

NASUAD NEWS



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The Newsletter of the National Association of States United for Aging and Disabilities

FROM THE HILL

HUD and HHS Working Together on Initiatives to Coordinate Services and Supports

HUD Secretary Shaun Donovan and HHS Secretary Kathleen Sebelius have been meeting for the past year and have assigned staff to focus on the coordination of programs and services delivered by the Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) and the Department of Health and Human Services (HHS). Work groups have been formed to focus on: (1) Homelessness; (2) Livable Homes and Communities; (3) Community Living; and (4) Aging and Services. Seventeen specific areas are being explored for coordination, including budget and policy initiatives.

There are two major themes of the HUD and HHS Coordination Initiative: improving the effectiveness and efficiency of programs and working more closely together. The Initiative aims to make collaboration a common practice. The Coordination Initiative has been in place for a year and already HHS and HUD are working together on regulations and grants.

The Aging and Services Work Group will convene in Fall 2010 to focus on research of how to better connect housing and services. The work group is also considering, among other challenges and opportunities, the unintended consequences

for clients receiving multiple services, Choice Neighborhood initiatives, no wrong door entry points to services, and the workforce shortage.

As HHS and HUD approach the one year anniversary of their initiative to coordinate services, expect to see more information on how to provide a more seamless delivery of HUD and HHS-funded supports and services to seniors and people with disabilities. ■

IN WASHINGTON

Grandparents Day Proclamation

President Barack Obama proclaimed National Grandparents Day on September 12, 2010. He called on all Americans to take the time to honor their own grandparents and those in their community. In the proclamation, President Obama recognized the special place in our homes and communities that family elders hold. He said, "As a country and a people, our grandparents have made us who we are today."

On Monday, September 13, 2010, members of the NASUAD staff, along with other national organizations' staff, attended a White House Administration Briefing on Grandparents Day. Senior Obama administration officials discussed the administration's initiatives and policies to keep grandparents and seniors healthy and engaged in their communities. Christina Tchen, Director of the White House Office of Public Engagement,

began the briefing by stressing the importance of a two-way conversation with grassroots organizations and citizens. She mentioned that the President is a personal example of the importance of grandparents in a child's life.

Ms. Tchen then introduced Nancy-Ann DeParle, Director, White House Office of Health Reform, who talked of the myths still circulating about seniors and the Affordable Care Act. Even with the information that has been sent to seniors through meetings and printed materials, there are still many people who have received misinformation. She called on everyone to help spread the facts, clear up confusion, and support the benefits of the law.

Other speakers talked of the importance of recognizing that many seniors are balancing work and care giving. Many people are reentering the workforce after an initial retirement or job loss due to increased economic stress and the need to provide care to extended family. Flexible working conditions, additional training, and additional services in the community are important in making older Americans successful.

Kathy Greenlee, Assistant Secretary, Administration on Aging, U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, closed the briefing by summarizing the importance of milestones. This year, 2010, is the anniversary year for many major programs: 75th Anniversary of Social Security, 45th Anniversary of Medicare and Medicaid, 45th Anniversary of the Older Americans Act, 20th Anniversary of the Americans with Disabilities Act and the 10th Anniversary of the National Family Caregivers Program. All of these milestones have given benefits to seniors, with and without grandchildren. Now in 2010, we have the beginning of what will eventually be many more program anniversaries. She pointed out that there are opportunities in the Affordable Care Act for seniors and grandparents. Older Americans will benefit from new medical preventions, closing the donut hole in Medicare Part D, opportunities to support communities, support for an all encompassing approach to health care, and support for services in the community where most people want to age. Ten years from now, we will celebrate an additional milestone, the 10th Anniversary of the Health Care Reform Act. ■

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States United for Aging and Disabilities

SEPTEMBER 2010

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Article: *Senior Journal* Highlights the Issues
of Growing Older in Rhode Island

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Increasing Use of Networking Sites among Older Adults and NASUAD's New Initiative

As the world is becoming more dependent on the internet for everyday use, the older population is catching on and becoming part of this growing trend. Today, older adults make up the fastest growing group of networking site users, such as Facebook and Twitter. Sources say that older adults enjoy these sites as a practical way to see what friends and family are up to. In fact, there has been an 88% increase in users aged 50 to 64, and a 200% increase in adults 65 and older. The Pew Center identified that the older population likes these networking sites because it bridges the "generation gap," helps people connect with others from the past, and allows older adults to seek medical support online.

