



Florida Association of
Aging Services Providers

Florida Association of Aging Services Providers e-Newsletter

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Nancy Green-Irwin, Friendship Centers

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Message from the President

by Andrea Busada, Broward
County Elderly and Veterans
Services



Dear FASP Members:

As we enter the summer months, I'd like to encourage you to join us at the 2016 Florida Conference on Aging - Force of the Future August 8-10 in Orlando. It's wonderful to be able to connect with aging professionals throughout the state at this important event each year. There will be discussion surrounding the future of the aging network, and I know your presence will add value to the discussion. See you in Orlando!

Sincerely,
Andrea Busada

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Real Possibilities in

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Rethinking Care by Nancy Green-Irwin

In a recent healthcare magazine, I saw an article with a bold statement – **“Our nation’s aging population calls for radical changes in care!”** Reading on about “rethinking care”, I was proud to see something we already know; Florida is headed in the right direction and our lead agencies and aging services providers have been doing it for a long time.

The article first discussed milestone moments including the 50 years of Medicare, its expansion to the disabled in 1972 and Medicare Advantage Plans coming on board in 2003. All fantastic changes but Florida’s been talking about and doing much more in the last 50 years. Their suggestions for better care included:

1. Seniors should not be grouped together as “older Americans”. Seniors at our centers span from age 60 to age 100. That’s 40 years. Do we treat a 2-year-old toddler the same as a high school graduate? Of course not. Our sites serve cold sandwiches for those who just came from working out to a hot meal to the more traditional “Greatest Generation” member.
2. Seniors overwhelmingly want to remain in their homes and services should be provided there. Our state has 60,000+ waiting desperately to be served in their own homes and our agencies are finding faster and better ways every day to do just that - with the help of volunteers and other cost effective, innovative community partner development and constant outreach to our legislators.
3. There is a caregiver crisis growing each and every day which is taking its toll. Among other caregiver programs, Florida agencies have developed thriving Adult Day Services, RELIEF Volunteer Respite Programs and Caregiver Resource Centers to relieve some of the burden so caregivers can become knowledgeable about where to turn and families can remain together with loved ones.
4. Finally, the article suggests that seniors are ending up in emergency rooms because better care coordination options are needed. Many of our centers have Volunteer Physicians Clinics providing care at no or very low cost to those who can’t even cover their Medicare Co-pay. In addition, effective care transitions and services are in place in our communities so that the frail seniors who are discharged, don’t keep repeating hospital stays.



Whenever we get frustrated that we still have a long way to go in Florida – we should all smile and pat ourselves on the back because we are innovators that have been ahead of the curve providing quality care for many of the large numbers of seniors who need us.

Depression in the Elderly

As we know, humans are social beings and - as we age – we also know that there is less opportunity to be as involved and get that socialization. Retirement, living far from family, poor health, death of a spouse, or an inability to drive or have reliable transportation are all factors that contribute to loss of our social support network. As we become less involved, we spend many hours alone and television and web surfing are not substitutes for human contact. One of the many consequences of this aloneness is depression. And although it is a term frequently used, it is not frequently understood.

Depression is more than just feeling sad or blue. It is a common but serious mood disorder that needs treatment. It causes severe symptoms that affect how we feel, think, and handle daily activities, such as sleeping, eating, or working. With depression, one has trouble with daily life for weeks at a time. Doctors call this condition depressive disorder or clinical depression. Depression is a real illness. It is not a sign of a person's weakness or a character flaw. One cannot "snap out of" clinical depression. Most people who experience depression need treatment to get better.

Not a Normal Part of Aging – Depression is a common problem among older adults, but it is NOT a normal part of aging. In fact, studies show that older adults typically feel satisfied with their lives, despite having more illnesses or physical problems. Significant life changes as we age may cause feelings of uneasiness, stress, and sadness. After a period of adjustment, older adults typically regain their emotional balance but others may not bounce back as easily.

Symptoms May Be Hard To Recognize – Sometimes, it is difficult to detect because individuals have different symptoms. For some who have depression, sadness may not be exhibited or they may not be willing to talk about their feelings. Therefore, doctors may not recognize a patient has depression. The causes and risk factors differ from person to person. Genes, personal history of depression, brain chemistry, and stress can all contribute to depression.

Common Symptoms – There are many symptoms associated with depression, but they vary by individual. If an elderly person has several of these symptoms for more than two weeks, he/she may be depressed.

