

LEHIGH TIMES

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LEHIGH COUNTY AGING & ADULT SERVICES

Long-Distance Caregiving

Anyone can be a long-distance caregiver, no matter your gender, income, age, social status, or employment. If you live an hour or more away from a person who needs your help, you're probably a long-distance caregiver.

Long-distance caregivers take on different roles. You may help with money management, bill paying, arrange for in-home care, provide emotional support or occasional respite, serve as an information coordinator, keep family and friends updated, organize paperwork in the event of an emergency, or make sure the home is safe.

If you are new to long-distance caregiving you should ask the primary care-

giver, if there is one, how you can be most helpful. Find out more about local resources and develop a good understanding of the person's health issues and other needs. It can also be helpful to visit as often as possible to see if there is something that needs to be done.

As a caregiver it is important to learn as much as you can about your family member's condition and any treatment. This can assist in preventing a crisis or in healthcare management.

Get written permission, as needed under the HIPAA Privacy Rule, to receive medical and financial information. To the extent possible, the family member should be the one to talk with healthcare providers.

During a visit, make time to actually spend time visiting with your family member. Try to make time to do things unrelated to being a caregiver, like watching a movie, playing a game, or taking a drive.

Don't underestimate the value of a phone and email contact list. It is a simple way to keep everyone updated on your parent's needs.

You can find additional tips and resources on long-distance caregiving from the National Institute on Aging.



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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.

May is Older Americans Month

Each year, more and more older adults are making a positive impact in and around our community. As volunteers, employees, educators, mentors, advocates, and more, they offer insight and experience that benefit the entire community. That's why Older Americans Month (OAM) has been recognizing the contributions of this growing population for 56 years.

Led by the Administration for Community Living (ACL) each May, Older Americans Month provides resources to help older Americans stay healthy and independent, and

resources to help communities support and celebrate their diversity.

This year's theme, **Connect, Create, Contribute**, encourages older adults and their communities to:

- **Connect** with friends, family and local services and resources.
- **Create** through activities that promote learning, health, and personal enrichment.
- **Contribute** time, talent, and life experience to benefit others.

Lehigh County will celebrate Older Americans Month with its annual Unsung Hero Event on May 15, 2019 recognizing local members of our community that take part in helping our community thrive.

Communities that support and recognize older adults are stronger! Join us in strengthening our community— this May and throughout the year.



Social Isolation Among Older Adults

Sponsored by ShareCare & Senior Corps RSVP and supported by the United Way of the Greater Lehigh Valley, a day-long program will be held on Tuesday, May 14, 2019 on **Social Isolation Among Older Adults**.

Guest speaker will be Janet Seckel-Cerrotti, Executive Director of FriendshipWorks. FriendshipWorks' mission is to reduce social isolation, enhance quality of life and preserve the dignity of older adults in the Greater Boston area. Founded in 1984, the organization is based on the

belief that no one should have to be alone, regardless of age or frailty. FriendshipWorks strives to achieve this vision by recruiting and training volunteers of all ages, faiths, and backgrounds to provide friendship, advocacy, education, assistance, and emotional support to the elderly.

The event will be held at Zentz Community Center, Fellowship Community, 3000 Fellowship Drive in Whitehall. Check in at 9 AM and the program runs from 9:30 AM to 2:30 PM. During the after-

noon session focus will be on solutions to reduce loneliness and isolation among the elderly who live in our community.

Please **register for Social Isolation Among Older Adults by April 30th** at <http://signup.com/go/LVZFgsq>. Enter your email address (you do NOT need to register an account on SignUp.com) and you will be emailed a confirmation.



Spring Cleaning Tips for Seniors

Tips to get your home ready for Spring...

Use the right tools

A duster with an extender helps you reach high places safely.

Check your smoke detectors and fire extinguishers

A good rule of thumb is to change your batteries when you change your clocks forward or backward. Check the expiration date on your fire extinguisher.

Clean out the medicine cabinet

Expired medications do you no good and clutter up your medicine cabinet. Dispose of any unused and expired medications.

Put away the clutter

It can be easy to set stuff into organized piles throughout the year, but use your spring cleaning to put everything away where it belongs and throw the rest away. Make sure nothing is out of place than can be a tripping hazard.

Use small bins

Bins are the best way to keep things clean and organized. Use small bins to reduce the possibility of injuries from hauling down larger bins.

If you haven't used it, get rid of it

For nearly everything in your home, if you haven't used it in the past year you should throw it out, donate it, sell it or give it away. This goes for

clothes, decorations, home décor—anything.

Know your limits

Realize that some tasks might be a bit cumbersome or could pose a risk if you were to do it. Know your limits. While spring cleaning may seem like a necessity, fall prevention is even more important.

Ask for help

Enlist the grandkids to wash your windows while you dust. Don't be afraid to ask friends and loved ones to lend a hand. People actually love feeling useful and needed.

(Information taken from www.hoveround.com)

National Volunteer Week

National Volunteer Week

kicks off on April 7th, with Good Deeds Day, a global day of service that unites people from more than 100 countries to do good deeds for the benefit of others and the planet.

It is a time to celebrate the impact of volunteer service on our communities. An opportunity to recognize and thank volunteers who lend their time, talent, voice and

support to causes they care about. Their stories serve to inspire others to take action, to realize their power to make a difference, and be a force that transforms the world.

