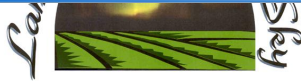


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Senior News

Medicare's Annual Open Enrollment Has Changed!

October 15—December 7, 2011 is the new timeline to make changes to your Medicare Advantage and/or Part D Prescription Drug Plans. **Mark your calendars!**

From the Director's Desk...

It is that time of the year again for Medicare's annual open enrollment. As stated above there is a new time line for the annual open enrollment. Be sure to take care of your enrollment needs by December 7th this year. You will notice a few changes when you call the Senior LinkAge Line® this year during open enrollment. Due to increased call volume related to some new initiatives you may experience a wait time for this service.

As you can see from some of the articles in this newsletter, the Senior LinkAge Line® has added new roles to play on the lines this year. The Senior One Stop Shop that was announced on September 1st will

be available to assist with volunteering and employment opportunities. Long Term Care Consultation Expansion is available October 1st to assist you in making choices. If you are finding you need assistance

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A One Stop Shop for Minnesota Seniors

From the Director's Desk continued...

The Senior LinkAge Line® is a free service of the Minnesota Board on Aging. Specialists provide in-depth long-term care options counseling; including application assistance, health insurance counseling and helping individuals plan to age well in their home and community.

in your home or are thinking about moving into a Registered Housing with Services establishment you can contact the Senior LinkAge Line®. We will provide you with the information you need to make an informed choice and give you a verification code for the provider.

Many Title III services in the region are providing older adults the opportunity to remain in their homes for as long

as it is possible and safe.

Some of the programs out there for older adults to participate in include: Matter of Balance, Bone Builders, Chronic Disease Self Management Program, and Powerful Tools for Caregivers. If you are interested in any of these programs call the Senior LinkAge Line® to find out where these programs are available in your area.



**Check out the new design of the Dancing Sky
Area Agency on Aging Website!**

www.dancingskyaaa.org

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One Stop Shop—A New Service to Help Seniors Navigate State Government, Connect with Volunteer and Employment Opportunities!

The Senior LinkAge Line® has expanded to be a one stop shop for Minnesota seniors and their families.

Furthering Governor Dayton administration's commitment to transparency and accessibility, Lt. Governor Yvonne Prettner Solon announced the creation of the Senior LinkAge Line®: A One Stop Shop for Minnesota Seniors at the State Fair on September 1, 2011.



The service will build on a legacy of providing Minnesota seniors with health care related information to include all government services, as well as to connect seniors with volunteering and employment opportunities in their communities.

This expansion is a significant change for the line, which previously handled primarily health insurance and long-term care services related questions. Now, when Minnesota seniors call the Senior LinkAge Line® they will be connected to a person who will help them with any government service related questions they may have. Line operators will utilize a specialized chat system, connecting them to representatives from all state departments and providing instant access to answers for callers.

Call the Senior LinkAge Line®: A One Stop Shop at 800-333-2433. The service can also be accessed via a chat line at www.minnesotahelp.info operated by the Minnesota Board on Aging.

There is Help for You as You Help Others – November is National Caregiver Awareness Month

Your father has dementia, your mom falls periodically, and your neighbor struggles with grocery shopping. They all need your assistance now, in one way or another. Before you realized it, you entered a new phase of your life . caregiving.



A caregiver is a relative, friend or neighbor who provides care for an older or disabled adult. Caregiving is important work and it can be rewarding, but it can also be overwhelming.

If you are a caregiver, it is important for you to realize that it is okay to ask for help. Assistance is available through Caregiver Consultants, who are professionals trained in providing individual support for family caregivers.

In-person or over the phone, a Caregiver Consultant will listen to your concerns and help you develop a plan of action. Depending on your needs, your Caregiver Consultant might assist you in problem solving, help you understand a chronic disease, teach you ways to manage stress, link you to community services, and more.

For a referral to a Caregiver Consultant, call the Senior LinkAge Line®: *A One Stop Shop for Minnesota Seniors*, at 1-800-333-2433. The Minnesota Board on Aging has seven regional Area Agencies on Aging who are dedicated to addressing the needs of older adults and their families by providing a range of services and resources in local communities. See the Minnesota Board on Aging website for more information about Area Agencies on Aging at: www.mnaging.org.