- Persistent sadness, feeling hopeless

- Pessimistic, irritable, restless, worthless, helpless

- Loss of interest in once pleasurable activities

- Decreased energy or fatigue, moving or speaking more slowly recently

- Increased difficulty concentrating, remembering, making decisions, sleeping, or oversleeping

- Eating more or less than usual, unexplained weight gain or loss

- Thoughts of death or suicide expressed

- New aches or pains, headaches, cramps, or digestive problems without physical cause

- Frequent crying

Treatments for Depression - As with many illnesses, early treatment is more effective and reduces the chance of recurrence. It is important to remember that a person with depression cannot simply "get over it." Treatment choices differ, and sometimes it is a matter of finding what works. The most common treats for depression are medication and psychotherapy.

Antidepressants – It usually 2-4 weeks for antidepressant medications to work, seeing an improvement in symptoms such as sleep, appetite, concentration, and mood swings. Though symptoms may subside, it is always important to continue medications unless otherwise instructed by a medical professional. Stopping them abruptly can cause withdrawal symptoms, and deeper depression than before. Some common side effects: nausea and vomiting, weight gain, diarrhea, sleepiness, and sexual problems. However, most antidepressants are generally safe. Those taking antidepressants should be watched closely, especially during the first few weeks. For older adults who are already taking several medications for other conditions, it is important to talk with a doctor about any adverse drug interactions that may occur while taking antidepressants.

Herbal and Natural Products – Though some herbal medicines like St. John’s wort have been advertised as effective for depression, this has not been approved by the FDA for depression and there are serious concerns about its safety and effectiveness. Other natural products sold as dietary supplements, including omega-3 fatty acids and S-adenosylmethionine (SAME) are being studied, but have not been proven safe and effective either. One’s health care provider should be consulted before starting any dietary supplements because they can cause medical problems if not used correctly or if used in large amounts, and some may interact with other medications.

If depression is suspected, discussion with the elder person's healthcare provider is recommended either by the individual or person responsible for care. Always get immediate help for anyone who expresses thoughts of suicide. Reach out to the healthcare provider, call 911, or go to the nearest emergency room. In addition, the

Depression is a serious disease, and can be especially so for older adults. For those who have fewer people in their social network, it is especially critical that there is someone in frequent contact with them to recognize changes in mood or behavior. Sometimes that is a family member or neighbor, but often it is someone in the aging network who assists them in the home: a home health aide, a nurse, a delivery meal driver, a telephone wellness operator, etc. who recognizes changes that need to be addressed. It is one of the many ways providers help keep the elderly safe and living dependently.

This Department of Health and Human Services article is covered under US law - *Title 17 USC §105, Subject matter of copyright: United States Government works. 17 U.S.C. § 101 - Definitions*: "A "work of the United States Government" is a work prepared by an officer or employee of the United States Government as part of that person's official duties." Thus, only works solely created by US Federal Government employees, in the course of that employment, are free of copyright.

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Coping with Hearing Loss and the Consequences of Ignoring It



New Technologically Advanced Products Fill in the Gaps When Hearing Aids Are Not the Total Solution by Michele Ahlman

According to the National Council on Aging, over 30 million people in the United States have hearing loss, but this number is rapidly reaching epidemic proportions as the baby boomer generation, who lived in an ever increasing sound polluted environment, are reaching senior status.

The Council also discovered those with untreated hearing loss are more likely to report: - Depression - Worry and anxiety - Paranoia - Emotional turmoil - Social isolation - Insecurity

Those with hearing loss are also less likely to participate and organize social activities, compared with those who wear hearing aids. It proves that hearing loss is definitely not a harmless condition.

Seniors whose hearing loss is treated often report benefits that include: - Better relationships with their families - Higher self-esteem - Greatly improved mental health - Greater independence and security.

Hearing aids are not the only solution for people living with hearing loss. The particular lifestyle situations for which a hearing aid may not be the best solution for optimal hearing are: - Getting out of bed on time - Talking on the telephone - Listening to TV or the radio - Hearing every word of the movie, play, or concert - Dinner with friends, and meetings

Sometimes hearing aids do not completely screen out background noise, or work well with telephones. And many people with hearing loss do not want to wear the powerful, cumbersome outside-of-the-ear aid, while others refuse to believe that they need to wear a hearing aid at all. (Even former President Reagan refused to be photographed putting in his hearing aid.)

