

Age Matters

Newsletter of the Aging Services Division, State Unit on Aging
State of Connecticut Department of Social Services
November/December 2006



From the Director

By Pamela Giannini, DSS

The Aging Services Division has been very busy this fall, with many accomplishments to report.

We unveiled a new Aging Services website (visit www.ct.gov/agingservices) and invite you to search our site which is designed to help older adults, their families and professionals learn about the different programs and services offered by the Department of Social Services Aging Services Division. We would also like to solicit your recommendations for improvements to the site so that it reflects all the ongoing programming available in your communities. We consider the website a work in constant progress that will be responsive to the needs of our constituency. Also if you have announcements that you would like to be posted for events in your community that are pertinent to the aging population and are open to the public, we would be glad to post these events on the site. Our Aging Services toll-free number is 1-866-218-6631. Suggestions may also be emailed to Cynthia Grant at Cynthia.grant@ct.gov.

The State Plan on Aging, which appears on our website, has been approved by the Administration on Aging for the period from 2007 to 2010.

Just to give you an idea of the general sections in the State Plan, the following outline is provided: Accomplishments of the State Unit on Aging over the past 4 years, Background and Statistics on the Aging Population in Connecticut, Developing Coordinated Service Systems, Key Issues and Promising Practices and Priorities for 2007 to 2010. There are five specific topic areas included in the plan and they range from ensuring access to services through effective outreach and education, promoting optimal physical, mental and social well-being among older adults and their caregivers, protecting the quality of life and rights of elders through education, legal services and improved coordination with law enforcement, promotion of senior friendly communities and strengthening the quality and accountability of Connecticut's Aging programs. Associated with each one of these topic areas are objectives such as improving access to mental health services for older adults or assisting senior centers in becoming accredited.

We are pleased to announce some staffing changes: our new Nutritionist, Janett Haughton, is on board, Margaret Gerundo-Murkette has become our Program Manager for the Information and Assistance Division, and will act as the Division's Liaison to both Senior Centers and Municipal Agents, and Nancy Schaffer has accepted the position of Long Term Care State Ombudsman.

The New England Cognitive Center, one of our grantees under the Alzheimer's Settlement Project, has been awarded the prestigious Archstone Award for Excellence in Program Innovation by the American Public Health Association. They were recognized for their innovative Brain G.Y.M.M. Program, a cognitive fitness program designed for individuals with Alzheimer's disease.

Four agencies were awarded the right to negotiate contracts with the Department through the Community-Based Regional Transportation System for the Elderly RFA. They are The Western Connecticut Area Agency on Aging (covering the towns of Colebrook, Winchester, Barkhamsted, Torrington, New Hartford, Litchfield, Harwinton, Morris, and Thomaston), St. Luke's Home (covering the towns of Portland, Middlefield, Middletown, and East Hampton), The Middlesex Chapter of the American Red Cross (covering the towns of Bristol, Farmington, Plainville, New Britain, Newington, and Berlin), and The Town of Enfield Department of Social Services (covering the towns of Bloomfield, Granby, East Granby, Suffield, Enfield, Somers, Windsor Locks, East Windsor, Windsor, and South Windsor).

I am very proud to announce that the Department was awarded the SHIP Performance Plus Award from the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS) recognizing the valuable work of all of our partners in the CHOICES program. CMS grants these awards to State Health Insurance Programs (SHIPS) that have demonstrated exceptional achievement in serving Medicare beneficiaries. The CHOICES Program will receive \$169,387 in grant funds to enhance and expand their educational and assistance services for area residents with Medicare over the coming year.

Our Division applied for an Administration on Aging grant entitled: Empowering Older People to Take More Control of their Health Through Evidence-Based Prevention Programs: A Public/Private Collaboration. This proposed project is a public/private collaboration with the Atlantic Philanthropies that seeks to empower older people to take more control of their health through life-style changes that have been proven effective in the reduction of disease. The nature and design of the grant is to mobilize the aging, public health, and non-profit sector at the state and local level to move forward with the dissemination of low-cost evidence-based disease and disability prevention programs at the community level. Even though we were recently notified that we did not receive this grant, we were told that our application was very strong and if additional funds become available, we are on the short list.

The Connecticut project incorporates three geographic primary service areas: the South Central, North Central & Western regions. The focus of the Western and South Central region is Fall Prevention and the North Central region will utilize the Stanford Chronic Disease Self-Management Program. The primary partners for this initiative include; the North Central AAA, the Western AAA, the Agency on Aging of South Central CT, the Yale School of Medicine/Connecticut Collaboration for Fall Prevention, the Consultation Center, Inc., Home to Home, Inc., Hartford Elderly Services, the Hartford Department of Health and the UCONN Center on Aging.

