

Spotlight on Community Living

Wednesday, December 4, 2013 *Serving D.C. residents who are age 18+ with a disability or age 60+ and their caregivers* Vol 2, No 2



Executive Director's Message

John M. Thompson, Ph.D., FAAMA, D.C. Office on Aging

In this month's edition of the **Spotlight on Community Living**, I would like to share some exciting news about the D.C. Office on Aging's (DCOA) Nursing Home Transition Program, which was started on April 8, 2013 with new funding from Mayor Vincent C. Gray. This program, which is important to me both personally and professionally, is designed to assist nursing home residents to return to the community. During the very short time since the program's inception, the agency has been able to touch many lives across the District of Columbia and neighboring jurisdictions.

I mentioned that this program is personal to me as I faced a situation for a couple of years when my elderly cousin, who suffered a stroke, remained in a nursing home with no one advocating for her return home. It appeared that my cousin had all odds working against her. The Area Agency on Aging in her North Carolina hometown, which is equivalent to the functions of the Office on Aging here in the District of Columbia, did not take a strong interest in assisting my cousin with transitioning from an institution. The

nursing home was receiving payment from my cousin every month and was not working to discharge her. Lastly, my cousin had no knowledge about home and community-based services and how she could receive quality care at home and save over \$40,000 of her retirement each year as compared to what she was paying to the nursing home. Her ordeal lasted well over two years in an institution that prevented her from experiencing Thanksgiving and Christmas in the comfort of her home where she enjoyed cooking, baking, and spending quality time with family and friends for decades. However, as a result of our persistence and advocacy, I am glad to report that my cousin was able to spend this past Thanksgiving at home!

The same approach that I used to help my cousin to return home is what we do in the District of Columbia through our Nursing Home Transition Program. Through this service, my colleagues visit nursing homes across the District of Columbia, and in other jurisdictions, meeting with residents who are interested and able to return home. After identifying these

individuals, we work closely with the nursing home staff, sister District governmental agencies, and community-based providers to ensure that we locate housing, home and community-based services, and other resources that will help a discharged nursing home resident return to the community. As this is a new challenge for those who have become accustomed to nursing home living for an extensive period of time, our transition coordinators work closely with each individual in ensuring their success during and after transition. Success for the agency is not only discharging the person, but ensuring that they remain in the community and experience quality and productive living.

To date, I am excited to report that our agency has been successful in assisting 57 nursing home residents return to the familiar surroundings of their communities. Some of these individuals are seniors, while others are not quite at the age of 60. In reviewing the data, the agency learned that the average length of stay for these citizens is approximately three and a half years. These are not typical residents whose

nursing home stays were for only short term rehabilitation. Additional data reveal that DCOA's assisted discharges have taken as little as six days.

Do you know of someone who is in a nursing home, but would like to return to the community? If they are a District resident living in a D.C. nursing home or in a neighboring jurisdiction and desire to return to their homes, we would like to hear from you. In this season of giving, why don't you give them the gift that they so desire by telling them about our program and calling us so that we can visit them in the nursing home. Our team will work swiftly at beginning the transition process if they are ideal candidates for returning to the community. Please contact Dr. Chantelle Teasdell, associate director of the DCOA's Aging and Disability Resource Center, at 202-724-5622 or chantelle.teasdell@dc.gov for more information about the program or to make a referral. ~

DISTRICT SENIOR COMPETES IN NATIONAL COMPETITION

Ms. Senior D.C. **Nancy A. Berry** was one of 34 contestants 60 years of age or older to compete in the Ms. Senior America Pageant held at the Resorts Hotel in Atlantic City, NJ. Ms. Senior D.C. performed a jazz dance to "Sweet Georgia Brown" from the play *Bubbling Brown Sugar*. Berry



also talked about a "Plan B" as part of her philosophy during the evening gown and philosophy of life segment of the competition. Ms. Senior America Carolyn Corlew from Tennessee was crowned the winner of the competition.

