

LEHIGH TIMES

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Spring 2012

LEHIGH COUNTY AGING & ADULT SERVICES

We Want to Hear from You!

The Lehigh County Office of Aging and Adult Services is currently in the process of preparing its 2012-2016 Area Plan. The general public and providers of service can provide input and ideas concerning the programs and services of the agency. The agency's programs and services can be viewed on the County website at www.lehighcounty.org. The final plan will be a comprehensive document that will serve as a blueprint for future aging and disability services. Lehigh County's 4-Year Aging Plan will be submitted to the Pennsylvania Department of Aging.

Current providers of service, older adults, persons with disabilities, caregivers, and any interested resident in Lehigh County is encouraged to attend. The Four-Year Planning Process allows you the opportunity to provide input and ideas concerning programs and services to older adults and the disabled in Lehigh County.

Public Hearing for Area 4-Year Plan

Monday, April 30, 2012

2:00 PM

Lehigh County Government Center

Public Hearing Room

17 South 7th Street in Allentown

This is an opportunity for your voice to be heard. You may give a brief testimony, or you may submit your comments in writing and mail them to:

Kim Melusky, Program Analyst
Lehigh County Aging & Adult Services
17 South 7th Street
Allentown, PA 18101-2401

Written testimony must be received no later than Thursday, April 26, 2012.

Thank you for your interest.

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Special points of interest:

- If you know someone who is interested in receiving this Enewsletter, please have them contact Kim at (610) 782-3096 or email kimberlymelusky@lehighcounty.org.
- Feel free to print or email this newsletter.

Elder Abuse and Domestic Violence Training

Domestic violence in later life is largely unrecognized and underreported. "It is estimated that for every one case of elder abuse, neglect, exploitation, or self-neglect reported to authorities, about five more go unreported." (National Elder Abuse Incidence Study. 1998)

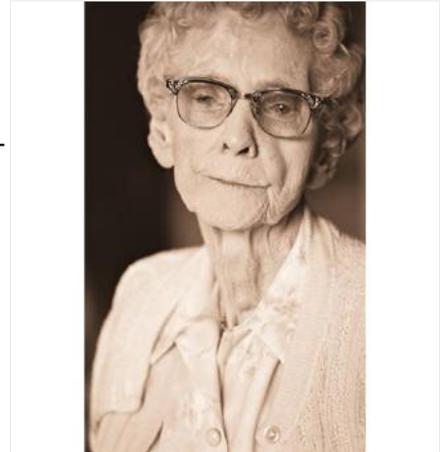
Researchers often construct their questions in ways that ignore the existence of domestic violence or do not differentiate it from general elder abuse. Although elder abuse and domestic violence in later life look similar, there are a few key differences. Perpetrators of elder abuse can be anyone with access to the person and/or their property and assets; including caregivers either in the home or in an institution. Domestic violence in later life

is perpetrated by a partner, family friend, or a "trusted" individual like a companion.

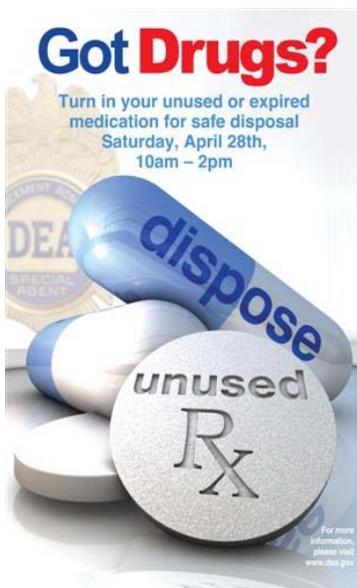
Lehigh County Aging and Adult Services and Turning Point of the Lehigh Valley are collaborating to improve services and educate senior residents in the Lehigh Valley who may be experiencing domestic violence or elder abuse. Presentations will be held at all Lehigh County senior centers and will focus on abuse indicators, who is at risk, how to reduce risk, and how to help others at risk.

No one deserves to be abused.