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Census Data Update

The Land of the Dancing Sky Area Agency on Aging, serving twenty-one counties in Northwest and West Central Minnesota, has a total population of 390,802 according to the 2010 census report. This is a gain of 16,110 from the 2000 census.

Eleven counties actually lost some population.

Clay County gained the most population as the Moorhead/Fargo metro area continues to grow.

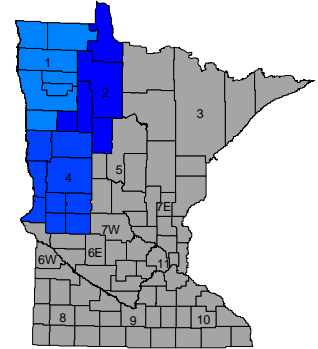
The lakes area counties also saw population increase.

Under the Older Americans Act, Area Agencies on Aging serve age sixty and over population. In our region, this population grew from 79,114 in 2000 to 90,614 in 2010 which is an

increase of 11,500 people. This represents 23.2% of our region's population compared to 21.1% in 2000. For the state of Minnesota, the sixty and over population represents 18.2% of the total population of 5,303,925.



Map of Service Area



Warren Office

115 South Main
Warren, MN 56762
(218) 745-6733

Park Rapids Office

PO Box 301
Park Rapids, MN 56470
(218) 237-3304

Fergus Falls Office

313 South Mill Street
Fergus Falls, MN 56537
(218) 739-4617

Thief River Falls Office

122 Kneale Ave N.
Thief River Falls, MN
56701
1-800-333-2433 ext.
80014

Long Term Care Consultation Expansion to Housing with Services

Changes to the Long Term Care Consultation (LTCC) statutes were made during the Legislative Special Session in July 2011. This initiative is an expansion of long-term care consultation and long-term care options counseling and is available to people of all ages who want to move into a Registered Housing with Services establishment.

Housing with services settings are a helpful option for some people. They can offer an opportunity to get care and help with daily living in a home-like environment to people who cannot live independently in their own homes or who have no support to do so. For those who do careful planning and can afford this option, it is a viable alternative to remaining in one's home.

The expanded LTCC service will offer long-term care options counseling services to people who are considering a move to a Registered Housing with Services, which is estimated to be 30,000 Minnesotans per year.

This initiative will increase access to the existing phone-based long-term care options counseling services provided by the Senior LinkAge Line® and the face to face long-term care consultation services delivered by counties, tribes and health plans. Through this collaborative model all Registered with Housing Services providers must provide information to all prospective residents that they should contact the Senior LinkAge Line® for options counseling. Callers would then be offered a phone-based conversation that includes:

- The Live Well At Home risk screen which determines how well callers are managing activities of daily living, whether they have access to caregivers and other resources available to support daily living.

Continued on Page 7

Long Term Care Expansion continued from page 6



- Review independent living options . includes a review of ways to remain in one's home such as home modifications and consumer directed supports.
- Caregiver concerns and options for support . including referrals to caregiver consulting services that can assist with supporting the caregivers directly.
- Review of financing options . Helping consumers understand what their benefits are and other financing options that may be available to support long-term care needs with reduced risk to businesses. The LTCC will likely result in settings being better matched with people that can afford this option and will ultimately have less risk.

For more information about Long Term Care options counseling, please contact the Senior LinkAge Line® at 1-800-333-2433.



A One Stop Shop for Minnesota Seniors

Upcoming Events:

- October 1**—Long Term Care Counseling Verification Codes available
- October 11**. Mahnomen, MN. Sustainability Training for Title III Providers
- October 15—December 7**. Medicare Open Enrollment
- October 29**. 12th Annual Senior Community Clean-Up. Bemidji (call (218) 333-8261 to sign up by October 14, 2011)
- November 1**. Medicare Part D Enrollment Session. Karlstad Senior Center, Karlstad, MN, 10:00 a.m. 4:00 p.m.
- November 3**. Medicare Part D Enrollment Session. Fosston Senior Center, Fosston, MN, 10:00 a.m. 4:00 p.m.
- November 8**. Medicare Part D Enrollment Session. Four Seasons Senior Center, Roseau, MN, 10:00 a.m. 4:00 p.m.
- November 10**. Medicare Part D Enrollment Session. Ada Community Center, Ada, MN, 10:00 a.m. 4:00 p.m.
- November 14**. Medicare Part D Enrollment Session. VA Community Center, Mahnomen, MN, 10:00 a.m. 4:00 p.m.
- November 15**. Medicare Part D Enrollment Session. Golden Link Senior Center, Crookston, MN, 10:00 a.m. 4:00 p.m.



