



Focus on Aging

A Quarterly Publication

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2017 Advocacy for Aging Issues

Ushering in 2017, we continue the goals of advocacy for and service delivery to older adults in our nine-county region. The demands for long-term care continue to grow as the population of older adults continues to increase. According to the National Association of Area Agencies on Aging (n4a), 90% of individuals aged 65 and older state a preference for their long-term care needs being provided in their home. The ability to “age in place,” meaning at home and in their community, is not only preferred, but costs a fraction of the cost of institutional care.

We have a new President and a new Congress facing this shift in demographics, and the accompanying increased need for long-term care. Advocacy groups at the state and national level, including n4a and the Ohio Association of Area Agencies on Aging (o4a) will be reaching out to legislators to ensure that issues surrounding aging are heard.

The n4a urges the incoming Trump administration to recognize the critical demographic juncture and calls for:

1. Development of policy strategies that will support people in their home and communities as they age;
2. Improving the health and well-being of the fastest-growing demographic cohort in our country while effectively managing expenditures; and
3. Preserving the original intent and current structural integrity of Medicare, Medicaid, Social Security and other vital aging programs.

The new Congress will be considering health care reform and repeal of the Affordable Care Act. Joining numerous health care advocacy organizations across the state, o4a has signed a letter to Governor Kasich urging him to protect Ohioans’ right to health care by asking Congress to have a clear replacement plan in place

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New Committee on Aging Forms

The Ohio House Speaker, Cliff Rosenberger, announced the formation of a new **Committee on Aging and Long-Term Care**. The focus of this standing committee will be on strategies to support Ohioans as they age. Anticipating changes, this committee is preparing to guide policy and legislative processes related to the needs of an aging population.

Winter Heating Help for Older Ohioans

Ohio has several energy assistance programs to assist low income Ohioans with paying their utility bills.

The **Home Energy Assistance Program (HEAP)** is a federally funded program to help low-income Ohioans by providing a one-time benefit annually to the consumer's primary heating source account. For example, if you heat your home with a gas furnace, a credit will be provided to your gas bill. To receive this benefit, the applicant must be at or below 175% of the poverty level.



The **Percentage of Payment Plan Plus (PIPP Plus)** is a year-round extended payment arrangement that provides assistance with both electric and heating fuel bills. Persons at 150% of the poverty level pay only \$10 per month or 6% of their gross monthly income (whichever is greater) to the utility company each month to maintain service. If they heat with electricity, they pay 10% of their monthly household income.

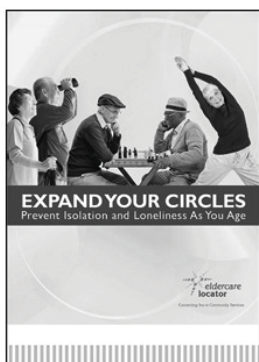
The **Winter Crisis Program (WCP)** provides a one-time benefit annually to your primary heating source account. The benefit can be used by eligible households that are disconnected (or have a pending disconnection notice), need to establish new services or pay to transfer service, or have 25% (or less) of bulk fuel. The program can also assist with fuel tank placement and furnace repair, and can provide funds for the purchase of electric heaters. Visit your local energy assistance program provider to apply in person for WCP.

For more information about these programs, please call **937-223-HELP or 800-258-7277**, or visit **www.info4seniors.org**.

National Campaign to Combat Social Isolation

Social isolation and loneliness have been identified as a critical issue for the health and well-being of older Americans. A national public education campaign to combat the effects of social isolation and resulting feelings of loneliness has been formed by collaboration of the National Association of Area Agencies on Aging and the AARP Foundation.

Loneliness is a feeling stemming from our perceptions of isolation from others. Social isolation is a condition that can be measured and quantified and is based on one's social network, availability of transportation, and ability to access resources and information. Prolonged social isolation has been compared to having the same negative health effects as smoking 15 cigarettes per day, and has been associated with impaired mental performance, compromised immune system, and increased risk of heart disease and dementia. Social isolation has also been identified as a risk factor for elder abuse.



Fifty-one percent of individuals over age 75 live alone and that combined with health, mobility and transportation challenges can result in fewer social contacts and connections. So how, with these barriers, can one remain or become more connected to others?