For a schedule of presentations at the senior centers, please visit www.lehighcounty.org or call Karen at (610) 782-3254.



National Take-Back Initiative



National Take-Back Initiative Saturday, April 28, 2012 10 am—2 pm

This is a great opportunity for those who have accumulated unwanted, unused prescription drugs to safely dispose of those medications.

- Unused or expired medications are a public safety issue, leading to accidental poisoning, overdose, and abuse.
- Pharmaceutical drugs can be just as dangerous as street drugs when taken without a prescription or a doctor's supervision.
- The non-medical use of prescription drugs ranks second only to marijuana as the most

common form of drug abuse in America.

- The majority of teenagers abusing prescription drugs get them from family and friends—and the home medicine cabinet.
- Unused prescription drugs thrown in the trash can be retrieved and abused or illegally sold. Unused drugs that are flushed contaminate the water supply. Proper disposal of unused drugs saves lives and protects the environment.

Visit www.dea.gov or call **1-800-882-9539** for a collection site near you.

Lehigh County Prescription Discount Card

Americans are paying more for prescription drugs than ever before. Without prescription coverage, staying healthy can come at a high price. With the Lehigh County Prescription Discount Card, free to county residents, you can save money on many of your prescription purchases.

Any county resident without prescription coverage can use this program. Even if you have insurance for prescription drugs, you may still benefit from the discount card, since it may save you money on prescription drugs your existing plan does not cover.

Your prescription discount card can be used for pets taking prescriptions that will be filled at a network pharmacy. The discount card will not work in the Veterinarian's Office.

Since the program began in October 2008, 35,481 total prescriptions have been filled in Lehigh County. Use of the prescription discount card has shown a cost savings of \$574,324.37 to Lehigh County residents since its inception.

Additional information about the Lehigh County prescription discount card is available at www.lehighcounty.org.

You may also print a card from the website. Please contact Kim Melusky at (610) 782-3096 or Melanie Hahn at (610) 782-3952 for additional information, to receive a card, or to receive a supply of cards for your organization.

Cards are available in both English and Spanish.



Lehigh County is 1 of 47 counties in Pennsylvania participating in the NACo prescription discount card program. The card can be used nationwide.

National Volunteer Week

“Honoring the people who dedicate themselves to taking action and solving problems in their communities.”

Established in 1974, National Volunteer Week has grown exponentially in scope each year since, drawing the support and endorsement of all subsequent U.S. presidents, governors, mayors and other respected elected officials.

National Volunteer Week is about inspiring, recognizing and encouraging people to seek out imaginative ways to engage in their communities. It's about demonstrating to the nation that by working together, in unison, we have the

fortitude to meet our challenges and accomplish our goals.

National Volunteer Week is about taking action, encouraging individuals and their respective communities to be at the center of social change—discovering and actively demonstrating their collective power to foster positive transformation.

National Volunteer Week is not only our moment in time to celebrate our volunteers, but to enable a nation to share ideas, practices, and stories, wherever they happen thereby shaping a movement to re-imagine the notion of citizenship for the 21st century.

Recognize those volunteers in your community during National Volunteer Week, April 15-21, 2012.

(Hands on Network)


**Celebrating
People in Action**
 National Volunteer Week
 April 15 - 21, 2012

Older Americans Month 2012

May is Older Americans Month, a perfect opportunity to show our appreciation for the older adults in our community. Since 1963, communities across the nation have joined in the annual commemoration of Older Americans Month—a proud tradition that shows our nation's commitment to celebrating the contributions and achievements of older Americans.

The theme for Older Americans Month 2012—Never Too Old to Play! - puts a spotlight on the important role older adults play in sharing their experience, wisdom, and understanding, and passing on that knowledge to other generations in a variety of significant ways. This year's celebrations will recognize the value that older adults continue to bring to our communities through spirited participation in social and faith groups, service organizations, and other activities.

As large numbers of baby-boomers reach retirement age, many communities have increased efforts to provide meaningful opportunities for older adults—many of whom

remain physically and socially active through their 80s and beyond. Current trends show that people over age 60 account for an ever-growing percentage of participants in community service positions, faith-based organizations, online social networking as well as arts and recreational groups.

