



Senior News

From the Director's Desk...

Spring is just around the corner as I look back on 2010. What a whirlwind of a year. Senior LinkAge Line® staff have just finished up another busy year of open enrollment for Medicare. These staff members work very diligently through the holiday season to assist seniors with plan selection. I would like to take this opportunity to remind you that open enrollment next year will be **October 15, 2011 through December 7, 2011.**

We implemented many new programs and initiatives to grow home and community based services in our region so seniors can remain safe and independent in their homes. Some of the programs/initiatives include: Matter of Balance, Chronic Disease Self-Management Program, Early Memory Care Intervention, Powerful Tools for Caregivers and Return to Community. If you would like information call the Senior LinkAge Line® for assistance 1-800-333-2433.

Continued on Page 2 & 3

“Older Americans:
Connecting the Community”
Theme for Older Americans
Month, May 2011



Inside this issue:

Nutrition Targeting	2-3
Food Support Guidelines	4
VA Caregiver Line	5-6
LIS Guidelines (Extra Help)	6
Fuel Assistance Guidelines	7-8
Medicare Cost Sharing 2011	9
Programs Funded for 2011	9-11
Presentations Available	12-14
Staff Listing	15

Senior News

New Initiatives Definitions.....

Matter of Balance

– learn to view falls and fear of falling as controllable; set goals to increase activity; change your home to reduce fall risks; and learn exercises to increase strength and balance.

Chronic Disease Self-Management Program

– a workshop that provides ways to deal with chronic diseases like high blood pressure, diabetes, heart conditions; along with exercise, nutrition, medication use and more.

Early Memory Care Intervention

– provide people in the early stages of memory loss control over their situation; decrease, decline and minimize emotional and psychological stress of family care partners.

Powerful Tools for Caregivers

– workshop that empowers caregivers with skills to better care for their family member and themselves.

Return to Community

– work with staff that provides assistance to individuals that can and want to return to the community from the nursing home.

Nutrition Targeting

Beginning 2011 we will focus on nutrition targeting as federal and state dollars decline or do not change.

Back in 2008 and 2009, the Minnesota Board on Aging sponsored a Nutrition Task Force. Since the establishment of the Nutrition Program, many societal and economic changes have taken place which has created a need for adjustments in the program. Members of the Task Force included MBA Board members and staff, Area Agency on Aging staff and senior nutrition providers.

The first priority was to 'Maximize Resources'. In order to do this, we need to 'improve targeting' and 'improve technology'. Targeting criteria for congregate and home-delivered meals was included in the report to 'highlight the importance of strategically using program

Volume I, Issue I

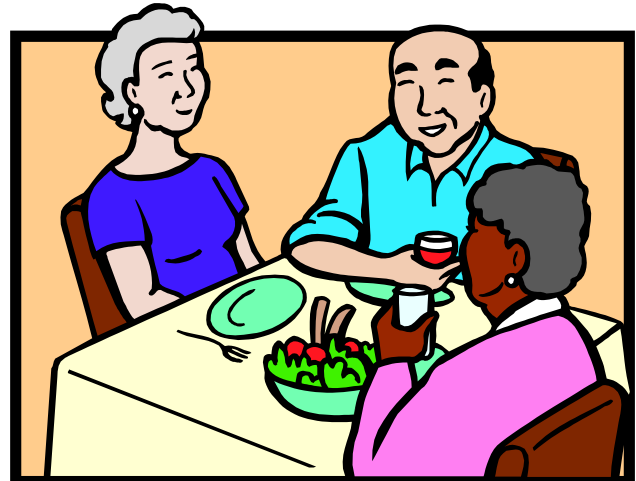
resources to serve those individuals with high levels of need for service, but who are not yet eligible for other public home and community-based service programs'. Land of the Dancing Sky Area Agency on Aging has initiated a nutrition task force (consisting of staff, county commissioners and nutrition providers) to look at improving our targeting of senior meals with the limited dollars we have for the 21 county region. The use of the information collected from the *Participant Registration* forms will be used to assist us as we target those seniors with the most need for nutrition services.

The state Nutrition Task Force report also listed two other priorities. The second priority was to 'Build Relationships' by increasing communication between area agencies on aging, nutrition providers and the state.

The third priority was to 'Improve Sustainability' with the use of innovative models. Each service area is different and uses different approaches to best meet the needs.

With this in mind, the Land of the Dancing Sky Board, staff and the nutrition providers, will work together to determine the best ways to maximize resources we have by building good relationships and improving the suitability of the nutrition providers in our region.

The full report can be found on the Minnesota Board of Aging website at www.mnaging.org.