Because of the increasing use of the internet among the older population, nursing homes are introducing courses that teach new users how to

use networking websites. The National Association of State Units on Aging and Disabilities and some of its members, including the Ohio Department of Aging, the District of Columbia Office on Aging, and the Kansas Department on Aging, manage their own Facebook pages, a user-friendly webpage that is updated frequently with various articles and events. This form of networking is an interactive way for people to read updates as they are happening and post comments. Check out the NASUAD page and become a fan to see our updates at: <http://www.facebook.com/pages/National-Association-of-States-United-for-Aging-and-Disabilities/123832437663894>.

Watch for upcoming articles in our newsletter regarding social networking and its benefits for our members and older adults. Related story: <http://www.orlandosentinel.com/business/os-facebook-older-adults-study-20100827,0,1399395.story?page=2>. ■

Fall Prevention Awareness Day

September 23, 2010, will mark the third annual Fall Prevention Awareness Day. This year, the Senate Proclamation is being co-sponsored by Senator Mikulski, (D-MD). This year, 34 states are actively participating in activities to support this awareness day. For an advocacy toolkit concerning fall prevention, please visit: <http://stopfalls.org/advocacy/>. ■

National Memory Screening Day

The National Association of States United for Aging and Disabilities is supporting National Memory Screening Day on November 16, an annual initiative of the Alzheimer's Foundation of America (AFA) in which qualified healthcare professionals at local sites nationwide provide free, confidential memory screenings and educational materials to the public. Screening sites include Alzheimer's agencies, assisted living residences, long-term care facilities, doctors' offices, hospitals, senior centers, YMCAs, pharmacies and other community venues. The screening results do not represent a diagnosis; individuals with below-normal scores or those who still have concerns are encouraged to pursue further medical evaluation. Please sign up at a

screening site today by emailing Melissa Austen, AFA National Events Coordinator, at mausten@alzfdn.org. For more information, visit www.nationalmemoryscreening.org or call 866-AFA-8484. ■

Federal Court Case with Potential Impact to States' Medicare Savings Programs (MSP)

In *Narcisa Garcia, et al. v. Kathleen Sebelus, et al. No. 09-CV01747 (E.D. Pa., Order signed April 23, 2010)*, a federal judge in the United States District Court for the Eastern District of Pennsylvania approved a Settlement Agreement between low-income Medicare beneficiaries and the Pennsylvania Department of Public Welfare (DPW). See [Attached Motion for Approval](#)—which includes the terms of the settlement. In brief, the plaintiffs in the case challenged the length of time a Medicare beneficiary qualifies for Medicare Savings Programs (MSP) and the time they actually begin receiving the MSP benefits.

The *Garcia* case primarily addressed issues of data sharing and the need for greater understanding of, and attention to, enrollment complexities between the state Medicaid agency, which administers MSPs, and the Social Security Administration (SSA) and the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS). The Settlement Agreement focused on increasing the frequency of data sharing among the relevant entities to allow for timely enrollment into the program and prompt resolution of data discrepancies. Thus, the state Medicaid agency, Pennsylvania Department of Public Welfare, agreed to transition from monthly to daily data exchanges with CMS about enrollments of MSP applicants. It also agreed to submit Part A and Part B enrollments simultaneously, whereas previously it had submitted Part A enrollments only after the Part B enrollment had been verified.

While the *Garcia* settlement applies only to Pennsylvania, it is important to monitor legal developments and civic advocacy. Many advocates are turning their attention to this area, and states should be cognizant of their MSP practices, especially assuring prompt enrollment and resolution of data errors in the exchange of information between the CMS and the state.

