January 29, 2016

Message from the Secretary

Though its impact is still being felt in communities and neighborhoods across Pennsylvania, one of the worst winter storms in the history of the commonwealth did not disturb the commitment of scores of social and health care workers who care for older Pennsylvanians.

From hospitals and nursing homes, to personal care homes and group homes, direct care workers, cooks, dietary aides, nurses, and support staff from various other facility departments worked around the clock to make certain that residents who rely on them for care and shelter were tended to before, during, and after the storm.

Administrators from facilities most directly impacted by the storm have shared countless stories hailing these often unsung heroes who left the solace of their own homes to ensure that their facility’s patients or residents would be safe, cared for and comfortable. Once such story involved an 18-year-old high school senior, Elsie McCarthy, who walked two miles so that she could be at her job at a Harrisburg-based assisted living community, ensuring that breakfast, lunch, and dinner was prepared, served, and cleared without interruption. Because of the dedication of workers like Ms. McCarthy, those who reside in such facilities don’t have to worry about having enough food or shoveling snow.

I would also like to praise our local area agencies on aging, who ensured that extra meals were delivered and extra wellness checks were made. In one local community, the area agency on aging director calmed the fears of an out-of-town son by ensuring that his elderly mother’s pilot light was functioning and the vent pipe on her roof was clear of snow.

This winter, the PA Department of Aging is reminding Pennsylvanians that while these dedicated workers have kept care facilities running, the majority of older adults who live on their own must practice caution and safety on their own accord when winter storms wreak havoc. While age alone does not make a person vulnerable or compromised in their capacity to respond to and recover from such storms, there is a correlation between advancing age and the likelihood of having special needs, such as being house-bound or socially isolated, having impaired mobility, or being reliant upon nursing, home health care or food from aging service providers or volunteer agencies. These needs increase frailty and thus heighten the need for an elderly citizen’s community to be good neighbors.

There have been numerous incredible examples of neighbors stepping up to support each other. When severe weather strikes, being a good neighbor can help save a life.

Here are some tips for checking on your elderly neighbors during winter weather:

- Take a few minutes to shovel out their driveway and sidewalks and clear the front of all the doors, so that even if the elderly occupant does not need to get out, if need be, medical personnel, home health workers, or volunteers can get in. If they have a car, offer to clean off the snow, start it up, and let it run for a few minutes.
Engage in a conversation with your elderly neighbors. Ask them if their smoke and carbon monoxide detectors work and if they have an adequate supply of oil, batteries, water, food, and medications. If you are headed to the market, call and ask if you can pick anything up for them.

Knock on the door of those you may not have seen out and about during and after the storm. Sometimes a quick check-in can make a big difference -- for safety or for those who may be lonely.

As we witnessed throughout the commonwealth during and after this weekend’s blizzard, facility and home based health and direct care workers, area agency on aging staff, and community neighbors did a tremendous job to care for Pennsylvania’s seniors, despite the extreme forces of Mother Nature. I thank them for their vigilance and commitment as together we strive to enable, empower, serve, and protect older Pennsylvanians.

Teresa Osborne
Secretary

Legislative Update

Upcoming Events
Governor Wolf is scheduled to present the “State of the State” Budget address on Tuesday, February 9 beginning at 11:30 a.m.

House Appropriations Hearing for Aging
February 24, 11:00 a.m.
Main Capitol, Room 140

Senate Appropriations Hearing for Aging
February 29, 3:00 p.m.
North Office Building, Hearing Room 1

General Assembly Update
The House and Senate are scheduled to return on Monday, February 8, 2016 at 1:00 p.m. No aging related legislation was introduced this week.

Personnel Update

Robyn Nesbitt and Shena Lofton are starting as part-time Paralegal externs with the Office of Chief Counsel, under the direction of Neeka Jones, Chief Counsel. Robyn begins on Monday, 2/1/16, and Shena begins on Wednesday, 2/3/16. Both are in the Paralegal Studies Program at Harrisburg Area Community College, with graduation expected in the spring. They can be reached at 717-425-5718.

Education and Outreach Office

PrimeTime Health
The PrimeTime Health program focuses on health promotion and disease prevention activities for older Pennsylvanians with a special focus on health risk screening, nutrition, chronic conditions, fall risk, exercise, and strengthening to prevent fall-related injury, monitoring behavioral health, and managing medications. To view upcoming programs offered through your local Area Agency on Aging, click here.
Bureau of Aging Services

Housing Symposium for Older Adults
On January 21, 2016, the Department of Aging, in collaboration with the Center for Community Action, Huntingdon-Bedford-Fulton Area Agency on Aging, Behavioral Health Services of Somerset and Bedford Counties, Inc., and PA Link to Aging and Disability Resources held a housing symposium, Housing Choices: A Symposium on Housing for Seniors in Bedford-Fulton-Huntingdon Counties, at the Holiday Inn Express Breezewood, in Bedford County. The purpose of the gathering was to bring together housing experts and human service communities in partnership to expand and explore housing options and opportunities for seniors and individuals with disabilities in the tri-county area. Through facilitated discussion, key housing issues and specific strategies were identified in each county to address housing needs.