Senior News

Food Support Program Guidelines Changed!

Beginning November 1, 2010 the income and asset limits for the Minnesota Food Support program changed; meaning more individuals may now be eligible for the program.

Income Limits: (gross monthly)

Increased from 135% to 165% of Federal Poverty Guidelines.

- \$1,490 for a single adult
- \$2,004 for a couple



Asset Limits:

There is no longer an asset limit for the program.

For more information regarding food support and other assistance programs, or for application assistance, contact the Senior LinkAge Line®.

Call 1-800-333-2433 for assistance or go to www.MinnesotaHelp.info to chat live with a Senior LinkAge Line® specialist. Information on applying is also available through the Food Support Hotline at 1-800-657-3698.

Volume I, Issue I

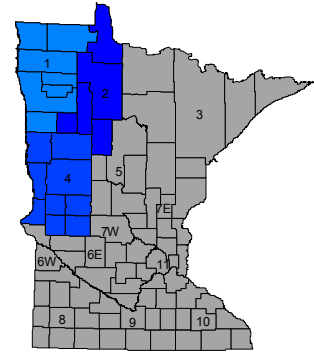
VA Caregiver Support Line Open!

Caregivers are the family members and loved ones who provide care for Veterans who are living with the effects of war, disability, chronic illness or aging. They deserve VA's highest level of support. On February 1, 2011, the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) is opening a toll-free National Caregiver Support Line, housed at the Canandaigua VA Medical Center campus in Canandaigua, New York. The support line will serve as a primary resource/referral center to assist caregivers, Veterans and others seeking caregiver information to help in the care of our Nation's Veterans. Calls to the National Caregiver Support Line will be

answered by VA employees who are licensed clinical social workers.

The Support Line will provide information on VA/community caregiver support resources and "warm" referral to dedicated Caregiver Support Coordinators located in every VA Medical Center; emotional support for the caregiver will be an integral component of this service. The National Caregiver Support Line is also available to respond to inquiries about the caregiver benefits associated with Public Law 111-163, Caregivers and Veterans Omnibus Health Services Act of 2010.

Continued Page 6



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



Senior News

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.

VA Caregiver Support Line Continued from Page 5

The National Caregiver Support Line will be open Monday - Friday 8:00 a.m. to 11:00 p.m. and Saturday 10:30 a.m. to 6:00 p.m. eastern time. The National Caregiver Support Line Toll-Free number is 1-855-260-3274.

Please also see VA's updated caregiver website:

www.caregiver.va.gov



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

Volume I, Issue I

Fuel Assistance Guidelines

The Energy Assistance Program (EAP) helps people with lower incomes pay their heating/energy bills. For 4 months in a row, your EAP agency will pay part of your bill directly to the gas or electric utility company that provides you heat.

The EAP uses the past 3 months of household income prior to signing the application. For a household of one, income needs to be below \$5,655. For a household of two, income must be under \$7,395. This program doesn't look at your assets.

Call your county Energy Assistance Program agency today or call the Senior LinkAge Line® at 1-800-333-2433 for more information.

Beltrami

Bi-County Community
Action/Bemidji

218-751-4631 or
800-332-7161

Becker, Hubbard and Mahnomen

Mahube Community
Action/Detroit Lakes

218-847-1385 or
888-458-1385

Clay, Douglas, Grant, Pope, Stevens, Traverse, Wilkin

West Central
Community Action/
Elbow Lake

800-492-4805

Clearwater

Clearwater County
Human Services

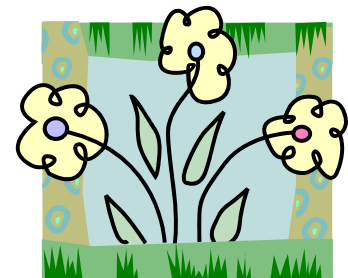
218-694-6164 or
800-245-6064

Otter Tail

Otter Tail-Wadena
Community Action
Council

218-385-333 or
877-256-7249

Continued Page 8



Senior News

**Energy Assistance
Programs Continued
from Page 7**

**Kittson, Marshall, Lake
of the Woods, and
Roseau**

Northwest Community
Action/Badger

800-568-5329

**Marshall, Norman and
West Polk**

Tri-Valley Opportunity
Council/Crookston

866-264-3729 ext. 2623

**Red Lake, Pennington,
East Polk**

Inter-County Community
Council/Oklee

888-778-4008 ext. 20

Medicare Cost Sharing for 2011

***Part A Hospital
Deductible -***

\$1,132 per
benefit period for
Days 1-60

Coinsurance:

\$283 a day for
61st-90th day
each benefit
period

\$566 a day for
91st-150th day
each benefit
period. Also
known as
“Lifetime Reserve
Days”.

