

# AOASCC News & Notes



\*\*\*Best Senior Services\*\*\*

## Independence

### January 2017

#### Spotlight on Volunteering



What will you be doing at age 100?

At 100 years old, Isabella retired from her post at the Canoebrook Senior Center where she served for over 13 years as a RSVP Volunteer.

When asked about being 100 she said "It's no big Deal!" Now Isabella is looking forward to having a volunteer come by so she doesn't get "bored."



Will you follow Isabella's example? Find out how even a few hours a month can make a difference - [click here.](#)

#### CHOICES

When the Affordable Care Act was passed several improvements were made to Medicare to increase access to preventative services for people on Medicare. Many co-pays were eliminated and other out-of-pocket costs were reduced or eliminated entirely. With the current discussion of repealing the ACA, these benefits are in jeopardy. Use of prevention benefits ultimately saves a lot of money for consumers and government because they help prevent costly hospitalizations.

If you are on Medicare and want to continue to have prevention benefits a part of your Medicare coverage, you should make your wishes known to your elected representatives. They need to know what benefits are important to their constituents so they can make difficult

**Did You Know?** Under the ACA, Medicare's donut hole is disappearing.



The standard Medicare Part D drug benefit contains a "donut hole," a coverage gap where beneficiaries are required to pay the full cost of their medications, even while they continue to pay premiums.

Prior to the passage of the Affordable Care Act in 2010 over three million Medicare beneficiaries per year reached the Medicare prescription drug coverage gap, requiring them to pay for 100 percent of the cost of their drugs. People in the doughnut hole sometimes skipped doses, split their pills, or didn't take any medications altogether because of the high costs of their drugs.

The ACA is slowly closing this gap in coverage with the gap expected to be completely closed by 2020. As a result, in 2015, 66,843 Connecticut seniors saved \$78 million on drugs, an average of \$1,174 per beneficiary. [www.hhs.gov](http://www.hhs.gov)

Here is how the ACA is designed to decrease the cost of prescription drugs during the coverage gap. The percentage of prescription costs paid will decrease annually until 2020, when an individual will pay the same percentage that is paid from the time the deductible is met until the out-of-pocket spending limit is reached (up to \$4,750 in 2013).

Year	% paid for brand-name drugs	% paid for generic drugs
2013	47.5%	79%
2015	45%	65%
2017	40%	51%
2018	35%	44%
2019	30%	37%
2020	25%	25%

decisions about where to make cuts.

Some of the prevention benefits currently available through Medicare are:

**Screenings** for breast cancer, colon cancer, diabetes, depression, glaucoma, lung cancer and prostate cancer;  
**Exams** - new to Medicare and annual wellness visit;  
 and **Vaccines** - flu, pneumonia and Hepatitis B.

To locate your Congressional representative visit [www.house.gov/representatives/find](http://www.house.gov/representatives/find) and to locate your state senators, visit [www.senate.gov](http://www.senate.gov).

## Visit our Info Library

### Recent additions

*Getting to Know Fruits & Vegetables*, American Heart Association

2017 Quick Guide to CT Benefit Programs

[Click Here](#)

## Caregiver Corner

Vacations or traveling to visit relatives for the holidays is still possible when you are a caregiver, but it takes planning to ensure it will be a positive experience. There are many sad stories of stressful trips that caregivers tell. One reason for the stress is that traveling can be unpredictable. This is particularly true if you're traveling with someone with dementia. However, you can have a good experience if you follow a few suggestions. Plan ahead. It is important to carry documents and information about your loved one with you. Some of the documents you might need are insurance cards, passports, and the phone number of your loved one's physician, and a copy of the medical record.

Bring refills on medications and pack them in carry-on bags

Try to follow the routine that is followed at home regarding rest periods, eating times, and medications. Altering the routine can confuse and exhaust an older person, especially one with dementia.

Allow plenty of time for everything! New environments require adjustments and making adjustments can be tiring, but if it's not rushed, it can be stress free. Plan for rest periods.

Both you and the person you care for need more rest than usual when traveling. Don't overload your daily activity schedule with more than either of you can handle. You may not get to see

everything the vacation spot has to offer, but you can have some new, pleasurable experiences. Rest periods can be the most pleasurable parts of vacation. After a period of rest, the enjoyment level of a new activity is enhanced.

