

Frequently Asked Questions: Supporting the Expansion of the Bureau of Sages Model

What is the Bureau of Sages model?

- The [Bureau of Sages](#) is an innovative model developed by [CJE SeniorLife](#) (Chicago, IL) with [Patient-Centered Outcomes Research Institute \(PCORI\)](#) funding to incorporate the voices of older adults living in skilled nursing facilities and other community settings into research.
- The Bureau of Sages, which was initiated in 2015, provides the opportunity for older adults to share experiences, build knowledge, and develop skills for working with researchers to provide voice to the direction, design, and implementation of research on aging.
- The PCORI funded grant to CJE is in its last year (ends December of 2019), and they are hoping to expand this model to other providers and states. [The LeadingAge LTSS Center @UMASS Boston](#) and [Collective Insight](#) are educating researchers about this model and are providing technical assistance, as needed, to implement new models. We implemented a four part virtual seminar series on engaged research, which can be found [here](#).
- As this model expands to new providers and states, older adults who participate are assuming a lead role in naming their own group (some do not adopt the Bureau of Sages name).

How does this model get off the ground?

- There is often a “host” provider site that is interested and willing to bring older adults to the process, either in person or virtually. There also often is a “host” site of researchers. Both groups have access to Bureau of Sages manuals and toolkits to support their roles.
- Each site dedicates someone to support the process, whether it be a student, volunteer, or employee. This person helps with outreach, orientation, scheduling meetings, and facilitating meetings.
- There is a one-time, limited site stipend to support startup of the model (e.g., to assist with refreshments, incentives, technology, etc.), but funding for long-term sustainability is not currently available (so, sites will need to seek additional funding or absorb the minimal costs to keep the model going).
- Sites can consider how to implement this model within already established engagement procedures to keep costs down, such as existing committees, workgroups, and advisory groups.
- The designated person at the provider site develops flyers, meets with older adults one on one, and signs participants up to participate in the process. Some provider sites have

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provided consent forms that outline the process and seek signed consent. This is an advisory group model, so many sites replicate orientation and sign up processes they use for advisory groups.

What does this model typically look like, once started?

- There are many guiding tools, templates, videos, etc. that are available to sites that describe previous lessons learned and make the implementation of this model move smoothly.
- Older adults receive basic orientation or training (from their host site) on the research process, which can be done by using already developed tools. Upon completion of this training, the researcher partner supports a “mock” session to help prepare participants for their role.
- Older adults attend routine advisory meetings (e.g., once a month) to provide guidance to researchers. They are available as advisors to researchers and offer feedback regarding researchers’ assumptions, methodologies, and, most importantly, how relevant their research is to older adults.
- Researchers are required to use tools and checklists, already developed, to ensure their sharing of information is accessible to older adults.
- There are evaluation tools already developed (a researcher and older adult survey tool) that can be used to examine how well the process is going.
- This model has been implemented virtually and in-person, and both models seem to work with the correct support.

Why would we do this?

- Engaging older adults in research can support the development of programs and policies that are meaningful to your organization and to those you serve.
- Funders often require participant engagement, and this is one approach to demonstrate your commitment to engagement.
- Those you serve may value being involved in the design, improvement, and dissemination of research that moves beyond their own services to improving the services for many older adults.
- You may already be looking for new activities to add to your daily programming, and this can be one of those activities.
- You will be able to strengthen your organization’s partnership with researchers, possibly leading to new pilot initiatives and funding sources.
- Increased funding opportunities may be available due to readiness for engagement.

To learn more about the Bureau of Sages model please visit:

<https://www.cje.net/bureauofsages>

<https://www.pcori.org/research-results/2015/bureau-sages-incorporation-and-translation-older-adults-voices-meaningful>

<https://khn.org/news/researchers-seek-sage-advice-of-elders-on-aging-issues/>