Please note that by entering the Settlement Agreement DPW DID NOT ADMIT ANY LIABILITY, but in the interests of efficiency and to minimize costs, it agreed to enter into the Agreement in order to resolve the matter amicably—the Agreement was not a Consent Decree and it does not operate as an adjudication of the merits of the litigation.

If you have any questions or concerns, please contact Rex O'Rourke, rorourke@nasuad.org. ■

NEW RESOURCES AVAILABLE

Release of the Older Americans 2010: Key Indicators of Well-Being

Recent publication of the *Older Americans 2010: Key Indicators of Well-Being* identifies that the rapidly growing sector of older Americans is living longer and healthier lives than ever before. This study, among others, is identified in the 2010 report by The Federal Interagency Forum on Aging-Related Statistics, the fifth publication of its kind since 2000. The Forum was established in 1986 and is composed of 15 agencies, including the Administration on Aging, the Bureau of Labor Statistics, and the U.S. Census Bureau. *Older Americans 2010* provides 155 pages of updated indicators regarding population, economics, health status, health risks and behaviors, and health care, all encompassed in a comprehensive guide for policy-makers and the general public. For the complete *Older Americans 2010: Key Indicators of Well-Being* publication, please visit: http://www.agingstats.gov/agingstatsdotnet/Main_Site/Data/2010_Documents/Docs/OA_2010.pdf

To visit The Federal Interagency Forum on Aging-Related Statistics Homepage, please visit: http://www.agingstats.gov/agingstatsdotnet/Main_Site/Default.aspx ■

Senate Finance Committee Approves of new Assistant Secretary and Trustee Nominees

The Senate Finance Committee voted Michael C. Camuñez to be the new Assistant Secretary of Market Access and Compliance at the Department of Commerce, and Charles P. Blahous III and

Robert D. Reischauer as the Public Trustees of the Social Security and Medicare Trust Funds on August 5, 2010. Chairman Max Baucus (D-Mont.) said, “Filling these posts is an important part of our work to promote economic competitiveness, create the environment businesses need to create jobs and protect Social Security and Medicare for future generations.” The Public Trustees of the Social Security and Medicare Boards of Trustees, Blahous and Reischauer, will represent the public rather than the Administration, unlike most other Presidential appointments. ■

New SAMHSA Toolkit to Promote Mental Health and Prevent Suicide among Older Adults

As a result of a study showing that adults 65 and older have the highest suicide rate of any age group in the United States, the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration’s (SAMHSA) Center for Mental Health Services has create a toolkit for Promoting Mental Health and Preventing Suicide: A Toolkit for Senior Living Communities. The Toolkit includes resources for staff in senior living communities and is a free resource available for order or download on SAMHSA’s Health Information Network at: <http://mentalhealth.samhsa.gov/publications/allpubs/SMA10-4515/>. ■

AHRQ Launches Patient Centered Medical Home Website

AHRQ’s new website was launched recently to provide objective information to policymakers and researchers on the medical home. The site includes searchable access to a plethora of publications and other resources on the medical home, in addition to direct access to the exclusive AHRQ-funded white pages focusing on critical medical home issues. The website link is: http://www.pcmh.ahrq.gov/portal/server.pt/community/pcmh_home/1483. ■

New Tool: How to Effectively Communicate with, or About, Persons with Disabilities

In a world where persons with disabilities have unlimited employment opportunities, people are becoming increasingly concerned with saying and doing the “right things” as to not offend. When interacting with a person with a disability there are certain phrases and demeanors that can facilitate communication between parties. It is helpful to use positive language to empower the receiver in two-way communication. For example, it is appropriate to use phrases such as ‘person with a disability,’ ‘person who is blind,’ or person who is unable to speak’ to describe people with such disabilities, rather than using informal language. More tips on interacting with people with disabilities can be found on the Office of Disability Employment Policy (ODEP) website at: <http://www.dol.gov/odep/pubs/fact/effectiveinteraction.htm>. ■

