

WHAAM: Washington Healthy and Active for Arthritis Management



WHAAM's Goal

WHAAM aims to increase physical activity among people with arthritis to reduce and manage pain. We do this by supporting more ways for people living with arthritis pain to be active, and helping their health care providers give counseling and referrals for physical activity. WHAAM is a partnership between state agencies and community-based organizations, with a focus on communities with a higher burden of arthritis, such as rural and American Indian populations.



Increase Counseling and Referrals

- Build health care provider capacity for counseling and referrals for increased physical activity among people with arthritis.
- Build community program capacity to support health care provider referrals.



Increase Access to Physical Activity

- Expand and support arthritis-appropriate program offerings in communities, such as Enhance Fitness, Walk With Ease, and Chronic Disease Self-Management Program.
- Increase access to environments that support walking through policy, systems, and environmental changes.

Physical Activity Can Help Reduce Joint Pain

Arthritis affects more than 1.8 million people in Washington state. Nearly half of adults with arthritis have persistent pain, and about one in four adults with arthritis report experiencing severe joint pain. About 24 percent of Washington residents with arthritis report being physically inactive, even though participating in joint friendly physical activity can improve arthritis pain, function, mood, and quality of life. Being physically active can also delay the onset of arthritis-related disability, and help people manage other chronic conditions such as diabetes, heart disease, and obesity.

Counseling & Referrals

Objective: Increase health care provider counseling and referrals for physical activity among patients with arthritis

WHAAM builds health care provider capacity for counseling and referrals by:

- ⇒ Providing technical assistance to health care providers
- ⇒ Promoting building referrals for arthritis-appropriate programs into clinic systems and channeling patients to appropriate community partners
- ⇒ Working on increasing insurance coverage and reimbursement for arthritis-appropriate programs
- ⇒ Supporting Washington State Parks Park Rx program

WHAAM works with partners to build community program capacity to support health care provider referrals by supporting organizations that implement arthritis-appropriate programs.

Access to Activity

Objective: Increase access to physical activity for people with arthritis

WHAAM supports and expands arthritis-appropriate program offerings by:

- ⇒ Increasing access to EnhanceFitness and Walk With Ease programs
- ⇒ Supporting access to a chronic disease self-management program for people with arthritis
- ⇒ Supporting Wisdom Warriors programming

WHAAM increases access to environments that support walking for people of all ages and abilities by:

- ⇒ Strengthening aspects of built environment and community design that improve walkability
- ⇒ Integrating elements into state and community plans to support walking for people with arthritis



Contact WHAAM staff at Arthritis@doh.wa.gov or by calling 360-515-6365.