The Bureau of Aging, Community, and Social Work Services worked on the collaborative effort sponsored by DSS to answer CMS's request for proposals for the Money Follows the Person grant. The Department submitted a very thorough proposal on November 1st, 2006 that includes the goal of transitioning at least 700 people from nursing facilities in the next five years. The grant seeks to provide expanded services to allow those interested in living in the community the opportunity to do so. All states should learn whether their proposals are accepted early January 2007.

It has been a very successful time for the State Unit on Aging and we would like to thank and congratulate all of those who have helped make these projects come to fruition. We look forward to meeting the goals of our State Plan with the support of all of our community partners.

From the Editor

By Cynthia Grant, DSS

The month of November recognizes National Family Caregiver Month, celebrating the theme of "Believe, Protect, and Reach Out;" visit www.AoA.gov. Alzheimer's Disease Awareness Month is also celebrated in November (see www.alz.org or www.alzct.org for more information on the disease). In addition, the Older American's Act was reauthorized in October, and the fall brings the coordinated election period for the Medicare Part D Program (see article in this edition of Age Matters).

If you have any ideas or suggestions for articles in future editions, please contact Cynthia Grant at Cynthia.grant@ct.gov.

Program News

Older Americans Act Amendments of 2006 Passed

By Josefina G. Carbonell, AoA

I commend the Congress for the successful passage of the 16th reauthorization of the Older Americans Act (OAA). The OAA embodies our nation's compassion toward ensuring the dignity and independence of our older citizens by promoting older Americans' full participation in society, and supporting their overwhelming desire to remain living in their own homes and communities for as long as possible. Other provisions include:

- Enhanced Federal, State, and Local coordination of long-term care services provided in home and community-based settings
- Support for State and community planning to address the long-term care needs of the baby-boom generation
- Greater focus on prevention and treatment of mental disorders
- Outreach and service to a broader universe of family caregivers under the National Family Caregiver Support Program
- Increased focus on civic engagement and volunteerism
- Enhanced coordination of programs that protect elders from abuse, neglect, and exploitation.

The new legislation advances the President's New Freedom initiative and affirms the Administration's commitment to health promotion and disease prevention, value, and ownership. The OAA embeds the principles of the Administration's Choices for Independence initiative. The legislation modernizes community-based long-term care systems to empower consumers to manage their own care and make choices that will allow them to avoid institutional care and live healthy lives in the community. To download a copy of the Older Americans Act as well as recent amendments, visit www.AoA.gov.

The State Long Term Care Ombudsman Program

By Nancy Shaffer, DSS

Hello! I am Nancy Shaffer, the new State Long Term Care Ombudsman. I want to thank each of you, who, over the last few months have been so gracious in welcoming me to my new position! To have the opportunity to continue the work of the LTCOP is a great honor. I am so impressed with the caliber of professionalism, intelligence and dedication of the members of the LTCOP team: Brenda, Cristina, Kim, Maggie, Michael, and Theresa, along with Desi, Charlene, Stephanie, and Sheila. They bring to the Program their many years of experience and a compassion and sensitivity for long term care Residents that is remarkable! My first two weeks on the job I witnessed my new staff produce the VOICES Forum: more than 150 Presidents of Resident Councils along with more than 200 others enjoyed a wonderful day of workshops, luncheon, presentations and companionship. The morning workshop "From Fear of Retaliation Towards Building Trusting Relationships" was developed based on issues that were raised at last year's VOICES. The program was designed so that staff attendants discussed the topic in another room separate from the Residents. This enabled both groups, but especially the Residents, to speak openly. This format was well received by both groups. The Department of Social Services' own Sylvia Gafford-Alexander facilitated the program and I thank her for her sensitive direction of the program. My sincere thank you as well to Commissioner Pat Wilson-Coker and to other members of the Department of Social Services, in particular OSD, whose support and assistance contributed to the success of the day. And thank you also to Barbara Yard, of the Department of Public Health, who led the afternoon discussion regarding Resident Council Best Practices.

The issues raised by the Residents at the VOICES Forum become the Long Term Care Ombudsman Program's proposals for the upcoming legislative session. In this way, we believe, we are truly responding to the voices of those we serve. Issues expressed this year by our Residents were the Personal Needs Allowance, transportation, and the need for increasing efforts to ensure that all Residents are well fed and hydrated.

To our knowledge, Connecticut is the only state in the country to sponsor such a day for its long term care Residents!