Many are uninformed and have unrealistic expectations when purchasing a hearing aid. So they return it, and continue to live with untreated hearing loss, which causes a downward spiral of depression. The less we hear, the harder it gets to communicate. Hence, we begin to withdraw from others. As a result, we become more frustrated and lonely.

Luckily, we are living in the middle of an assistive hearing bonanza! There are now simple-to-use products, for use with or without a hearing aid, including ALDs (assistive listening devices, like binoculars for the ears) that begin to make solving hearing problems as simple and affordable as picking up new pair of glasses. These new products — affordable, innovative, simple and highly effective solutions for people with hearing loss — will allow you to continue to function independently and productively despite your communication challenges.

Finding the right devices is well worth the effort. Of course, there are no devices that will restore your hearing to what you may remember as normal, but by managing your communication needs you can improve your function level dramatically and retain or regain control of your life. You'll have the right tools to do the job.

Florida Telecommunications Relay, Inc. (FTRI) is a non profit 501(c) 3 organization that administers the Specialized Telecommunications Equipment Distribution Program for citizens of Florida who are Deaf, Hard of Hearing, Deaf/Blind and Speech Challenged. FTRI is also responsible for the education and promotion of the Florida Relay Service. For more information, visit www.ftri.org.

Hillsborough County: Providing Service to Older Adults with Innovative Solutions

According to the U. S. Department of Health and Human Services one's overall health is influenced by multiple factors, including a person's psychological, behavioral, and social well-being. Studies demonstrate an association between increased levels of social support and reduced risk for physical disease, mental illness, and mortality. Social support provided by others makes a person feel cared for, valued, and part of a community. Social support is critical for older adults who rely on family, friends, or organizations to assist them with daily activities, provide companionship, and care for their well-being.

For seniors living alone or with limited contact within the home, their isolation increases the risk of mortality. Loneliness negatively affects both physical and mental health. Feelings of loneliness contribute to cognitive decline and risk of dementia. Seniors who are socially isolated are more pessimistic about the future, and are at risk for depression. Isolation is linked to long-term illnesses, such as high blood pressure, diabetes, and heart disease.

According to Yang Claire Yang, a professor at the University of North Carolina (UNC) at Chapel Hill, via university news release regarding the university's study and analysis on social isolation, medical professionals and other health workers should redouble efforts to help the public understand how important strong social bonds are throughout our lives. For the study, the investigators analyzed data from four surveys of Americans who ranged from adolescents to seniors. First, they looked at social integration, social support and social strain. They then evaluated four indicators of health -- blood pressure, waist circumference, body mass index and systemic inflammation -- that are linked to heart disease, stroke, cancer and other diseases. In seniors, social isolation is more of a threat than diabetes in the development and control of high blood pressure, the study authors said.

With increased likelihood of long term illnesses, isolated seniors are also more likely to need long term, institutional care. Lonely people are more prone to self-neglect, exhibit unhealthy behavior, and are more vulnerable to elder abuse. For some, loss of a spouse and transportation challenges are also major contributors to their isolation. According to the AARP, "life expectancy exceeds safe driving expectancy after age 70 by about six years for men and 10 years for women." Yet, 41% of seniors do not feel that their community's transportation support is adequate, says the NCOA.

Since the issue of social isolation has such far-reaching consequences for citizens, it is being comprehensively addressed by Hillsborough County Government. The proposed solutions from Aging Services are in alignment with the County's mission of creating opportunities for community prosperity and specifically meet County Administrator, Mike Merrill's, objective for County departments to work collaboratively to identify and deliver high-value technology solutions. Aging Services was awarded approval to research and pilot two programs with older adults to combat senior isolation. The two initiatives are the *Interactive Silver Surfers Club* and *Safeguarding Seniors*.

The *Interactive Silver Surfers Club* will provide homebound, isolated Hillsborough County seniors with an opportunity to live active, connected, and meaningful lives through the use of online collaboration and video conferencing. This will allow virtual access to their families and friends, wellness activities, education, and programs which could ultimately reduce isolation and improve health and wellness outcomes. Through a Sole Partnership, Aging Services will purchase all-in-one computers for 25 seniors to participate in the pilot project. Aging Services has approached agencies in the country currently using this approach to explore subscribing to their original content. Hillsborough County would broadcast the purchased content at no

Continued from Page 6

cost to the citizen as well adding its own content. As the project builds, other Hillsborough County Departments will provide content as well. For example, Library Services, Cooperative Extension and the Parks & Recreation Department have content that offers a broad range of both general education and health education applicable to the senior population. The benefits are abundant: Engaging the citizen both mentally and physically at his/her own pace; choosing content to satisfy individual interests; and providing control of personal well-being. Those with physical limitations can select exercise classes or videos that allow them to participate in a safe and non-threatening environment, with no dependency on transportation services.