New Simplified Online Tool to Help You Search for Health Coverage

On August 24, 2010, the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services released a new HealthCare.gov web tool to facilitate searches for health coverage options. The new tool is available for download and is easier than previous search tools. Small businesses, families, and consumers are now able to search for suitable coverage options and understand all of the benefits under the Affordable Care Act. It allows Americans to control their health care plans with all of the information they need at their disposal. Find more information at: http://www.healthcare.gov/stay_connected.html. ■

OMBUDSMAN CORNER

As states move towards increasing the number of individuals who live in the community and receive services, there is a growing conversation about who advocates for those persons living outside of institutions. In some states, the Long-Term Care Ombudsman program has taken on the responsibility of providing that advocacy.

In August, NASUAD received an inquiry from the Congressional Research Office asking how many states currently provide home and community ombudsman advocacy and how much funding was being provided in the last three fiscal years by the state to support this effort. The survey response from the states was excellent, but pointed to many problems inherent with this issue.

First, only over 20% of the states have a program that serves the population receiving services in the community. All of these programs are focused on responses to complaints. As many said, they simply do not have enough resources to visit this population in the same manner that is mandated by the Older Americans Act for persons in licensed adult long-term care facilities.

That brings up the second problem. States differ in their definition of, and licensing of, adult long-term care facilities. This disagreement, when spread to the community, raises the issue of “what is a home?”. Is it Assisted Living? Senior Apartments? Or Single Family Structures?

Funding is another major issue for the Long-Term Care Ombudsman because, in most states, it comes from many sources. All offices work with limited resources, both budgetary and their personnel.

NASUAD will make the survey information available to its members in the next few months. Many other issues need to be discussed. It seems to be a positive sign that policy makers at the local, state, and federal levels are beginning, or perhaps continuing, the conversation. ■

SCSEP CORNER

45th Anniversary of SCSEP and National Employ Older Workers Week

September 19-25, 2010, is National Employ Older Workers Week, a celebration recognizing the importance of the participation of older workers in the labor force and highlighting the Senior Community Service Employment Program (SCSEP), Title V of the Older Americans Act. This year marks the 45th Anniversary of the inception of the SCSEP, which has helped over one million older Americans enter the job market each year by providing them with workforce training in community service settings, giving them the skills and tools necessary to become competitive in today’s rapidly changing workforce.

In honor of National Employ Older Workers Week and in celebration of the 45th Anniversary of the SCSEP, the National SCSEP Grantees, in partnership with the State SCSEP Grantees, the National Association of States United for Aging and Disabilities (NASUAD), and the National Association of Area Agencies on Aging (n4a), have planned a special event in Washington, D.C.

The “SCSEP 45th Anniversary Celebration” will be held at the U.S. Capitol Senate Visitor’s Center on Wednesday, September 22, 2010, from 8:30 am to 11:00 am. The event will highlight the achievements of the SCSEP throughout the years, its relevance in today’s economy, and the needs of older workers in the future. Local SCSEP participants will also join the celebration to share their success stories. ■

Final Rule

On September 1, 2010, the Department of Labor’s Employment and Training Administration (ETA) issued their final SCSEP regulation in response to the 2006 reauthorization of the Older Americans Act. ETA issued their first proposed rules two years ago and received more than 1,505 comments on the regulations. The final rule goes into effect October 1, 2010. Key provisions include changes to time limits, a renewed focus on community service as a priority, and greater support for training and supportive services. To view the final rule in the Federal Register, click here: <http://www.gpo.gov/fdsys/pkg/FR-2010-09-01/pdf/2010-21139.pdf>. ■

I & R CORNER

NASUAD would like to congratulate the following individuals who participated in its AIRS training offered at the n4a Annual Conference in St. Louis, Missouri, on June 18, 2010. We received word that they have successfully passed their CIRS-A examination!