***Skilled Nursing
Facility***

Coinsurance:

Days 1-20
covered 100%

\$141.50 a day for
21st-100th day.

***Medicare Part B
Medical
Premiums for
2011***

\$115.40 Monthly

*Some Medicare
Beneficiaries will
continue to pay
\$96.40 or \$110.50.
They are current
Medicare Part B
enrollees (before
1/1/2011) that have
their premiums
withheld from their
SSA check, and
have incomes
below \$85,000 for
a single person
and \$170,000 for a
couple.

***Medicare Part B
Deductible***

Annual - \$162

Senior News

Programs funded with Older Americans Act Funding for 2011



These grantees received Older Americans Act Funding to provide services within our 21 county service area.

Nutrition Service - Title III-C - Congregate and Home Delivered Meals Programs

Lutheran Social Services, Moorhead

-- Senior Nutrition Program Congregate & Home Delivered Meals (Regions 1 & 2 area)

Nutrition Services, Inc., Waseca

-- Senior Nutrition Program Congregate & Home Delivered Meals (Region 4 area)

Supportive Service - Title III-B

Tri-Valley Opportunity Council, Crookston

-- Valley Housekeeping Services (Polk, Marshall, Norman, Pennington, & Roseau counties)

NW Minnesota Legal Service, Moorhead

-- Senior Legal Services and Education Program (all 21 counties)

Roseau Co. Committee on Aging, Roseau

--Sr. Medical Transportation (Roseau County)

Kittson County Social Services, Hallock

--Senior Medical Travel (Kittson County)

Ideas to Be Happy!

1. Smile
2. Eat a sprinkled donut
3. Meditate
4. Take a Nap
5. Go For a Walk



Volume I, Issue I

Programs funded continued from Page 9

Northwest Sentencing to Service Program

--Chore Services
(Pennington, Marshall and Kittson counties)

Roseau County Sentencing to Service Program

--Chore Services
(Roseau County)

Tri-County Community Corrections Sentencing to Service Program

--Chore Services
(Norman, Polk and Red Lake counties)

LakeWood Health Center

--Homemaking Services -
(Lake of the Woods county)

Bi-County Community Action Program, Inc.

--Home Modification for Frail and Elderly
(Beltrami county)

Clearwater County Social Services

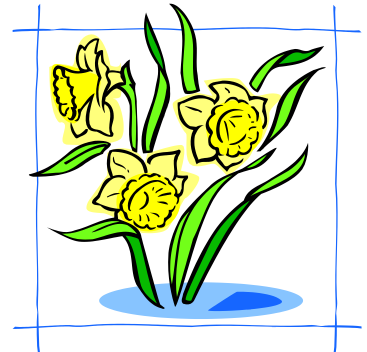
--Senior Transportation
(Clearwater County)

Otter Tail County Human Services

--Senior Transportation -
(Otter Tail County)

West Central MN CAC

--In-Home Repair/Modification
(Region 4 counties)



Health Promotion - Title III-D

Lake Region Medical Center, Fergus Falls

--Medication Management Sessions
(Regions 1, 2 and 4)



Senior News

Programs Funded continued from Page 10



MN-ND Alzheimer's Association

--Care Consultations/
Education Sessions
(Region 4)

*LifeCare Medical Center,
Roseau*

--Chronic Disease
Management Sessions
--Matter of Balance
Sessions
(Roseau County)

*Mahube Community
Council, Detroit Lakes*

--Bone Builders Program
(Mahnomen, Becker, Otter
Tail and Hubbard counties)

**Caregiver Information
and Advocacy - Title III-E**

*Lutheran Social Services,
Moorhead*

--Respite & Caregiver
Support Program (Region
1, 2 & 4)

*Northwoods Interfaith
Caregivers*

-- Respite and Caregiver
Support Program
(Beltrami, Clearwater
counties)

*Park Rapids Living At
Home/Block Nurse/
Interfaith Caregivers*

--Respite and Caregiver
Support Program
(Hubbard County)

Central MN Elder Network

--Caregiver Support/
Respite
(Douglas County)

*Mahube Community
Council, Detroit Lakes*

--Relatives as Parents
Program
(all 21 counties)



Senior News



More Things to Be Happy!

1. Do yoga
2. Read a book
3. Give a hug
4. Take a relaxing bath
5. Soak up the sun



Senior LinkAge Line® Presentations Available

Staff and volunteers from the Land of the Dancing Sky Area Agency on Aging are available to give educational presentations to groups in the twenty-one county planning and service area, free of charge. Presentations generally fit within a 30-60 minute time frame, including time for questions and answers. We are, however, able to adapt sessions based on group need regarding time and topics covered.