First Runner-up was Ms. New Jersey Senior America, Second Runner-up was Ms. Nevada Senior America. Ms. Senior America Pageant contestants are judged on a personal interview with a panel of judges, their philosophy of life, talent and evening gown presentations. A complete list and information is located at senioramerica.org.

Congratulations also to Shirley Rivens Smith, Ms. Senior DC 2009 who was appointed Parliamentarian for the National Senior America Alumni Organization during the pageant activities. ~

DC HEALTH LINK

DC Health Link, in partnership with DC Public Library, has opened two new health insurance enrollment centers, one in downtown DC and the other in Ward 7. At each enrollment center, trained experts – known as DC Health Link Assistants – and licensed health insurance brokers



will be on-hand to answer questions and guide people through the process of obtaining health insurance.

- DC Health Link Enrollment Center at the Martin Luther King Jr. Memorial Library, 901 G St. NW, will operate Monday-Wednesday, 10:30 am – 8:00 pm, Thursday-

Friday, 10:30 am – 1:00 pm and Saturday, 10:30 am – 4:30 pm.

- DC Health Link Enrollment Center at Deanwood Library and Recreation Center, 1350 49 St NE, will operate Monday and Wednesday, 10:30 am – 4:30 pm, Tuesday and Thursday, 2:00-8:00 pm,

and Friday and Saturday, 10:30 am – 4:30 pm. The Enrollment Centers at both libraries will be open from November 2013 until March 31, 2014.

For more information, visit www.DCHealthLink.com or call the toll-free hotline 1-855-532-5465. ~



COMMUNITY EVENTS CALENDAR

DECEMBER

4th • 11 am

Model Cities will hold a holiday bazaar at 1901 Everts St. NE. For more information, call 202-635-1900.

11th • 10 am to 2 pm

The Bernice Elizabeth Fonteneau Senior Wellness Center will hold a community health and informational fair. The center is located at 3531 Georgia Ave. NW. For more information, call 202-727-0338.

11th • 10:30 am

Model Cities Senior Wellness Center will host a community outreach health fair sponsored by Verizon. Model Cities is located at 1901 Everts St. NE. For more information, call 202-635-1900.

13th • 11 am

Seabury Resources for Aging Ward 5 will distribute toys to the Second New St. Paul Day Care Center, 2400 Franklin St. NE. For more information, call Vivian Grayton at 202-529-8701.

15th to 17th

Model Cities hosts a "Christmas in the Cities" trip to see the Rockettes in New York and a Christmas show in Atlantic City. The trip departs on Dec. 15 at 7:45 am. There is a \$246 donation for the trip. For more information, call 202-635-1900.

17th • 2 pm

Seabury Resources for Aging Ward 5 will hold its holiday open house at 2900 Newton St. NE. For reservations, call Vivian Grayton at 202-529-8701.

18th • 1 to 3 pm

Attend a DCOA sponsored community health and wellness fair at St. Mary's Court apartments, 725 24th St. NW. For more information, call 202-223-5712.

19th • 10 am to 2 pm

DCOA will hold a community health and wellness fair Model Cities Senior Wellness Center. Model Cities is located at 1901 Everts St. NE. For more information, call 202-635-1900.



THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA STATE PLAN ON ALZHEIMER'S DISEASE

The D.C. Office on Aging (DCOA) recently released the District's first State Plan confronting Alzheimer's disease. According to the Alzheimer's Association, 9 percent of seniors living in the District have the disease.

The District of Columbia State Plan on Alzheimer's Disease seeks to set measurable goals to help improve the lives of District residents living with this disease and reduce the burden on caregivers and their families.

The plan engages District government agencies, federal partners, the private sector, and non-profits to make Alzheimer's disease a priority for the city. Additionally, the plan outlines several goals and inclusive strategies to enhance care and support for individuals suffering from Alzheimer's. These goals include:

- Developing comprehensive research and data;
- Enhancing quality care for seniors diagnosed with Alzheimer's disease;
- Creating a robust public awareness campaign to increase awareness about Alzheimer's disease throughout the District; and
- Improving training and workforce development.