"Expand Your Circles: Prevent Isolation and Loneliness as You Age" is a publication which offers resources and ideas to remain socially connected. It includes a self-assessment checklist to aid in determining whether isolation and loneliness may be causing negative health effects. The brochure can be viewed and downloaded by visiting **www.n4a.org**.

2017 Advocacy...

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for the estimated 964,000 Ohioans who would lose coverage if the Affordable Care Act is repealed. Specific protections requested in any replacement plan include protection against discrimination based on gender and pre-existing conditions, as well as continuing to allow youth up to age 26 to remain on their parents' health insurance policy.

This new year will bring legislative changes and input from advocacy groups, coalitions and individuals that help inform the legislative process. If you wish to make your voice heard, contact information for your representatives to the U.S. Congress is available at www.usa.gov/elected-officials.

Healthy U Plans for 2017

We are proud to report that in 2016 a total of 35 six-week Healthy U workshops were conducted in our region, and plans are underway for an even busier 2017.



Healthy U is an interactive, disease self-management workshop that was developed at Stanford University. Healthy U is proven to improve well-being and reduce unnecessary hospitalizations and emergency room visits.

Visit www.facebook.com/healthyuaaa2 to learn more about the program and scheduled workshops.

2017 Meeting Schedule

The 2017 meetings of the **Area Agency on Aging, PSA 2 Advisory Council** and **Board of Trustees** are scheduled on the fourth Wednesdays of January through October, and the annual meeting will be held in June at a location to be announced.

The Council meets at Spring Meade in Tipp City at 10:00 a.m. The Board meets at the agency in Dayton at 4:00 p.m.

Advisory Council Openings

The Area Agency on Aging is seeking one representative each from **Champaign, Greene, Logan, Montgomery and Shelby Counties** to serve on its regional Advisory Council. The Champaign County opening is a replacement term that ends March 2019, after which the member may serve three full 3-year terms. The other openings are three-year terms that begin April 2017, and each of these terms may be renewed two times. The county representatives are appointed by the Board of Trustees.

The Area Agency on Aging Advisory Council advises the Board of Trustees regarding the administration of federal and state funds for services for those over 60 years of age, as well as other issues affecting older adults and their caregivers.

The Advisory Council is composed of three representatives from each of the nine counties in our service area. The Council meets monthly in Tipp City and round-trip mileage is reimbursed.

The Area Agency on Aging appreciates the dedicated service provided to the Advisory Council from the following individuals.

- **Sonia Greene**, representing Greene County since 2008
- **Sanford Holmes**, representing Montgomery County since 2008
- **Betty Hughes**, representing Shelby County since 2008
- **Robert Notestine**, representing Logan County since 2006
- **Warren Stevens (posthumous)**, who represented Champaign County until he passed away in September 2016

Apply Today

To obtain a position description and application, contact Margaret Burns (937-341-3099, 800-258-7277, mburns@info4seniors.org). Information and the application are also available by visiting www.info4seniors.org and clicking on the News tab.



Severe winter weather is hazardous to anyone who steps outside, and for a variety of reasons, older adults are more vulnerable to the effects of severe weather. Proper winter clothing is crucial, including covering all exposed skin and having boots or shoes with slip resistance.

Every home needs an emergency kit for all seasons including a battery operated radio, a flashlight, extra batteries, a signaling device like a whistle or horn or bell, and food and water for a few days.

Have a safe place (a friend's or neighbor's home) and a plan to get there if it is unsafe to remain at home. Request a reliable family member, friend or neighbor to call or check on you in the event of severe weather and communicate with them about a plan if they are unable to reach you, or find you need help. Communication with others reduces risks of weather-related injuries.

If you are the reliable person who checks on others, ask:

- Do they need medical attention? Have they fallen? Are they staying warm enough? Are they taking their medicines as prescribed?
- Do they have safe food and water? Are they eating and drinking regularly?
- Is the temperature in their home comfortable? Do they have safe means to heat the home if temperatures continue to fall?
- Who will they call if they need help? Do they have access to a phone that will work without power or land line service?

More information is available at <http://www.weathersafety.ohio.gov/>.



Caregiver Corner

Ohio Caregiving Act

Ohio lawmakers have voted unanimously in both houses of Congress to pass the **Ohio Caregiving Act**. This new law will ensure that a patient's designated family caregiver is given instruction in providing care -- sometimes complex and chronic -- that will allow the patient to return home safely. The law is designed to improve communications between family caregivers and hospitals resulting in a reduction of hospital re-admissions and reducing the need for nursing home care.