Some people have a problem with wandering and this can get worse when traveling. Try using an identity bracelet or necklace that clearly explains that your relative has a dementia illness. Make certain your contact information is with your loved one and never leave him/her alone in the car.

Traveling can disrupt toileting. Don't wait until your relative suddenly tells you they need to use the bathroom. There may not be enough time to find the closest restroom. Instead, look at the usual pattern of bathroom use at home and based on that, plan a schedule for bathroom visits each day. Bring a change of clothing, just in case the scheduling doesn't work 100% of the time. Being prepared for a bathroom emergency can make it less stressful.

If you're traveling by air, notify the airline in advance that you're a caregiver traveling with someone who has health problems. You may not need any special attention, but if you do they'll be prepared to assist you.

Vacationing with the person you care for can be one more opportunity to create a wonderful memory to appreciate long after they've passed. Don't deprive yourself of the chance to make a memory. Just plan it carefully so it's a good memory.



## AOASCC Happenings

M-Team: January 15, 9 :30 a.m.

### Do you work with clients in crisis?

The Multi-Disciplinary Team (M-Team) is an opportunity for front-line staff to participate in case presentations about challenging cases, particularly cases with issues of elder abuse, neglect, exploitation, hoarding, abandonment....all the difficult cases with few options.

The purpose of M-Team is to support the social workers, care managers and nurses who are faced with the responsibility of helping clients for whom there is no easy path to help.

The Multi-Disciplinary Team is a subgroup of the Interagency Council on Aging of South Central Connecticut. [Find out more.](#)

### Are You Eating Enough Fruits & Vegetables this Winter?

Some people notice that their appetite changes during the winter months. Warm food and spices may seem more appealing. You can make most fruits and vegetables suit your need for comfort foods during the cold months. For example:

- Baked fruit, such as pears or apples, are great with a little honey and cinnamon sprinkled on top.
- Add applesauce, diced banana, raisins, and diced pears to oatmeal, serve them on top of pancakes or waffles, or fold them into a muffin batter.
- Roast butternut squash, potatoes, sweet potatoes, mushrooms, cauliflower, beets, or carrots and make them either savory or sweet, depending on the herbs and spices you choose.
- Soups are a great way to add vegetables to your diet. Buy lower-sodium canned soup and add extra veggies to it, or make your own soups and add more veggies than the recipe calls for

[www.nutrition411.com/articles/fruits-and-vegetables-eating-more-during-winter-months](http://www.nutrition411.com/articles/fruits-and-vegetables-eating-more-during-winter-months)

Seniors often live on a fixed income - SNAP can help you afford to put more fruits & vegetables into your diet. Visit [BenefitsCheckUp.org/getSNAP](http://BenefitsCheckUp.org/getSNAP) or visit our website to [find out more.](#)



**Need help finding support at home?**

Care Network Link is a wonderful resource to find trusted providers: Homemaking, Personal Care Assistance, Live-In Caregivers, Wheelchair Ramps, Fall Alert Systems, Hair Stylists that come to your home.

Give us a call at 203-495-1655 or sign up for membership at [www.CareNetworkLink.org](http://www.CareNetworkLink.org) Membership is FREE and will earn you discounts from the providers you hire. Care Network Link credentials all the providers before allowing them on the network to make sure they are trustworthy businesses to have in your home.

**Social Security Disability Assistance Program**

Our goal is to provide the knowledge and dedicated assistance necessary to succeed after you have been denied your claim for disability benefits. By navigating you through the Social Security maze, our goal is to truly be your advocate for independence. [Find out more.](#)

As part of the Agency on Aging's mission to advocate for independence, we are committed to building awareness, breaking down stereotypes and challenging unfair policies to stop ageism now.

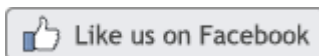
**Join the Conversation!**



You are cordially invited to any open community conversation about STOP AGEISM NOW! As part of the Middlesex County Gatekeeper Program, St. Luke's Community Services will hold a series of Community Forums throughout Middlesex County.

[Find Out More.](#)

**Stay Up to Date!**



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