At the conclusion of the pilot project, Hillsborough County Aging Services' partner, the University of South Florida using doctoral students, will evaluate viability and effectiveness of the program to determine expansion of disengaged seniors served by Hillsborough County. It will be measured by program attendance and amount of peer interaction, and improvement of quality of life among the group as measure by surveys and focus groups. Lastly, the program will be evaluated on solution feasibility: Ease of use, cost, quantity and severity of issues reported, etc. Recommendations of continuation and/or expansion will be based on all post-pilot evaluations.

The *Safeguarding Seniors* project is designed to ensure seniors receive assistance with navigating the myriad of Hillsborough County services and programs. It will launch in phases. The first phase will introduce a cross-departmental collaboration that provides existing Aging Services clients faster access to resources that might be available in other county departments. Phase two will target senior citizens that reside in Hillsborough County but are not existing Aging Services clients. As employees from other departments in the county encounter a senior in the community that is need of county resources, a new referral will be generated to Aging Services and assistance will be provided to that senior. For example, the County's Pet Resources responding to an animal nuisance may observe a senior who cannot care for himself. This allows all County employees to be the eyes and ears of the community, and provide appropriate services when a person meets the eligibility for all services offered. Those who are in the homes and provide information will have HIPAA compliance training as well as proper background checks. In addition, the requests and responses will use a referral tool with tracking capability.

Over the last 20 years, the technological advancements have fueled an explosion in the ability to reach out to those most at risk. Aging Services is striving to make the technology work for our seniors, in working with partners to provide hardware, cultivate and develop content, and provide seniors with education and skills to participate in life-changing activities without ever leaving their homes. In addition, the technology has evolved by which we can share information with other departments, communicate rapidly, and connect citizens to other resources while diligently protecting their privacy. When the *Interactive Silver Surfers Club* and *Safeguarding Seniors* initiatives are implemented, Aging Services will enhance the ability to meet its mission to keep seniors living dependently for as long as possible.

AARP Legislative Voting Record



AARP Legislative Voting Record Gives Florida Voters A Way To Track Their Legislators' Actions in 2016 Session

Finding out how your state legislators voted in the 2016 Legislature just got easier with the release of AARP Florida's fifth annual Legislative Voting Record.

AARP Florida's 2016 voting record report contains detailed, vote-by-vote information on assisted living facility reform, guardianship proceedings, utilities regulation, and other important issues.

During the 2016 session, AARP alerted legislators that AARP would consider their votes on certain proposals to be key votes for the 2016 voting record. And because key legislative decisions often occur during the long process of legislative consideration of a bill, the voting record tracks legislative committees' actions and final House and Senate votes.

"In order to hold your state House or Senate member accountable, you need to know how they voted on key issues," AARP Florida State Director Jeff Johnson said. "AARP Florida's Legislative Voting Record makes it easy for voters to track legislators' decisions on key issues that matter most to them."

The Legislative Voting Record is unusual in that it captures not only final votes on legislation on the floors of the state House and Senate, but also includes detailed information on committee actions, including votes on important amendments. These details can be helpful in identifying where your legislator took action that may have helped or blocked a given piece of legislation from getting to final passage.

From the time a bill was selected for the 2016 voting record AARP Florida has informed legislators that it would track the members' votes at every stage of the legislative process.

The complete version of the 2016 voting record can be viewed here: www.aarp.org/flvotingrecord2016

A limited supply of published hard-copy versions will be distributed by AARP at the Florida Council on Aging conference Aug. 8-10.

Resources

IRS Releases 990 forms as Machine-Readable Data: [Click Here.](#)

Old and on the Street: The Graying of America's Homeless. [Click Here.](#)



Oral History Project Outreach: A Letter from DOEA Secretary Verghese



Rick Scott
Governor

Samuel P. Verghese
Secretary



June 14, 2016

Dear Friends:

With almost 5 million residents age 60 and older, Florida has the highest population percentage of seniors in the nation. At the Department of Elder Affairs, one of our goals is to honor and celebrate our elders. We do that not just through our services and by promoting positive views of aging overall, but also through special initiatives and events.