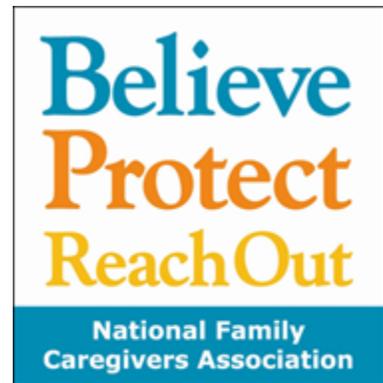
There are many exciting things to look forward to in 2007 for the LTCOP: the Long Term Care Needs Assessment, the first such in-depth look at aging issues in the state in twenty years, is underway; we await word on the Money Follows The Person Grant Proposal; The LTCOP has joined with providers and organizations throughout the state and country in the Advancing Excellence in America's Nursing Homes Campaign, and the Program is excited by the prospects of adding three new Ombudsmen to its ranks! The addition of these new Ombudsmen will provide the Program the much-needed "manpower" to support our Residents in Assisted Living Facilities.

National Family Caregivers Month 2006

National Family Caregivers Month (NFC Month) — observed every November — is a nationally recognized month celebrated to draw attention to the many challenges facing family caregivers, advocate for stronger public policy to address family caregiving issues, and raise awareness about community programs that support family caregivers. NFC Month is a time to thank, support, educate, and celebrate more than 50 million family caregivers across the country.

During National Family Caregiver Month and every day, NFCA encourages family caregivers to take three steps every day to make their lives easier, improve care and raise awareness about the issues that family caregivers face. NFCA's caring every day messages are:

***Believe** in Yourself.
Protect Your Health.
Reach Out for Help.*



National Family Caregivers Month
November 2006

This November there will be a special emphasis on the need for all of us to help family caregivers protect their health in order to have a more satisfying life and be better able to provide their loved one with the best care possible.

Family Caregiving: How Much is Enough?

The Aging Services Division invites all caregivers to a caregiving event on Thursday, November 30, 2006 at the Crowne Plaza in Cromwell, CT from 8:30am-11:30am. Guest speaker Jack P. Gesino will present a talk entitled "How to be a Good Enough Child." This event is free and includes a breakfast buffet. To register, contact Karen Gamble at (860) 424-5297 or email your name, phone number and email address to Karen.Gamble@ct.gov.

NCAAA Offers Supplemental Funding to Caregivers

By Maureen McIntyre, NCAAA

The CT National Family Caregiver Support Program Supplemental Services component is offering to provide funding for alternative electricity sources such as generators to protect vulnerable elders during the coming winter months. **To be eligible, recipients must:**

- Qualify for the CT National Family Caregiver Support Program/Supplemental Services.
- Provide a physician's note explaining the nature of the condition and outlining the dependence on electricity.
- Arrange for the purchase, delivery, and installation of the generator.

Work with a vendor willing to bill NCAAA directly for payment.

For an application for Supplemental Services please contact Laurie Browne at 724-6443 x 234. As funding is limited, requests will be process in the order in which they were received.

Alzheimer's Association, Connecticut Chapter Offers Caregiver Luncheons

By Sonia Gaztambide, Alzheimer's Association

In 1983, nearly 20 years before he died of the disease, President Ronald Reagan signed the proclamation that designated November as National Alzheimer's Disease Month (NADM).

Alzheimer's disease is growing at an epidemic rate and as baby boomers age, the number of Americans with Alzheimer's disease will continue to grow to as many as 16 million Americans in 2050, up from the current 4.5 million.

Early Onset, the diagnosis of the disease in a person 65 years of age or younger, is "The New Face of Alzheimer's." Individuals with early onset can be in their 30s, 40s and 50s; a recent survey indicated that there may be half a million Americans age 65 and under who have memory problems.

The Alzheimer's Association promotes NADM by creating awareness of this devastating illness which affects 100,000 Connecticut residents and their families. The Association also seeks to promote the progress made in treatment and care.

The Association is hosting Caregiver Luncheons in November to honor outstanding individuals who perform the difficult but rewarding task of providing care to individuals with Alzheimer's and related diseases. Caregivers were nominated by individuals and facilities and will attend one of five luncheons being held statewide. For more information, contact the Chapter at 1-800-356-5502 or (860) 828-2828.

Medicare Rx in 2007

By Jennifer Throwe, DSS

The Medicare Prescription Drug Program Annual Coordinated Election Period will take place between November 15th – December 31st, 2006. Everyone who already has Medicare Rx, also known as Medicare Part D, should be reviewing their plan options to make sure the plan they are in continues to be the best plan for them in 2007. All Prescription Drug Plans (PDP) providers were required to mail "Annual Notice of Change" letters to beneficiaries participating in the Medicare Rx program notifying them of any changes to their plan scheduled to go into effect as of January 1st 2007. Therefore, everyone who has a Medicare Rx plan should be reviewing their coverage. If a Medicare beneficiary currently has Medicare Rx coverage, they can also switch to a different plan if they wish during the Annual Coordinated Election Period. In Connecticut, for 2007, Medicare beneficiaries will have an increased number of plan options and will be choosing from 51 different PDPs, 23 MA-PDs (Medicare Advantage plans) and 9 Special Needs plans. The good news is...if a beneficiary is happy with their plan, they do not have to do anything to continue their coverage.