To review the complete plan, visit www.dcoa.dc.gov. ~

DCOA PARTNERS WITH OUC TO MAKE SENIORS MORE AWARE OF SMART911

DCOA and the **Office of Unified Communications (OUC)** continue their campaign to make more seniors aware of Smart911, the safety profile that provides first responders information to better assist callers when responding to emergencies. Smart911 is provided free of charge to all residents of the District of Columbia.

The DCOA has partnered with the OUC to present these presentations citywide in an effort to keep District seniors safe and more prepared for emergencies should they occur. During the presentations, seniors are also provided more information on the Office on Aging provided programs and services and those of the Office of Unified Communications.

If you have a church group, an organization, residence building or other entity that is interested in hosting a presentation, call 202-727-8364 or email darlene.nowlin@dc.gov to sign up today! Visit smart911.org for more information. ~

DISTRICT'S HYPOTHERMIA WATCH FOR 2014

Call the hotline when you see a homeless person who may be impacted by extreme temperatures. The Hypothermia Hotline, 1 (800) 535-7252, is operated by the United Planning Organization (UPO). ~

DCOA JOB ANNOUNCEMENT

The D.C. Department of Human Resources has posted **Job #22575 Supervisory Public Health Analyst for the D.C. Office on Aging**. Located within the Aging and Disability Resource Center (ADRC) this position is responsible for participating in the overall management of the ADRC under the general supervision of the Associate Director for ADRC. Responsibilities also include overseeing and monitoring the services rendered through the Hospital Discharge Planning, Diabetes Self-Management Programs and other grant funded projects within the ADRC. The Supervisory Public Health Analyst position will be open until filled. Only online applications will be accepted, visit www.dchr.dc.gov to view the complete position description. ~

SOCIAL SECURITY ANNOUNCES 1.5 PERCENT BENEFIT INCREASE FOR 2014

Monthly Social Security and Supplemental Security Income (SSI) benefits for nearly 63 million Americans will increase 1.5 percent in 2014, the Social Security Administration announced today. The 1.5 percent cost-of-living adjustment (COLA) will begin with benefits that more than 57 million Social Security beneficiaries receive in January 2014. Increased payments to more than 8 million SSI beneficiaries will begin on December 31, 2013.

Information about Medicare changes for 2014 is available at www.Medicare.gov. The COLA calculations are determined by the Social Security Act. To read more, please visit www.socialsecurity.gov/cola. ~

SPOTLIGHT ON COMMUNITY LIVING

Spotlight on Community Living is published by the External Affairs and Communications unit of the D.C. Office on Aging. Advertising contained in the Current is not endorsed by the D.C. Office on Aging or by the publisher. The D.C. Office on Aging is responsible for developing and carrying out a comprehensive and coordinated system of health, nutrition, education, employment, training, and social services for the District's elderly population, who are 60 years of age and older. The Office on Aging also administers the Aging and Disability Resource Center, a one-stop shop resource center, designed to assist seniors, persons with disabilities 18 years of age and older and family caregivers navigate the long-term services and supports system.

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Executive Director

In accordance with the D.C. Human Rights Act of 1977, as amended, D.C. Official Code Section §2-1401.01 et seq., (Act), the D.C. Office on Aging does not discriminate on the basis of actual or perceived: race, color, religion, national origin, sex, age, marital status, personal appearance, sexual orientation, gender identity or expression, familial status, family responsibilities, matriculation, political affiliation, genetic information, disability, source of income, or place of residence or business.

Sexual harassment is a form of sex discrimination which is prohibited by the Act.

In addition, harassment based on any of the above protected categories is prohibited by the Act.

Discrimination in violation of the Act will not be tolerated. Violators will be subject to disciplinary action.