Tufts Health Plan Foundation Awards More Than $50,000 to Friends of Dedham Council on Aging

Initiative supports Livable Dedham

Contributed to The Dedham Times

Tufts Health Plan Foundation announced a grant of $54,545 to Friends of Dedham Council on Aging to build the capacity of the Livable Dedham initiative, which aims to serve as a suburban model for age-friendly communities.

The grant reflects the Foundation’s commitment to building healthier communities by promoting collaboration and improving systems and best practices.

“Our investments focus on improving community livability and addressing inequities to help older adults live healthier, fulfilling lives,” said Nora Moreno Cargis, president of the Tufts Health Plan Foundation and vice president, corporate citizenship for Tufts Health Plan. “Every community has different needs and opportunities. We want to honor communities where they are and catalyze health improvements for older adults and the entire community.”

Livable Dedham, begun in 2015, is a volunteer-led initiative. Its goal is to help make Dedham a great place to grow up and grow old. As fiscal agent, the Friends of Dedham Council on Aging will manage grant funds for Livable Dedham.

The Foundation grant will allow Livable Dedham to develop a three to five year action plan based on community input that identified several priorities, including accessible and affordable housing options, better walkability, access to volunteer opportunities, better adult learning and social programs, and improved communications about these efforts.

“We are thrilled to received this highly competitive grant,” said Diane Barry Preston, co-founder of Livable Dedham, along with Marie-Louise Keboc.

They thank the Steering Committee members who worked tirelessly on the grant application and subsequent site visit.

“It will allow Dedham to better respond to the needs of an aging population — where 41% of our residents will be age 55+ by 2030. Research tells us that community amenities that are good for older adults are also good for young children and families. Working with town officials and concerned residents, Livable Dedham has the opportunity to become a suburban age-friendly model community for all ages,” says Barry Preston.

In all, Tufts Health Plan Foundation announced 21 new grants totaling more than $1.7 million and representing collaborations with more than 200 community organizations in Massachusetts, New Hampshire, and Rhode Island.

About our grant program: Tufts Health Plan Foundation awards grants twice a year. Interested organizations should submit a letter of intent (LOI) through the online system accessible via www.tuftshealthplanfoundation.org. Letters of intent for the Policy and Advocacy grant cycle are due on July 20, 2017.

About the Tufts Health Plan Foundation: Established in 2008, Tufts Health Plan Foundation supports the health and wellness of the diverse communities we serve. The Foundation has given nearly $26 million to Massachusetts, New Hampshire, and Rhode Island nonprofits that promote healthy living with an emphasis on older adults. The Foundation began funding in New Hampshire in 2016.

The Tufts Health Plan Foundation funds programs that move communities toward achieving age-friendly policies and practices that are relevant, focus on older adults, and include them in community solutions. Visit www.tuftshealthplanfoundation.org or follow us on Twitter, Facebook, and YouTube.