The Annual Coordinated Election Period is also the time when those looking to enroll in Medicare Rx for the first time may do so. Anyone who didn't already have creditable coverage (coverage as good as Medicare) was eligible to enroll in Medicare Rx during the Initial Enrollment Period, November 15th, 2005 – May 15th, 2006, but did not enroll may be subject to a penalty. A 1% per month penalty, based on the National Premium Average, will be added to the individual's Medicare Rx premium for every month they delayed enrollment. The National Premium Average in 2007 is \$27.35. Therefore, if someone was eligible to enroll in 2006 but did not they will have to pay an additional \$1.91 for every month that they delayed enrollment ($27.35 \times .01 \times 7 \text{ months} = \1.91 per month penalty).

All Medicare beneficiaries should have received the Medicare & You 2007 Handbook by the second week in November. Detailed information about Medicare, PDPs, MA-PDs, and Special Needs plans can be found in this handbook in addition to cost and contact information for all available Medicare Rx plans.

In order to enroll in a plan for the first time or switch plans, a beneficiary can contact the plan they wish to enroll with by telephone or on the individual plan's website. Beneficiaries may also enroll by calling 1-800-Medicare (1-800-633-4227), TTY users should call 1-877-486-2048, or enroll on the web at www.medicare.gov. Beneficiaries may call CHOICES at 1-800-994-9422, TDD/TTY users call 1-800-842-4524, for Medicare Rx counseling and enrollment assistance. The DSS Rx-Xpress mobile office is also assisting with Medicare Rx counseling and enrollment assistance in cities and towns around the state. For a listing of Medicare Rx outreach and assistance events, including the DSS Rx-Xpress stops around the state, please refer to the Medicare Rx Outreach and Events Calendar located on the DSS Medicare Rx web page at: www.ct.gov/medicarerx.

The Alzheimer's Resource Center: A Leader and Innovator

By Nancy Leonard, ARC

Since 1992, the Alzheimer's Resource Center of Connecticut has been studying and learning as we work daily with individuals who reside in our Assisted Living community and Skilled Nursing residence, and who participate in our Adult Day program. All of our programs are exclusively for individuals with Alzheimer's Disease or related dementia.

Our innovative approaches demonstrate how much we've learned about how to care for people with these conditions, and how we help them live each day with individuality, independence, and dignity.

We work closely with our clients' and residents' families, and out of this work has emerged our Educational Series designed to give families and caregivers a spectrum of information, techniques, and support. It is our gift to those who are living with this great life challenge.

Please join us at the Alzheimer's Resource Center in Farmington for our Educational Series covering a variety of topics of interest to families and caregivers of individuals with Alzheimer's Disease or related Dementia.

We have invited special guests to present sessions in their areas of expertise-in cognitive fitness and long term care insurance. All other topics are presented by the directors and staff at the Alzheimer's Resource Center, who will share their practical knowledge and the innovative approaches they use when working with individuals who have Alzheimer's Disease or related Dementia.

Our building is centrally located and easily accessed from I-91 and I-84. Please call 860-628-9000 for directions.

All sessions are Wednesdays at 6:00pm starting on September 13, 2006. (Please see Coming Events section of this newsletter). To register, please contact Nancy Leonard at 860-628-3002 or e-mail at Nleonard@arc-ct.org.

Need Help With Winter Heating Bills?

By Andrée Pesci, DSS

The Connecticut Energy Assistance Program (CEAP), which is administered by the Department of Social Services and coordinated by regional Community Action Agencies in cooperation with municipal and other non-profit human service agencies, is designed to help offset the winter heating costs of our most vulnerable lower income households.

Connecticut residents who need help in paying their primary heating bills may apply for energy assistance at about 160 community sites now through May 1, 2007.

It is available to households with incomes up to **150%** of the federal poverty guidelines.

A household of 1 is eligible if income is under \$14,700. A household of 2 is eligible if income is under \$19,800. Visit our website at www.ct.gov/staywarm or call 2-1-1 Infoline to inquire about additional household income guidelines or to get more detailed information about the energy assistance program. Households eligible for the winter heating program may also be eligible to receive weatherization assistance, which can help conserve energy and lower heating bills.

Elderly and/or disabled households with even higher incomes (up to **200%** of the federal poverty guidelines) are also eligible for CEAP. If a member of your household is at least 60 years old or has a disability, the household is eligible if the household of 1 income is under \$19,600; a household of 2 income must be under \$26,400, etc.

