

## **Exploring Structural Ageism in Governmental Health & Healthcare Programs - Changes to Improve**

We decided to explore the Capable (Community Aging In Place—Advancing Better Living For Elders) Program which is a person-directed, home-based program. This program integrates services from an occupational therapist (OT), a registered nurse (RN), and a handy worker who work together with the older adult to set goals and direct action plans that change behaviors to improve health, independence, and safety. Participants learn new skills, exercises, and how to work with additional tools/equipment/home modifications to improve function and safety.

Research shows that CAPABLE reduces the impact of functional impairment and disability, enhances motivation and self-efficacy, reduces health disparities, improves emotional health, and reduces hospitalizations and nursing home days.

We explored who in the State of Maine is using the Capable model. Through research we learned that Lewiston Housing Authority has been using a Capable model in the Lewiston area. They have applied for a grant that will expand their reach to Androscoggin, Kennebec, Oxford, Franklin and Cumberland County. Currently, they have been working with Androscoggin HomeCare to provide RN and OT services. We learned about their program requirements, intake process and what they may need if their grant is approved. On April 4th we are presenting to Lewiston Housing Authority several pieces that will help them grow their referrals and expand the program into new counties: 1.) Communication Plan to help increase exposure about the program through various media and print opportunities 2.) Contact spreadsheet to include town offices, healthcare offices, community resources and libraries in all 5 counties 3.) Culturally Responsive Engagement Strategies that will help Lewiston Housing Authority develop a strategy for approaching community leaders, organizations, and/or faith leaders with respect, empathy, and compassion.