Melissa Brown
Western Egyptian
Chester, Illinois

Cindy Carlson
Mid-East AAA
Manchester, Missouri

Kay Curtis
Collinsville Faith
Collinsville, Illinois

Mary Dixon
Bond County Senior Center
Greenville, Illinois

Kimberly Elizalde
Western Egyptian EOC
Waterloo Senior Center
Waterloo, Illinois

Denise Flory
Hawkeye Valley Area Agency on Aging
Waterloo, Iowa

Ms. Kathryn Jones
Health Visions East St. Louis
East St. Louis, Illinois

Chris Kuchta
Siouxland Aging Services
Sioux City, Iowa

Anna Oestreich
Bond County Senior Center
Greenville, Illinois

Paula Wills
Health Visions East St. Louis
East St. Louis, Illinois

MIPPA CORNER

The National Association of States United for Aging and Disabilities (NASUAD) and the National Center for Benefits Outreach and Enrollment of the National Council on Aging (NCOA) are pleased to present a new innovative case study, *Alabama’s AmeriCorps Project—Leveraging resources to support increased community outreach and enrollment*. This case study examines how the Alabama State Health Insurance Assistance Program (SHIP) increased its capacity for benefits outreach and enrollment thanks to the recruitment of 13 AmeriCorps Members.

The AmeriCorps program has a natural synergy with SHIPs and the work they undertake. Moving forward, the AmeriCorps program can assist states and their SHIP to reduce costs and improve efficiency and effectiveness by mobilizing

volunteers, expanding services, and creating sustainable programs. As a direct result of the AmeriCorps Members, the Alabama SHIP was able to exponentially increase the number of beneficiaries served, enrollment events, educational presentations, and volunteers recruited.

To download this and other publications, please visit **NASUAD's website**. Limited hard copies are available from NCOA. Please e-mail centerforbenefits@ncoa.org to request a copy. If you have any comments or questions, please do not hesitate to contact Rex O'Rourke at rorourke@nasuad.org. ■

TASC CORNER

On July 20, 2010, Assistant Secretary on Aging, Kathy Greenlee, was a keynote speaker during the closing session of n4a's 35th Annual Conference and Tradeshow held in St. Louis, Missouri. The Assistant Secretary addressed the audience, focusing on the intersections of the aging network and the

Affordable Care Act. During her remarks, Assistant Secretary Greenlee emphasized that, embedded within the Affordable Care Act and implicit in its implementation, there are many opportunities for the aging network to become involved in health reform. By engaging key partners, beginning new conversations, and looking creatively at the intersections between health reform and the aging network, the changing health care landscape could provide great potential for growth. Specifically, the Assistant Secretary discussed four main areas of opportunity for the network: prevention, the Elder Justice Act, care transitions, and the CLASS Act. In doing so, she focused on the importance of forming successful partnerships to help influence the conversation at the national level, as well as the need to engage critical stakeholders to prepare for implementation at the state and local levels.

Looking ahead, given the vague language of the new law and the subsequent need for federal guidance to inform implementation, there will be many instances to inform the innovation that this guidance will contain. Additionally, the potential for the network to become involved in specific programs and initiatives authorized in the new law will continue to grow as these provisions are informed and implemented. Therefore, to play a key role in the nation's changing health care system, it is necessary for the network to look at health reform creatively in order to recognize and participate in the many opportunities the law includes to improve care for older adults and people with disabilities.