Senior LinkAge Line® - Who We Are and What We Do

The Senior LinkAge Line® assists seniors with a wide variety of issues to maintain their independence in the community. Some of the topic areas covered in this presentation include: Medicare Health Insurance Counseling, Prescription Expense Assistance, Transportation, Housing, Nutrition Programs, Chore Services, Legal Services and Caregiver Supports. Also introduced is a

public database, www.MinnesotaHelp.info that individuals can use to search for needed services.

Minnesota Long Term Care Partnership Insurance

We will answer the following questions: What is long-term care? Why plan for long-term care? We will also review pressures on the long-term care system, how long-term care insurance works and the MN Long-Term Care Partnership.

Volume I, Issue I

Senior Medicare Patrol – Prevent Medicare Fraud & Abuse

Don't be a target of Medicare fraud. Become familiar with examples of Medicare fraud and waste. Learn how to review billing statements and report system abuse. Learn how the Senior LinkAge Line® can assist seniors and their families.

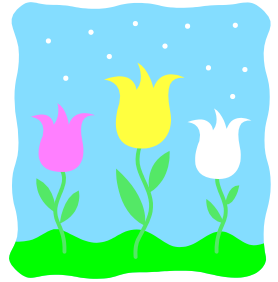
Medicare and You A-D or Medicare Part D and Prescription Assistance

Presentation focuses on an overview of Medicare, including what is covered

under Parts A & B, enrollment guidelines, Minnesota options, including the Advantage plans (Part C), Prescription Drug coverage (Part D), and where to go for extra help with prescription drug costs and fighting Medicare fraud. Another option is to focus our presentation on Medicare Prescription Drug Coverage including: eligibility, how and when to enroll, drug plan costs and extra help, and choosing a Medicare drug plan.

“The File”

Presentation focuses on the importance of having “One place to look” that would provide your family or close friend the “One place” to find all of your important information upon your death. Five topics reviewed include: Important people, Finances, Insurance Information, Documents and Funeral arrangements. Each person in attendance would also receive a copy



More Things to Be Happy!

1. Laugh until it hurts,
2. Take your mom to the movies
3. Watch the sunrise
4. Sleep in
5. Enjoy nature



Continued Page 14

Senior News

Presentation Topics continued from Page 13

of “The File” to use for themselves.

Long Term Care System Navigation (offered Spring 2011)

What are the options for seniors who are thinking about staying in their homes while they are getting older? What if they want to continue living independently but need some assistance with issues such as home maintenance, caring for another person, decision-making, or transportation? This presentation will introduce the

audience to the Long-term Care Choices Navigator. A step-by-step tool to help you find services to assist you or a loved one age well in the community.

Falls Prevention

Presentation will review what you can do to reduce any fall risk factors. It will also increase your awareness for falls prevention through helpful hints and suggestions.

The Affordable Care Act ... What MN Medicare Beneficiaries Need to Know Now

The Affordable Care Act was passed by Congress and signed by President Obama in 2010.

We will discuss new services and benefits provided by the Act. Included in the presentation is information about the Donut Hole, expanded Medicare Preventive Benefits, changes to Medicare Advantage, and Long-Term Care Choices.

If you would like to schedule a presentation in your town call the Senior LinkAge Line® at 1-800-333-2433.

Volume I, Issue I

Land of the Dancing Sky Staff

Warren Office

Carol Bye, SLL Specialist/Outreach Coordinator

Amanda Caillier, SLL Specialist/Volunteer Coordinator

Rose Reed, SLL Specialist/Program Technician

Shannon Henrickson, Aging Program Director

Carol Sorensen, Financial Officer/Grants Manager

Park Rapids Office

Darla Bergquist, Program Development Specialist

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, Program Manager

Senior Coordinators

Becker-Karen Lenius

Clay-Dale Rollie

Douglas-Mary Krueger

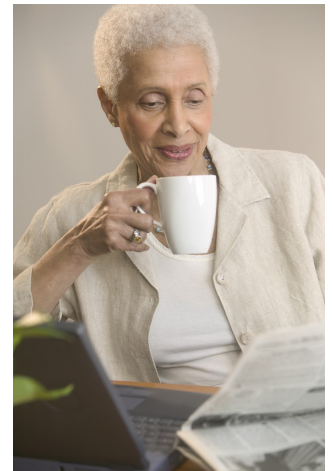
Grant/Traverse-Deb Rapp

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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