The Contingency Heating Assistance Program, also known as CHAP, is available for the many residents whose incomes are too high to qualify for benefits through the regular Connecticut Energy Assistance Program. A household of 1 is eligible if income is under \$27,867. A Household of 2 is eligible if income is under \$36,441. A vulnerable household is defined as a household including a member who is at least 60 years old, under 6 years old, or disabled.

Eligibility for energy assistance is based on the annual gross income and the size of the household. Clients must report all liquid assets (checking and savings accounts, CD's, stocks, bonds, shares, etc.) for every household member. For homeowners, the first \$10,000 in liquid assets, and for other households, the first \$7,000 in liquid assets, is disregarded. Any amount over that limit, when added to the annual gross income must be below the income guidelines. Clients must provide *proof* of income and assets for all household members, ages 18 or over who may reside with them, for the four weeks prior to the application date. If natural gas or electricity is the heating source, the client must submit a copy of the bill, which is required to be in the name of the applicant, or a household member who is of majority status, or an emancipated minor. In addition, the bill must be for residential services only, and for charges incurred from November 1st through April 15th.

Clients whose heat is included in the rent with incomes up to 150% and who pay more than 30% of their gross income towards rent may also be eligible for energy assistance. Renters must present verifiable documentation of rent. The basic Rental Assistance

benefit is from \$240 to \$270 for the winter, depending on a household's exact income and number of people in the household.

A one-time Crisis Assistance benefit of \$400 is available to all CEAP households whose primary heat source is a deliverable fuel (oil, propane, kerosene, wood, or coal). A one-time Crisis Assistance benefit of \$200 is available to all CHAP households whose primary heat source is a deliverable fuel.

A Safety Net Assistance benefit of up to \$400 may be available to address the needs of CEAP deliverable fuel-heated households that have exhausted their Basic Benefits and Crisis Assistance benefits and are in a life-threatening situation. These households must be interviewed by a case manager and must also complete a risk assessment determination. If it is determined that the household has insufficient resources to obtain fuel on its own, as a last resort, an emergency fuel delivery of up to \$400 may be authorized. These households may also be prioritized for weatherization services.

A further Safety Net Assistance benefit of \$400 may be available to **vulnerable** CEAP deliverable fuel-heated households. Vulnerable households are those that include members who are elderly, disabled, or under the age of 6. An additional risk assessment determination will not be necessary for these cases.

Safety Net Assistance benefits are not available for CHAP-eligible households.

The only sure way of knowing whether a household is eligible is to apply. Clients may call 2-1-1 Infoline to inquire about the intake site nearest to their residence. Or, they may contact the Community Action Agency in the town where they live to inquire about what they would need to bring to the appointment. Applicants must apply in person. However, efforts will be made to accommodate homebound applicants.

If there are questions on the Energy Assistance Program, clients should please call 2-1-1 Infoline, or our office at 1-800-842-1132. We encourage clients to check our web site at: www.ct.gov/staywarm.

Employer Recognition Breakfast

By Dee White, DSS

On September 27, 2006, the 14th Annual Employer Recognition Breakfast, sponsored by the Department of Social Services' Aging Services Division and The American Legion, was held at the Rocky Hill Marriot Hotels & Resorts.

This event recognizes Connecticut's outstanding employers that have consistently demonstrated a strong commitment to older workers through their recruitment, hiring, training, and retention practices. The Senior Community Service Employment Program's (SCSEP) staff provided The American Legion with nominees for "Outstanding Employer" awards.

For 2006, the award for The American Legion's prestigious designation of "Employer of the Year" was presented to the Community Action Agency of New Haven.

The following employers were honored and received "Outstanding Employer" awards.

- ABCD Inc., Bridgeport CT
- School House Apartments, New Canaan, CT
- West Haven Child Development Center, West Haven, CT
- Rechbind Furs, New Milford, CT
- Edward E. Sullivan Center, Torrington, CT
- Forty South Main Apartments, Norwalk, CT
- New Haven Department of Parks, Recreation, and Trees

Also, Aging Services Division presented special recognition awards to Mrs. Effat Naficy of the Area Agency on Aging of South Central CT and Mr. Daniel Krevolin of the Community Action Agency of New Haven for their outstanding performance in administering the Senior Community Service Employment Program in the South Central region. Aging Services Division also honored and presented an award to the Connecticut Outstanding Older Worker, Mr. Stanley Israelite of Norwich, CT

Connecticut's 2006 Outstanding Older Worker

From Experience Works Press Release, August 8, 2006

Stanley Israelite, 81, Development Specialist for the Norwich Community Development Corporation (NCDC) in Norwich, CT will be honored in Washington, D.C. as part of the Experience Works Prime Time Awards Program. Experience Works, the nation's largest provider of training and employment services for older workers, recognizes outstanding older workers from all 50 states, the District of Columbia and Puerto Rico.

