that are solutions, not passing the problem to someone else." – Tina Gabriel, Director, Financial Crimes Investigations, People's United Bank

KEY TAKEAWAYS FROM THIS SESSION:

Financial fraud is a significant threat to older adults, requiring the legal community, professionals in the financial services industry, and regulatory agencies to create policies and practices that protect account holders and notify families and caregivers when appropriate.

The rate of reported financial fraud is estimated to be somewhere between 4 percent and 17 percent, but collecting reliable data is extremely difficult. Financial fraud, abuse, and exploitation all have differences and unique challenges, but are all subject to underreporting.

Older people may be targeted more often due to greater assets, reduced cognitive function, social isolation, and previous victimization—though it is not evident that older people are more susceptible.

Lost assets are only one consequence of financial fraud, but **there is also stress and emotional damage**.

A “360–365 approach” to fighting fraud engages customers, communities and financial institutions. Financial crime follows a triangle of available factors—desire, opportunity, ability—that fraud prevention programs must seek to disrupt.

The nature of the challenge of preventing fraud makes it impossible to put the onus entirely on consumers to protect themselves.

- Legislation such as “The Model Act” and “Senior\$afe Act” require (or encourage, depending on the state) financial planners, investment advisors or others to report to authorities when they have a reasonable suspicion of fraud.
- Protective measures are still in development, with evolving definitions and processes that need to be addressed.

More than 5 percent of older adults experience some form of fraud or scam each year.^{vii}

–American Journal of Public Health; Prevalence of Financial Fraud and Scams Among Older Adults in the United States: A Systematic Review and Meta-Analysis.



Teresa Ghilarducci, The New School for Social Research

Averting a Potential Financial Crisis Through the Promotion of Financial Security for Older Adults

Teresa Ghilarducci, PhD, Bernard L. and Irene Schwartz Professor of Economics and Policy Analysis, The New School for Social Research

Introduced by **Judith A. Salerno**, MD, MS, President, The New York Academy of Medicine

***"Under our current retirement system, many of the 24 million workers nearing retirement (ages 55–64) will face declining living standards or poverty in just 10 years. After a lifetime of lower wages, the retirement crisis is likely to have the largest impact on households of color, women and lower-income workers."* – Teresa Ghilarducci, Professor of Economics, The New School for Social Research**

KEY TAKEAWAYS FROM THIS SESSION:

There is an impending “retirement crisis” for those without adequate retirement income. Most workers will be unable to maintain their standards of living in retirement, and many will fall into poverty.

Social security is a critical aspect of retirement for 50 percent of Americans, and despite attempts to increase voluntary savings, most people have very small account balances. The wealth in voluntary accounts is concentrated among a small number of people, and downward mobility in retirement is a significant risk for many, particularly women and minorities.

Today’s assumptions about career progression and earnings do not reflect the accurate backdrop upon which savings decisions and actions are being made, nor do they consider financial emergencies. Most workers’ earnings peak at ages 45 to 50, leaving little time to grow retirement savings, even assuming other factors like health do not lead to premature retirement.

The market for financial advice needs to be reformed so that it is more accessible to a greater number of American households. Advisors should be required to act in households’ best interest, with tools and services aimed at improving financial wellness for all.



From left to right:

Beth R. Finkel, AARP NY
Cindy Hounsell, Women's
 Institute for a Secure
 Retirement
Thomas Kamber, OATS
Naomi Karp, Consumer
 Financial Protection Bureau
Seung Kim, LISC

Panel Discussion

Communities Supporting Financial Wellness Throughout the Life Course

Cindy Hounsell, President, Women's Institute for a Secure Retirement

Thomas Kamber, PhD, Executive Director, Older Adults Technology Services (OATS)

Naomi Karp, JD, Senior Policy Analyst, Consumer Financial Protection Bureau

Seung Kim, Senior Program Director, Family Income and Wealth Building, Financial Opportunity Centers, Local Initiatives Support Corporation (LISC)

Moderator: **Beth R. Finkel**, State Director, AARP NY

"People are eager to learn and do what they can...and so many people do not know the basics of the system, which is why education on this is so important." – Cindy Hounsell, President, Women's Institute for a Secure Retirement

"Those looking to rejoin the workforce are not always being taken seriously, and entrepreneurship is an obvious alternative route." – Thomas Kamber, PhD, Executive Director, Older Adults Technology Services (OATS)

KEY TAKEAWAYS FROM THIS SESSION:

Government, non-profits and business all have roles to play in supporting and engaging individuals as they prepare for financial security in older age.

Enhancing financial literacy—through community-focused initiatives, financial technology and policy changes—is essential.

It is imperative to begin engaging people earlier in their lives to promote financial wellness, which will go a long way toward helping people understand their options and choices, and to provide them access to the tools they need.

Communities should build programs in places where seniors engage in activities (like senior centers, libraries, and through area agencies on aging) and provide access to technological tools for budgeting and expense planning. This will help increase adoption of these technologies.

Seniors are increasingly seeking job training and employment assistance, and programs making these services more available to underserved populations are making these communities more vibrant. Continued employment helps to prevent social isolation, reduce financial insecurity, and foster independence.

Among older adult Internet users, 21 percent used the job-search and networking site LinkedIn. This represents an eight percent increase from 2013 and is one of the most significant increases in utilization among all age groups. As these technologies are further developed for use by job-seekers and job-recruiters alike, many older adults will need to learn how to use these technologies to advance their careers

—President's Council of Advisors on Science & Technology, Independence, Technology, and Connection in Older Age

NEXT STEPS

Achieving financial wellness for longer lives requires a collective commitment across sectors and from employers of all types. The New York Academy of Medicine, The Global Coalition on Aging, AARP New York, and Bank of America Merrill Lynch aim to continue the conversation around financial wellness through the sharing of innovative ideas, latest data, and best practices starting with a new online resource repository at <https://nyam.org/age-friendly-nyc/resources/financial/> that includes resources from symposium speakers, partners and collaborators.

For further information or to explore partnership on future events and initiatives, follow #FinancialWellnessNYC on social media or contact report authors via The New York Academy of Medicine at agefriendlynyc@nyam.org.

The views presented in this publication are those of the authors and not necessarily those of The New York Academy of Medicine, its Trustees, Officers, or Staff.

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