

Frequently Asked Questions

What is the LeadingAge California GARDEN Project?

The LeadingAge California GARDEN (**G**arden **A**ccess **R**esponds to **D**iagnosis and **E**nvironmental **N**eeds) Project aims to reduce resident loneliness, provide a meaningful and productive therapeutic activity, reduce depression, stimulate cognitive activity, and encourage motor skills. The project will implement Eldergrow's interactive and purposeful program that brings nature indoors with mobile, indoor therapeutic sensory gardens to 75 skilled nursing facilities.

How long is the project?

The GARDEN Project is a three-year CMP grant-funded project, starting in January 2023 and ending December 2025.

Who can participate in the project?

All Medicare and/or Medicaid certified skilled nursing facilities in California are eligible to participate.

How will you select the 75 skilled nursing facilities?

LeadingAge California will assemble a Stakeholder group that will review the project applications and select the skilled nursing facilities to participate based upon pre-determined criteria. LeadingAge California seeks to include a wide representation of California's skilled nursing facilities in the GARDEN Project. Examples of selection criteria may include:

- Geographic location (urban/suburban/rural)
- Number of skilled nursing facility beds
- Ownership information (non-profit, for-profit, government owned)
- Sustainability plan at project's end
- Participation in current and/or past CMP funded projects

If selected to participate, what do we receive?

At no cost, Eldergrow's therapeutic wellness program will include:

- Indoor, mobile, ADA accessible Garden Frames(s)
- All garden supplies including organic soil and non-toxic plants
- Twice monthly on-site sessions per garden led by trained Eldergrow Educators for up to 26 months (52 sessions)
- Class Supplies for all Educator led sessions
- Online portal access for staff including engaging extra-curricular activity ideas for skilled nursing facility staff to use with residents in between Educator visits.
- Continued Training for Skilled nursing facility Staff in regard to garden safety and resident engagement

What staff members need to be involved?

All staff members are encouraged to learn about the GARDEN Project and be involved, with Activity staff taking a lead.

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How many gardens are we eligible for?

You may be eligible for one, two, or even three gardens depending on the size (bed count) of your skilled nursing facility.

| Size | # of Gardens |
|------------------------|--------------|
| Small (<80 beds) | 1 |
| Medium (70 – 160 beds) | 2 |
| Large (>140 beds) | 3 |

What if our facility needs to quit or drop?

Once you agree to participate, your skilled nursing facility must do so for the duration of the project. You can contact the LeadingAge California Grant Manager if you are experiencing challenges that are impeding your progress.

What is the financial commitment?

For the duration of the GARDEN Project, all materials and training will be provided at no cost. Once the grant period has ended, your skilled nursing facility will have the option to continue the Eldergrow program subscription at your own cost. If you choose not to continue, your materials will stay at your facility but will need to be decommissioned.

How will our program be evaluated?

Educators will monitor residents' engagement both physically and emotionally with a Therapy Evaluation Form after every class. Staff will be asked to fill out surveys to ensure the full engagement of therapeutic programs and identify areas of improvement.

What is an Educator?

Eldergrow Educators are individuals with a green thumb who are outgoing, have previous experience working with vulnerable populations, but most importantly want to connect with your residents. An Educator will come to your skilled nursing facility twice a month and have a 1-hour class with your residents and stay an hour thereafter to maintain your garden and complete the resident therapy evaluations.

Interested in joining the LeadingAge California GARDEN Project?

For more information, go to leadingageca.org/garden-grant or email Grant Manager, Lindsay Fowks at lfowks@leadingageca.org.