The Prime Time Awards Program is the only national program that honors the contributions of working seniors each year. Now in its ninth year, the Prime Time Awards Program seeks to remove barriers to employment and lessen negative stereotypes about older workers.

Stanley Israelite's motto is "Don't Forget the People" and he has lived his motto throughout his very successful career in public service. His career includes serving 10 years as Executive Director of the Norwich Chamber of Commerce and being named "Citizen of the Decade" upon his departure. Prior to leaving the Chamber of Commerce, Stanley led the effort to found the Norwich Business Park now named in his honor. The development of the Business Park prompted Stanley's involvement in establishing the Norwich Community Development Corporation. Then in 1974, a meeting with the newly elected State Representative Christopher J. Dodd, led to 25 years of federal service for the now Senator Dodd. Upon the conclusion of his federal service Stanley returned to the NCDC as a Development Specialist where he continues to help people stating, "If you work towards taking care of the people in your community, and in your state, you can't go wrong."

Senator Dodd stated that one of his most vivid memories of Stanley was “the day Stanley agreed to run my congressional office. He gave up a great job to help a 30 year old congressman get on his feet.”

“As our population continues to age, it is becoming more important than ever that businesses look to older workers to fill critical jobs,” said Sharon Zimmerman, regional director of Experience Works. “Our Prime Time Awards Program showcases the talents of our nation’s seniors and helps us demonstrate that ability is truly ageless.”

Stanley will join honorees from every state in America, in Washington D.C. October 3rd-6th, 2006. During this time, Experience Works will provide the honorees and their families with a variety of exciting opportunities, including a chance to meet and be photographed with their Senators and Representatives, and attend an awards banquet at the world class Willard International Resort Hotel.

Established in 1965, Experience Works is a charitable, community based organization focused on meeting the training and employment needs of low-income seniors. Experience Works is supported by individual donations, foundations, and grants. Information about Experience Works and its programs can be found at www.experienceworks.org.

Accreditation – It’s Catching On!

By Dianne Stone, Newington Senior and Disabled Center

Wallingford Senior Center, always a happening place, was especially crowded on September 19th as people gathered to celebrate achieving National Accreditation. With Newington, Bloomfield, Groton, and Granby, the State now boasts 5 accredited Centers. There are at least two more Centers in the process and several more are seriously considering starting.

Why are they doing it? By now you’ve probably heard that National Accreditation demonstrates that a senior center is operating at the highest level, complying with standards of excellence as developed by the National Institute of Senior Centers. Centers across the nation report that this seal of approval has opened doors to funding, recognition, increased participation and community involvement.

Centers also report that the greatest value in the accreditation process is the process itself. The senior center self-assessment is a community-wide process resulting in increased awareness of the contribution the senior Center is making to the lives of older adults and their families. Participation in the process leads to a sense of pride and empowerment for both staff members and senior center participants. The concept of meeting national standards for operation improves the community's image of the senior center and its work. For some, the idea that senior centers function to baby-sit seniors ultimately gives way to the realization that senior centers provide high-quality programs based on actual standards. There is no Center that is too small or too big to participate.

For more information on Senior Center Accreditation contact Dianne Stone (dstone@ci.newington.ct.us) at (860) 665-8768 or the National Accreditation Coordinator at 1-888-508-6472.

CONNECTICUT
COMMISSION
ON  AGING

ADVOCATING FOR CONNECTICUT'S OLDER ADULT



State Launches First Long-Term Care Needs Assessment in 20 Years By Robert Norton, CCOA

A comprehensive new study that will serve as a roadmap for improving Connecticut's long-term care system for older adults and persons with disabilities is under way.

The Connecticut General Assembly this year authorized the needs assessment in consultation with the Connecticut Commission on Aging, Long-Term Care Advisory Council and Long-Term Care Planning Committee. A preliminary report is scheduled for completion in January.

The statewide assessment is being carried out by the Center on Aging, UConn Health Center, which is conducting mail, telephone, internet and in-person surveys of approximately 20,000 residents and providers of long-term care services and supports. It is also reviewing Connecticut-specific and national data.

Anyone wishing to participate in the survey should contact Irene Reed at the UConn Health Center at (860)-679-2089 or via email at ireed@uchc.edu.

The following are the assessment's major goals:

- Document the public and private inventory of long-term care services and supports currently being provided in Connecticut.
- Assess which segments of the population are receiving services.
- Project the number of persons who will require long-term care services over the next 30 years.
- Document the needs, desires and expectations of Connecticut's residents as they anticipate their need for long-term care services in the future for their families and themselves.

- Recommend changes to existing programs and services and prospective new programs and services to better serve residents and families needing long-term care.