National Volunteer Week was established in 1974 and has grown exponentially each year, with thousands of volunteer projects and special events. It is an opportunity to honor the impact of all those who do good in our communi-

ties, and inspire others to make a difference and improve the world.

(Info taken from Points of Light)



DO YOU HAVE MEDICARE?

Do you have questions about your coverage or current plan? Do you want to know if you are eligible to save money on your prescription drug costs and/or your Part B premium? Are you currently in the donut hole and need assistance?

The APPRISE PROGRAM can help!

What is APPRISE?

APPRISE is a free health insurance counseling program designed to help all Pennsylvanians with Medicare.

APPRISE counselors are specially trained staff and volunteers who can answer your questions and provide you with objective, easy-to-understand information.

You may qualify for financial assistance programs!
APPRISE wants to make sure you and your friends who have Medicare know about the Extra Help and Medicare Savings Programs.

Extra Help

Can help lower your prescription drug co-payments and premiums, and cover the cost of the coverage gap!

You may qualify if:

- If you are single and have total monthly income of less than \$1,561/month; and less than \$14,390 in resources
- If you are married and have a total monthly income of less than \$2,114/month; and less than \$28,720 in resources

*There are certain deductions taken for Extra Help. You may qualify even if you are above these limits.

Medicare Savings Program

Can help you with the payment of your Part B premium!

You may qualify if:

- If you are single and have a total monthly income of less than \$1,406/month; and less than \$7,730 in resources
- If you are married and have a total monthly income of less than \$1,903/month; and less than \$11,600 in resources

*Medicare Savings Programs can possibly help with the payment of your Medicare Part A and Part B cost-sharing. There are certain deductions taken for Medicare Savings Programs. You may qualify even if you are above these limits.

How can the APPRISE Program help you?

APPRISE can help with:

- Medicare
- Medicare Prescription Drug Plans (Part D)
- Medicare Advantage Plans
- Medicare Supplement Insurance (Medigap)
- Plan Comparison
- Medicaid
- Screening and applying for financial assistance programs
- Medicare Appeals
- Long-Term Care Insurance

Call today to get connected to the APPRISE Program in your area.

Lehigh 610-782-3200
Northampton 610-829-4540

APPRISE is a free service provided by the PA Department of Aging, and is funded in whole or part by a grant through the Administration for Community Living.





Pennsylvania Link to Aging and Disability Resources, commonly referred to as PA Link, is a cross-age system network of partner agencies who collaborate to service individuals who need long term care services and supports. The “no wrong door” approach attempts to minimize duplication of efforts by both consumer and provider.

To join our network, or for additional information on one of the upcoming trainings or workshops, contact Kim Melusky at kimberlymelusky@lehighcounty.org.

Many additional events sponsored by our partners are also listed at www.lehighnorthamptonlink.org under upcoming events. Check often!

Please look through this newsletter for upcoming events or visit www.lehighnorthamptonlink.org.

The next PA Link meeting will be May 15, 2019 and the training will be on the programs available from the Veterans Affairs Office. Contact kimberlymelusky@lehighcounty.org to register.

PA Link in Lehigh & Northampton

What PA Link has been up to in Lehigh and Northampton County lately...

PA Link held a training on ***Augmentative and Alternative Communication*** on January 16, 2019.

The annual ***Network Meeting*** for PA Link was held on March 20, 2019.

An information session on ***Community Health Choices*** was held on March 25, 2019.

LVCIL ***Transition Resource Fair and Cookie Bake Off*** was March 30, 2019.

Next PA Link training will be on May 15, 2019 on the programs and services available from the ***Veterans Affairs Office***.

Mark your calendar. The next ***Aging/ID Conference*** is scheduled for October 24, 2019 at DeSales University.



LEHIGH COUNTY AGING & ADULT SERVICES

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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!

Upcoming senior fairs....

Parkland Community Resource Fair, 4/6/19, 9 AM-12 PM at Parkland High School, 2700 N Cedar Crest Blvd in Allentown.

Rep. Simmons 2019 Healthy Aging Expo, 4/25/19, 10 AM-1 PM at Sacred Heart Senior Living by Saucon Creek, 4851 Saucon Creek Rd. in Center Valley.

Rep. McNeill & Sen. Boscola Health Fair, 4/26/19, 9 AM-12 PM at Whitehall Mall, 1259 Whitehall Mall in Whitehall.

St. Francis of Assisi's Annual Health Fair, 4/28/19, 9 AM-1 PM at St. Francis of Assisi Church Hall, 801 N. 11th Street in Allentown.

Lehigh Valley Senior Expo, 5/16/19, 9 AM-1 PM at AgriPlex, 302 N. 17th Street in Allentown.

Rep. Schlossberg and Rep. Schweyer Senior Health Fair, 5/17/19, 9 AM-12 PM at East Side Youth Center, 1140 E. Chair Street in Allentown.

Inner City Faith Collaborative Health Fair, 6/22/19, 11 AM-3 PM at Evangel Fellowship Church, 527 N. Saint Lucas Street 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.

To join our PA Link partners, visit our website at www.lehighnorthamptonlink.org.