We have shared many inspirational stories of older Floridians through the Department's newspaper, Elder Update, and now we are looking to expand on that through an oral history project. We will be hosting a podcast, called Living the Legacy, where we will interview Florida elders and share their life experiences, contributions, and wisdom. We have already conducted interviews with some outstanding people with memorable experiences, including a Holocaust survivor and a General with the U.S. Marine Corps who was at Iwo Jima.

On behalf of the Department, I would like to ask for your assistance in identifying some of these individuals. You may know of an outstanding elder who volunteers all of their time or of a veteran with a unique story. Maybe there is a resident of a local facility who has an inspirational story to tell. We would love the opportunity to talk with these individuals. If you have anyone that you think would be a good fit for Living the Legacy, please contact Rick Burnham of my staff at (850) 414-2353 or burnhamr@elderaffairs.org or consider sharing this request with those in your network.

Thank you for your consideration and assistance as we continue to honor Florida's elders.

Sincerely,

Samuel P. Verghese

Secretary

FASP is on Facebook - Are You?



Do you or does your organization have a Facebook or Twitter account?
We would love to “like” “Friend” and/or “follow” you too.

FASP - Florida Association of Aging Services Providers Facebook page

<http://www.facebook.com/home.php?#!/pages/FASP-Florida-Association-of-Aging-Services-Providers/186392068069967>

FASP - Florida Association of Aging Services Providers Twitter

<http://twitter.com/1FASP>



DOEA - Florida Department of Elder Affairs Facebook page

<http://www.facebook.com/pages/Florida-Department-of-Elder-Affairs/128604923878650?sk=wall>

FCOA - Florida Council on Aging Facebook page

<http://www.facebook.com/home.php?#!/pages/Florida-Council-on-Aging/74320166787>

FCOA - Florida Council on Aging Twitter

<http://twitter.com/#!/FCOA1>



Unexpected Therapy Animal: Llamas



Erin McLeod of Senior Friendship Centers recently submitted these pictures of seniors interacting with some adorable Llamas.



Past Sponsors



www.seniorresourceassociation.org/



www.marionseniorservices.org/



www.youragingresourcecenter.org/



www.councilonagingmartin.org/



www.agingresources.org/



Real Possibilities

<http://www.aarp.org>



Council on Aging
of St. Lucie, Inc.

<http://www.coasl.com>



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<http://www.bmbinc.com>

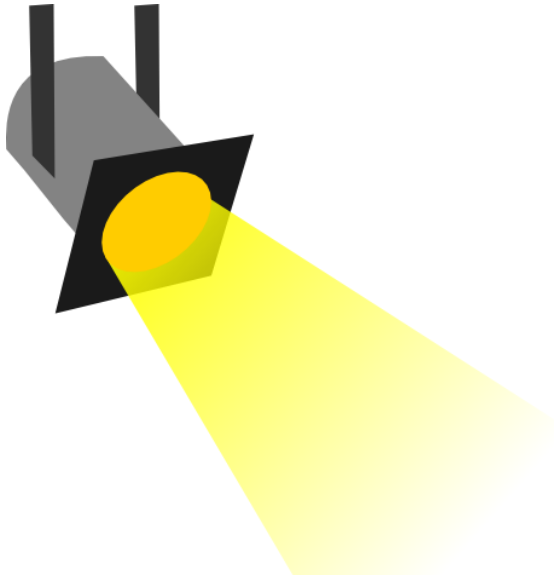


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Real Possibilities in

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www.aarp.org/fl



www.hillsboroughcounty.org/aging/



www.friendshipcenters.org

The intent of the FASP Newsletter is to keep you informed about program updates and information relating to aging services providers. If you have any comments about the newsletter, suggestions on ways to improve it and/or items you would like included, please contact FASP by e-mail at moreinfo@fasp.net or by phone at (850) 222-3524.

FASP's Mission: Supporting older adults and the providers that serve them through information, connection, and resources.



July 2016

July 21-23, 2016: Ft. Lauderdale, FL. Florida State Guardianship Association Conference. <https://www.floridaguardians.com/education/conference/>

July 30-31, 2016: Orlando, FL. Florida Geriatric Society Conference. <http://www.floridageriatricsociety.org/annual.html>

August 2016

August 8-10: Orlando, FL 2016 Florida Conference on Aging - Force of the Future. www.fcoa.org