The effort to provide care and services that help people live as independently as possible and where they are most comfortable--a goal shared by the Aging Services Division--also makes excellent fiscal sense. The Connecticut Medicaid program alone spends about \$2 billion annually on long-term care services. According to the state's 2004 Long-Term Care Plan, 69 percent is spent on institutional care and 31 percent on home and community care.

“Quality-of-life and fiscally responsible improvements in the long-term care system become even more necessary—and the opportunities for dramatic results more profound—as Connecticut’s one million baby boomers age,” said Commission on Aging Executive Director Julia Evans Starr.

This year the oldest of the nation’s 78 million baby boomers turn 60—about 7,920 each day, in fact, or about 330 per hour. More than 600,000 Connecticut residents are 60 or older and it is estimated that when the baby boomers begin turning 65, one in five Americans will be 65 or older. The size of the older population is expected to double over the next 30 years, growing to 70 million by 2030.

“As the range of options expands, and our knowledge of providing quality care improves, we can look to a brighter future for people of all ages who need long-term care,” said Evans Starr.

Did You Know?

Home Health Compare

From nasua.org

Information on all Medicare certified home health agencies is available on the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS) website at www.medicare.gov/HHCompare. Like Nursing Home Compare, **Home Health Compare** is designed to empower consumers to make more informed decisions regarding their health care and to encourage providers to improve the quality of care.

Home Health Compare provides information about each Medicare certified home health agency, including a set of 10 quality measures and why each measure is important for consumers to examine:

Three measures related to improvement in getting around:

 % of patients who get better at walking or moving around

 % of patients who get better at getting in and out of bed

 % of patients who have less pain when moving around

- Four measures related to activities of daily living:
- % of patients whose bladder control improves
 - % of patients who get better at bathing
 - % of patients who get better at taking their medicines correctly (by mouth)
 - % of patients who are short of breath less often (improvement in Dyspnea)
- One measure about after home health care ends:
- % of patients who stay at home after an episode of home health care ends
- Two measures related to patient medical emergencies
- % of patients who had to be admitted to the hospital
 - % of patients who need urgent, unplanned medical care.

The quality measures are taken from a larger data set --- the Outcome Assessment Information Set (OASIS) --- and are updated quarterly. The website directs consumers on how to use the quality measures to compare home health agencies and provides links to other helpful resources. Consumers can search for home health agencies by state, county and zip code. The information is also available in Spanish. As states continue their efforts to transition nursing home residents back to the community and help others remain living at home keep this tool in mind when assisting persons who are looking for home health care options.

If you have any questions please contact Mark Miller at (202) 898-2578 or via email: mmiller@nasua.org.

Connecticut Guide to Emergency Preparedness Available

Governor Rell has announced the publication of the Connecticut Guide to Emergency Preparedness, a document designed to help prepare for a wide variety of emergencies. According to J. Robert Galvin, M.D., M.P.H., the Commissioner of the department of Public Health, and James Thomas, the Commissioner of the Department of Emergency Management and Homeland Security: “While we can’t control natural disasters, emergencies or unexpected attacks, we can be prepared, and we can protect ourselves and our families. In this guide, you’ll learn some of the fundamentals of being prepared if an emergency strikes, including:

- The different types of emergencies that may affect you and your community, how you’ll be notified of an event and what plans are in place to deal with those events.
- How to create an emergency plan.
- How to prepare an emergency kit.
- How Connecticut’s emergency broadcast warning system is utilized in the event of an emergency.
- Inside (this guide) you will find steps you and your family can take now to prepare for a wide variety of emergencies. After reading this guide, create a family emergency plan and consider putting together an emergency supply kit. Then save this guide- put it somewhere accessible for you and your family.”

To receive a copy of this guide, visit www.dph.state.ct.us and click on the link for Emergency Preparedness, or call (860) 509-7270.

Additional Resources Include:

- Connecticut Department of Emergency Management & Homeland Security www.ct.gov/demhs (860) 566-3180
- Connecticut Department of Public Health www.dph.state.ct.us/ready.htm (860) 509-8000
- Connecticut Poison Control Center 1-800-222-1222
- Infoline 2-1-1
- Red Cross www.redcross.org 1-877-287-3327
- Tip Lines (Report Suspicious terrorist activities) 1-866-457-8477, (203) 777-6311
- The Office of Protection and Advocacy www.ct.gov/opapd

Coming Events

November 20, 2006

The Consultation Center, in cooperation with the Connecticut Mental Health Center Department of Psychiatry, and Yale University School of Medicine presents:

Caregiving: An informational Series for Caregivers

Session Two: Caregiving: Dealing with Difficult Issues

The Consultation Center

New Haven, CT

6-7pm

\$25 per session (All five sessions in the series cost \$110 per person)

For more information, call Lisa Flaherty at (203) 789-7645 or lisa.Flaherty@yale.edu.