To learn more about the intersections that Assistant Secretary Kathy Greenlee sees between the aging network and The Affordable Care Act, and to see her remarks in their entirety, please visit n4a's website and view the webcast of her presentation: <http://www.n4a.org/training-events/annual-conference/>

For additional information on health reform, including NASUAD's detailed analysis of the Affordable Care Act, please visit our website: www.nasuad.org. ■

UPCOMING EVENTS

www.nasuad.org



ALZHEIMER'S FOUNDATION
OF AMERICA

**National Memory
Screening Day®**

Save the Date

November 16, 2010

[Click here](#) to sign up as a screening site for November 16, 2010

[Click here](#) for more information about National Memory Screening Day

*Send information about your upcoming conferences to be included in our newsletter to kwalter@nasua.org

IN THE STATES

Family Caregivers to Receive Federal Respite Support

The Assistant Secretary for Aging, Kathy Greenlee, announced on September 7, 2010, that twelve states will receive grant awards to implement the

Lifespan Respite Care Program. This program will help states to better coordinate their existing respite care services, as well as create new services and raise awareness of the issue. Congratulations to Delaware, Kansas, Louisiana, Massachusetts, Minnesota, Nebraska, New York, Oklahoma, Pennsylvania, Washington, Wisconsin, and Utah for their awards in this area.

Please see the [Administration on Aging's press release](#) for more details. ■

Senior Journal: Highlights the Issues of Growing Older in Rhode Island



Since the first *Senior Journal* program broadcasted in November 1988 featuring an interview with Adelaide Luber, then the Director of the Rhode Island Department of Elderly Affairs (DEA), more than 550 programs have been aired. That is more episodes than *M.A.S.H.*, *The Cosby Show*, or *Friends*. Recently, the cast was recognized by the Rhode Island Public Broadcasting for its more than 20 years of enthusiastic service to the state's seniors, caregivers, families and adults with disabilities by using the statewide interconnected cable broadcast system. With such an energetic and creative production crew in place, there is no sign that the *Senior Journal* is ready to fade to black.

The *Senior Journal* grew out of an idea that Larry Grimaldi, then an Information and Public Relations Specialist for DEA, heard about at a New England aging network agency conference workshop held in New Hampshire in 1987. The workshop focused on the use of then-fledgling cable television systems to educate and inform seniors, caregivers, and families about community programs and services that are designed to promote independence and dignity. Since the Rhode Island Public Utilities Commission requires that cable systems offer training and air time to create and broadcast community access programming as a condition of their

operating license, DEA staff approached Cox Communication with the idea for programming devoted to exploring the issues of growing older in Rhode Island. In an added bonus, *Senior Journal* would be produced by senior volunteers who could look at these issues through their personal perspectives.

Technical training and assistance is now offered by the Rhode Island Public Broadcasting and Rhode Island Public Education, Government and Government (PEG) Access staff.

"It's very invigorating and gratifying to be part of such an important effort," said Libby Arron of Cranston, current chairperson for the *Senior Journal*. "We try to focus on information and public awareness of the programs and services that help seniors enhance their quality of life."

Over the years, the *Senior Journal* has focused on topics such as Medicare and Medicaid, health insurance, community based programs, medical and mental health services, nutrition and wellness initiatives, housing, safety and security for seniors, medication assistance programs, and countless other subjects. It is estimated that the *Senior Journal* is broadcasted to a potential audience of more than 400,000 cable subscribers.

Continues.

Senior Journal: Highlights the Issues of Growing Older in Rhode Island (Continued)



“The *Senior Journal* has become an integral part of our public information and education programming,” declared Corinne Calise Russo, DEA Director. “It takes preparation, hard work, and research to produce the *Senior Journal* and these volunteers accept that challenge each week that they are in the studio.”

The crew of the *Senior Journal* has received many PEG awards over the years, which recognize excellence in community access programming. The *Senior Journal* has also received recognition from the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services for public information efforts regarding beneficiary services. The *Senior Journal* also received

an award from the American Association of Critical Care Nurses for programming about acute health services. All in all, the crew continues to produce informative and education programming about senior issues in Rhode Island.

Programs are sponsored by DEA with the support of Rhode Island PBS and Rhode Island Public Education and Government Access Television. The *Senior Journal* airs on Sundays at 5:00 p.m., Mondays at 7:00 p.m., and Tuesdays at 11:30 a.m. each week. Programs are broadcasted in two-week time blocks.

One fact is certain; the *Senior Journal* will be on the cable airwaves in Rhode Island for many years to come. ■

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