Lifelong participation in social, creative, and physical activities has proven health benefits, including retaining mobility, muscle mass, and cognitive abilities. But older adults are not the only ones who benefit from their engagement in community life. Studies show their interactions with family, friends, and neighbors across generations enrich the lives of everyone involved. Young people who have significant relationships with a grandparent or elder report that these relationships helped shape their values, goals, and life choices and gave them a sense of identity and roots.

While Lehigh County Aging and Adult Services provides services, support, and resources to older Americans year-round, Older

Americans Month is a great opportunity to show special appreciation for some of our most beloved citizens. We have many reasons to celebrate them!



Lehigh County Aging and Adult Services is joining in the national celebration of Older Americans Month 2012 by holding its annual Unsung Hero Recognition on May 16, 2012 at 1:00 pm at the Lehigh County Government Center in Allentown. We invite you to join in the fun! To find out how you can support Older Americans Month and support the Lehigh County Unsung Hero Event contact Ann O'Keefe at (610) 782-3445.

Legislative Forum

The Lehigh Valley Fair Budget Coalition, a group of non-profits and local government organizations, will hold a Legislative Forum in the 6th floor conference room of Northampton Community College's Fowler Family Southside Center on East Third Street in Bethlehem on **Friday, April 13, at 1:00 PM**. A panel of elected officials will listen and respond to real stories from Lehigh Valley residents about how the proposed cuts will impact their lives.

According to the Lehigh Valley Fair Budget Coalition, Governor Corbett's proposed budget for 2012-2013 turns its back on Pennsylvania families and sacrifices long-

term economic growth to short-term budgetary savings. The proposed budget slashes education, human services and community and economic development programs that help individuals become productive and self-sufficient. Ironically, these programs save money over the long-run and build strong communities.

It doesn't have to be this way. Pennsylvanian Lawmakers can still keep their commitment to fiscal responsibility without balancing the budget on the backs of those most vulnerable.

We all want to live in healthy and thriving communities and we all understand that there needs to be

public and private investments in our communities in order to achieve that goal. Attend this forum if you would like to make your voice heard in discussions that will shape the future of the Lehigh Valley.

For additional information about the Legislative Forum, or with questions, please contact Elisa Zaehring at the Community Action Committee of the Lehigh Valley at (484) 893-1046 or ezaehring@caclv.org.

LEHIGH COUNTY AGING & ADULT SERVICES

Lehigh County Government Center
17 South 7th Street
Allentown, PA 18101

Phone: 610-782-3034
Fax: 610-820-2028
E-mail: agingandadult@lehighcounty.org



The Lehigh County Office of Aging and Adult Services is committed to supporting and empowering the well being of all adults of all ages, residing in Lehigh County. The office advocates for Lehigh County residents and provides a wide range of services and information to help adults to be well informed. Information and assistance is provided to enable individuals to remain active, healthy, productive and independent in their community.

For additional information, or to make a referral, please contact the Lehigh County Information and Referral Unit at (610) 782-3200.

We're on the web!

www.lehighcounty.org

Dates to Remember



Mark your calendar!

Visit Lehigh County Aging & Adult Services staff at one of the following community fairs this Spring...

11th Annual Health Fair and Blood Drive —Sunday, April 15th from 8:30 a.m. to 1:00 p.m. sponsored by St. Francis Parish Health Care Coalition.

Senior Fest—Thursday, April 19th from 10:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. at Agricultural Hall in Allentown.



To volunteer as an **Apprise Counselor or Volunteer Ombudsman**, or to receive more information about these volunteer opportunities, please call the agency at (610) 782-3034.



Remember...May is Older Americans Month!

Celebrating Older Americans Month, the agency will hold its **Twelfth Annual Unsung Hero Recognition** on Wednesday, May 16, 2012 at 1:00 pm. Call Ann O'Keefe at (610) 782-3445 for more information.