November 27, 2006

The Consultation Center, in cooperation with the Connecticut Mental Health Center Department of Psychiatry, and Yale University School of Medicine presents:

Caregiving: An informational Series for Caregivers

Session Three: Providing Care in Your Home

The Consultation Center

New Haven, CT

6-7pm

\$25 per session (All five sessions in the series cost \$110 per person)

For more information, call Lisa Flaherty at (203) 789-7645 or lisa.Flaherty@yale.edu.

November 28, 2006

AARP CT, the CT Commission on Children, and Generations United Present:

Helping Grandparents Raise Healthy, Hopeful Children

The Legislative Office Building, Room 2C

Hartford, CT

9:00am to noon

This event is free- Complimentary lunch, resource booths and tours of the Capitol
To register, call AARP CT at (860) 548-3163

November 29, 2006

The Alzheimer's Resource Center Presents:
Educational Series: Long Term Care Insurance
Alzheimer's Resource Center
1261 South Main Street
Plantsville, CT
6:00pm
To register, please contact Nancy Leonard at (860) 628-3002

December 4, 2006

The Consultation Center, in cooperation with the Connecticut Mental Health Center
Department of Psychiatry, and Yale University School of Medicine presents:
Caregiving: An informational Series for Caregivers
Session Four: Home way From Home: Finding Alternatives
The Consultation Center
New Haven, CT
6-7pm
\$25 per session (All five sessions in the series cost \$110 per person)
For more information, call Lisa Flaherty at (203) 789-7645 or lisa.Flaherty@yale.edu.

December 11, 2006

The Consultation Center, in cooperation with the Connecticut Mental Health Center
Department of Psychiatry, and Yale University School of Medicine presents:
Caregiving: An informational Series for Caregivers
Session Five: Managing Across the Miles: Long Distance Caregiving
The Consultation Center
New Haven, CT
6-7pm
\$25 per session (All five sessions in the series cost \$110 per person)
For more information, call Lisa Flaherty at (203) 789-7645 or lisa.Flaherty@yale.edu.

Resources

Websites

The Aging Services Division of DSS
www.ct.gov/agingservices

The Connecticut Association of Area Agencies on Aging
www.ctagenciesonaging.org

The Connecticut Commission on Aging
www.cga.ct.gov/coa

Long Term Care Services and Supports Information
www.ct.gov/longtermcare

DSS Energy Services
www.ct.gov/staywarm

The CT Partnership for Long-Term Care
www.Ctpartnership.org

The Connecticut Elder Law Newsletter
www.CTElderLaw.org

The Center for Medicare Advocacy
www.medicareadvocacy.org

The NCOA Benefits Checkup Eligibility Screening System
www.benefitscheckup.org

The ConnPACE Program
www.ConnPACE.com

The American Federation for Aging Research (AFAR)
www.infoaging.org

AARP
www.AARP.org

The Administration on Aging
www.aoa.dhs.gov

The Alzheimer's Association
www.alz.org

The Alzheimer's Association, Connecticut Chapter
www.alzct.org

National Family Caregivers
www.nfcacares.org

Today's Caregiver
www.Caregiver.com

The National Council on Aging



www.ncoa.org

The Seniors and The Law Program

www.jud.state.ct.us

The Better Choice

www.dmhas.state.ct.us

The CT Council on Problem Gambling

www.ccp.org

DSS Phone Numbers

Aging Services	1-866-218-6631	(860) 424-5274
CADAP Program (CT Aids Drug Assistance Program)	1-800-233-2503	
CT Partnership for Long-Term Care	1-800-547-3443	(860) 424-4943
Child Care	1-800-811-6141	(860) 424-5645
ConnPACE	1-800-423-5026	
CHOICES Program	1-800-994-9422	
Connecticut Commission on Aging		(860) 240-5202
Energy Services	1-800-842-1132	
Fraud Hotline	1-800-842-2155	(860) 424-4934
General Assistance	1-800-842-2159	(860) 424-5250
Home Care Program	1-800-445-5394	(860) 424-4904
Katie Beckett Waiver	1-800-445-5394	(860) 424-4904
Medical Transportation: South Central/Southwestern CT	1-888-248-9895	
North Central/Eastern/Western	1-888-743-3112	
PASARR Pre-Admission Screening and Annual	1-800-445-5394	(860) 424-4904

Resident Review

CT Child Support Call Center	1-800-228-5437	
Public Information	1-800-842-1508	(860) 424-4908
Rehabilitation Services	1-800-537-2549	(860) 424-4844
	TDD/TTY	(860) 424-4839
Self-Directed Care	1-800-445-5394	(860) 424-4904
Support Payment Information	1-888-233-7223	
TDD/TTY	1-800-842-4524	(860) 424-4975