"The Ohio Caregiving Act recognizes the critical role family caregivers play in helping their loved ones age well at home while keeping them out of costly institutions," said bill sponsor Senator Peggy Lehner of Kettering.

Three important provisions of the Ohio Caregiving Act include:

- Upon admission to a hospital, a name of a family caregiver for the patient is recorded.
- The caregiver receives notification if the patient is discharged to either home or another facility.
- The treating facility must provide live instructions and explanation of medical tasks that will be needed when the patient is at home including injections, medication management and wound care.

Caregivers will now be included in the discharge plan of their loved one, and prior to the discharge, will be provided specific demonstration(s) to meet the care needs of the patient. Caregivers already make it possible for loved ones to avoid nursing facility placement, and this law empowers and recognizes them as the critical link in continuing medical care for a safe and successful return home.

Save the Dates

The Alzheimer's

Association Miami Valley

Chapter will hold the annual "Dimensions of Dementia", on March 29 and March 30 at Sinclair Community

College David H. Ponitz Center in Dayton. The **Community Forum** will begin on March 29 with a resource fair. The keynote speaker is Judy Berry, the founder of Dementia Specialist Consulting.

Cost is \$20 per person. The **Professional Symposium** will be on March 30. The symposium will include 18 breakout sessions that offer CEUs. For more information or to register contact Tiffany Sampson at tsampson@alz.org or (937) 610-7016.



Ohio Association of Area Agencies

on Aging (o4a) is planning the Spring Advocacy Conference at the Sheraton at Capitol Square in Columbus on March 28, and March 29. For more information visit www.info4seniors.org under the **Calendars/Educational** tab.

Ohio Coalition for Adult Protective

Services will hold the 32nd annual conference on March 17 at the Columbus State Conference Center. Nominations are also being accepted until February 17, 2017 for the adult protective services worker of the year. For more information and to register, please visit www.ocaps.org.

The Montgomery County Alcohol, Drug and Mental Health Services

Board will hold a training entitled **Mental Health First Aid and Older Adults and those with Later-Life Issues** on April 14, 2017, at Aullwood Audobon Farm. The training is designed to help anyone recognize when another is experiencing a mental health crisis. In late February visit www.info4seniors.org and click on **Calendars/Educational tab** for more detailed information.

PSA 2 Trainings

Location: Aullwood Audobon Farm

March 23, 2017

Assessing Capacity for Guardianship and Other Alternatives in Ohio



Presented by Paula Taliaferro, MGS, LSW
3.0 hour CEU, 9:00 a.m. - 12:15 p.m.

May 3, 2017

Up All Night: Ethical Considerations in Everyday Practice

Presented by Kristie Matheson, BA, LSW
3.0 hour CEU, 9:00 a.m. - 12:15 p.m.

July 27, 2017

What's a Mandated Reporter to Do? Elder Abuse Prevention and Response

Presented by Carol Dayton, MSW, LISW, ACSW, Retired Chief of Adult Protective Services (APS) of Cuyahoga County. Also includes panel of local APS workers. 3.0 hour CEU, 1:00 p.m. - 4:15 p.m.



Aullwood Audobon Farm is located at 9101 Frederick Pike, Dayton, OH 45414. Training information is available at www.info4seniors.org under the Calendars/Educational tab. If you would like to receive future continuing education brochures, contact Margaret Burns at (937) 341-3099 or mburns@info4seniors.org.



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OUTSTANDING!

Now Accepting Nominations *Outstanding Senior Citizen*

Inside this newsletter you will find a nomination form for the 2017 Outstanding Senior Citizen Award. The Area Agency on Aging (AAA) asks that you consider nominating an older Ohioan who makes a difference in your community.

AAA recognizes an Outstanding Senior Citizen in each of our nine counties during Senior Citizens Day celebrations in May. Nominees must be at least 60 years old, a legal resident of Ohio for the past five years, and not a previous recipient. Major emphasis will be placed on contribution to the community. Service in any field of endeavor will be considered.

Nomination deadline is March 31, 2017.

Call the **Area Agency on Aging, PSA 2** for information about services to help seniors and their caregivers.

223-HELP

(800) 258-7277

Information is also available online.

www.info4seniors.org

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