

## **Eastern Region Affiliate Updates: DASH Plus for Older Adults in Maryland**

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The University of Maryland Extension (UME) received an USDA.AFRI grant in 2021 to implement a new healthy living program targeting older adults with hypertension. The DASH Plus program is an integrated project that aims to build a sustainable, community-based hypertension management program within senior centers. The intervention includes 8 nutrition education modules highlighting important components of the Dietary Approaches to Stop Hypertension (DASH) eating plan with the addition of a physical activity component in each module and other hypertension self-care skills.



A virtual pilot of these modules was taught by selected UME-FCS educators in 2021. In the summer of 2022, the complete DASH Plus program will be implemented by these educators in senior living communities across the state. In addition to the education component, participants will receive blood pressure education and supplies to measure their blood pressure at home. The final component is a weekly delivery of fresh produce to increase their access to fresh fruits and vegetables, an important component of the DASH eating plan. A culture of health will be promoted through a peer support model. This research study aims to identify components that can improve older adults' blood pressure management.