

AOASCC News & Notes



Best Senior Services

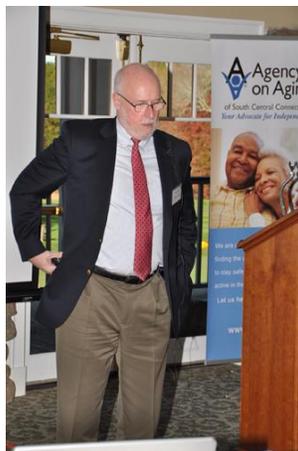
Independence

November 2016

Celebrating Another Successful Year

Annual Meeting:

One hundred twenty individuals gathered on October 28th to celebrate our accomplishments in the last year.



Michael McGivern, PhD, spoke on *Committing to the Cause*. In a rapidly changing world, he said a new paradigm is needed. People will not support your organization if they simply agree with your cause. To move people from a simple buy-in to total commitment, an organization needs to clearly communicate its message.

Annual Report: Through our services, we touch the lives of thousands of individuals. Mrs. Anderson's story is one of our favorites.

What moves you to get up every day? For Mrs. Anderson it was her tomato garden, but after her husband died, she didn't have the money to buy plants so the garden was bare.

CHOICES - Kudos to our Volunteer Counselors!

We are truly fortunate, in the south central region of CT to have an outstanding group of CHOICES counselors who are available to assist people with Medicare and Medicaid related issues. We are especially grateful in this period of open enrollment for all the work done by our CHOICES counselors. Most of the CHOICES counselors in our region are volunteers. Some are retired volunteers, others are working in the community and make time each month to share the knowledge they receive through the CHOICES program with seniors and people with disabilities who are Medicare eligible.

The staff of the AOASCC could never answer the questions of the thousands of Medicare recipients who live in our region without the contributions of our volunteers. CHOICES volunteers are stationed at libraries, hospitals, senior centers and housing locations throughout our region. Additionally, CHOICES

Read the rest of her story in [our annual report](#) & find out more about how we are making a difference every day. See our annual report for more stories.



Outstanding Partner Awards



Did You Know?

November is National Caregiver Month! This year's theme is *Take Care to Give Care*

Consider these facts compiled by the Center for Disease Control.

- An estimated 21% of households in the United States are impacted by caregiving responsibilities (NAC, 2004).
- The out-of-pocket costs for caregivers who are caring for someone who was age 50 or older averaged \$5,531 in 2007. About 37% of caregivers for someone age 50 and older reduced their work hours or quit their job in 2007 (AARP, 2008).
- Caregivers report having difficulty finding time for one's self (35%), managing emotional and physical stress (29%), and balancing work and family responsibilities (29%) (NAC, 2004).
- Half (53%) of caregivers who said their health had gotten worse due to caregiving also said the decline in their health has affected their ability to provide care (NAC, 2006).
- Caregivers said they do not go to the doctor because they put their family's needs first (67% said that is a major reason), or they put the care recipient's needs over their own (57%). More than half (51%) said they do not have time to take care of themselves and almost half (49%) said they are too tired to do so (NAC, 2004)

Here's one way you can take care of yourself.



November 3rd in Wallingford
[Find out more & register here!](#)

volunteers work in many organizations that serve the needs of people who are on Medicare and they respond to Medicare and Medicaid questions at their places of employment.

As we are working our way through open-enrollment this year we want to say a big THANK YOU to the many CHOICES counselors who provide accurate, up-to-date information that enables people to make complex decisions about their health care coverage. We truly appreciate all you do.

Spotlight on Volunteering

How valuable is the companionship of an RSVP volunteer? Ask Tom's family. Tom was matched up with volunteer Martha and it was a perfect fit. Martha, however, wasn't sure she could continue her visits. The overgrown bushes obstructed her view when exiting the driveway and she didn't want to risk a car accident. When Tom's family heard this, they hired someone to cut the bushes down. Problem solved. Now Martha knows how valuable her time really is.



Find out how you can make a difference in someone's life as a volunteer companion - [click here.](#)

Caregiver Corner

Blood Pressure

High Blood pressure is often referred to as the "silent killer" because there are very few signs of the problem until it becomes a crisis. If you are a caregiver it is wise to practice health behaviors that reduce the likelihood of developing high blood pressure.

It is important to ensure that the person you care for has a blood pressure screening a few times each year. The doctor can check it at an annual physical, it can be checked at one of the many health fairs throughout the year and most of our pharmacies and grocery stores have blood pressure monitoring machines. If the screening indicates the numbers are high, get to the doctor. One high reading doesn't necessarily mean high blood pressure, but it should be checked out. 120/80 is considered a normal pressure, 140/90 is considered a high blood pressure.

In addition to knowing the numbers, it's important to know the risk factors that predispose people to high blood pressure. There are some factors you can't control but you need to be aware that they are risk factors and be mindful of the risks: advancing age, family history and ethnicity. African-Americans have a significantly higher risk. Then there are risks you can control: smoking, obesity, inactivity, and drinking. In addition to obesity, other diet related issues are high salt diets and fatty diets. Both contribute to heart disease and high blood pressure. Following a heart -heathy diet, and reading food labels for sodium content can reduce risk factors.

Your best friend in preventing high blood pressure is regular exercise. Thirty minutes of exercise per day can make a significant difference. It doesn't have to be accomplished in one period. You can break it up throughout the day into 10 minute segments if the person you care for cannot tolerate 30 minutes in one session. Try walking , riding a bike, or dancing, just get moving!

Lastly, and most importantly, if your loved one, or yourself, has already been diagnosed with high blood pressure, take your medications as prescribed, even when you're feeling well and your numbers are ok. They're ok because of the medication. Sometimes you can reduce your numbers through diet and exercise and you can stop taking medication but NEVER without consulting with the doctor.

Help put food on someone's table

Want to give seniors another reason to be thankful? Help them put food on the table by encouraging them to sign up for SNAP. Anyone can learn more about the program and find applications for their state: 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 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!



Stay Up to Date!



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