2012 Title III Older Americans Act Funded Services Cost Sharing Implemented

In March 2011, the Minnesota Board on Aging approved an updated Title III policy regarding cost sharing and voluntary contributions for Older Americans Act funded services. Cost sharing will be used to help expand the service for which the payment was received. Programs that we will be required to implement Cost Sharing January 1, 2012 include the following: Title IIIB Chore and Homemaker; IIIE Caregiver Respite and Counseling 1:1 services; IIID Evidence Based/Informed Programs such as Matter of Balance, Chronic Disease Self Management Program, and Powerful Tools for Caregivers.

For Cost Sharing, participant income level will be based on self-reported gross income of the older adult receiving services. If a participant is married, both incomes will be used to determine the cost-share amount.

Voluntary contributions are still allowed for all Older Americans Act services. Voluntary contributions, however, do not replace the cost sharing policy as stated above. Such contributions shall be encouraged for individuals whose self-declared income is at or above 200% of the poverty line, at contribution levels based on the actual cost of service. Grantees shall publish a schedule of suggested contributions and shall advise clients of the opportunity to contribute towards the cost of the service. Voluntary contributions shall be used to expand the service for which the contribution was received.

Providers needing more information about the cost sharing plan should contact Shannon Henrickson, Dancing Sky Area Agency on Aging Director, at (218) 745-9109 or shenrickson@nwrdc.org.

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Guidelines for Extra Help with Medicare Part D

Partial Extra Help

(150% - 136% of FPG)

Income Guidelines

\$1,225.13 - \$1,361.25 Single

\$1,654.88 - \$1,838.75 Couple

Asset Guidelines

\$12,640 Single

\$25,260 Couple

Full Extra Help

(134% and less of FPG)

Income Guidelines

\$1,225.13 or less Single

\$1,654.88 or less Couple

Asset Guidelines

\$8,180 Single

\$13,020 Couple

Energy Assistance Program

The Energy Assistance Program (EAP) helps pay home heating costs.

Households at or below 50 percent of the state median income are eligible. Grants are based on household size, income, fuel type and energy usage. Households with the lowest income and highest fuel costs receive the highest grants.

Funds are available for renters or homeowners. Program is federally funded through U.S. Department of Human Services.

Contact the Senior LinkAge Line® for more information to find your local provider.



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Land of the Dancing Sky Staff

Warren Office

Shannon Henrickson, Director

Carol Sorensen, Financial Officer/
Grants Manager

Carol Bye, SLL Specialist/Outreach
Coordinator

Amanda Caillier, SLL Specialist/
Volunteer Coordinator

Kristina DeFrang, SLL Specialist

Rose Reed, SLL Specialist/Program
Technician

Park Rapids Office

Darla Bergquist, Aging Program
Developer

Thief River Falls Office

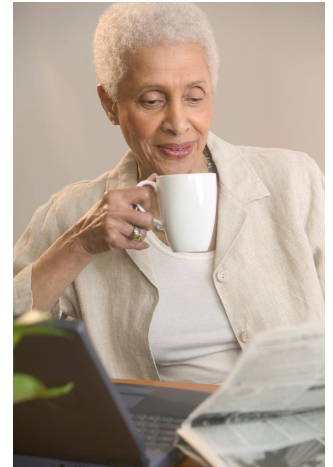
Nancy Sandahl, Community Living
Specialist

Fergus Falls Office

Karin Haugrud, SLL Specialist/
Volunteer Coordinator

Mary Jane Hay, Administrative
Specialist

Mark Tysver, WC Program
Director



Senior Coordinators

Becker-Karen Lenius

Clay-Dale Rollie

Douglas-Mary Krueger, Deb Shea

Grant/Traverse-Deb Rapp

Otter Tail-Lyle Hoxtell

Pope-Dodie Johnsrud

Stevens-Linda Wasmund

Wilkin-Linda Dietz

Land of the Dancing Sky Area Agency on Aging
NW Regional Development Commission
115 South Main, Suite 1
Warren, MN 56762



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Remember! Medicare's Open Enrollment Has Changed!
October 15—December 7th are the dates to make changes!



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