The event featured:
- A demonstration and discussion on the importance of fostering partnerships between service agencies, managers and housing developers to address the housing deficits in these counties.
- Census data and survey analysis of senior housing needs in the counties and non-traditional alternative housing models to meet the needs of individuals wishing to age in place.
- An overview of the existing local resources available to seniors and those with disabilities in the region.

Protective Services Office

This is a reminder to all PA Area Agency on Aging staff that Temple University is accepting registrations for Protective Services trainings offered during the current fiscal year. Click here to visit the new registration site and register for trainings. Courses, class dates and locations can be found here.

PA Link to Aging and Disability Resources

Luzerne County
Event: Link Collaborative Partner Meeting
Description: Carmella Rynearson, Representative from Pennsylvania Assistive Technology Foundation (PATF) PATF’s mission is to provide education and financing opportunities for older Pennsylvanians and people with disabilities, helping them to acquire assistive technology devices and services that improve the quality of their lives.
Location: John Heinz Hospital, Patient Dining Room, 150 Mundy Street, Wilkes-Barre, PA
Date: February 17, 2016
Time: 9:30 am – 11:30 a.m.
Contact: adrc@aginglw.org
Registration Deadline: February 15, 2016

Berks County
Event: Circle of Life Coalition seminar: “Lakota Death & Dying Practices”
Description: Learn about the death and dying practices of the Lakota Indians. The Lakotas are a tribal Native American group that resides in the northern part of the United States. Dr. Omaha Boy was married to a full-blooded Lakota and lived on the Rosebud Reservation in South Dakota for eleven years. She will share the understanding the Lakotas have for the Circle of Life. Also learn about their practices at wakes and funerals. Free to attend.
Location: McGlinn Conference and Spirituality Center, 460 St. Bernadine St., Reading, PA  
Date: Thursday, February 4, 2016 – 8:15 to 9:15 am

**Lebanon County**  
**Event:** Workshop: “See the tree through the forest – Moving toward trauma-informed care”  
**Description:** Learn about the impact of trauma on brain functioning; Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACE) study; basic tenets of trauma-informed care and more during this four-hour workshop.  
**Location:** Grace M. Pollock Training & Community Center, 283 South Butler Road, Mt. Gretna, PA 17064.  
**Date:** Wednesday, March 16 – 10:00 am to 2:00 pm  
**Contact:** 717.380.9714 or email bllink@mail.com  
**Registration Deadline:** Please register ASAP

Event: Lebanon County Link partners’ network cross-training meeting  
**Description:** Everyone is invited to come to the monthly cross-training meeting. This month’s program is the Lebanon County Mental Health / Intellectual Disabilities / Early Intervention Program. A team of staff professionals from the Lebanon County MH/ID/EI team will provide insight into individual programs and services provided.  
**Location:** 220 East Lehman Street, Lebanon, PA 17046 – 2nd floor conference room  
**Date:** Friday, February 5, 2016. 8:30 to 9:45 am  
**Contact:** 717.380.9714 or email bllink@mail.com  
**Registration Deadline:** February 3, 2016

**McKean County**  
**Event:** “Within Your Reach” Assistive Technology Initiative coming to Port Allegany  
**Description:** LIFT will launch its newest assistive technology display at the S.W. Smith Memorial Library featuring telephones, communication aids, daily living aids, learning aids and adaptive toys for children. There will be demonstrations of various assistive technology and assistance with applications and information on funding opportunities.  
**Location:** S.W. Smith Memorial Library – 201 East Maple St., Port Allegany, PA  
**Date:** Thursday, February 11, 2016  
**Time:** 1:00 p.m.  
**Contact:** 814-781-3050

**Clearfield County**  
**Event:** Veterans Health Summit  
**Description:** A free event for veterans, veterans couples, veterans family members, and healthcare providers that will shed light on how combat-related stressors impact the veterans’ ability to establish and maintain relationships after their experience. See brochure for more details.  
**Location:** Penn Highlands DuBois Central Resource Center Assembly Room, 204 Hospital Ave  
**Date:** Wednesday, February 17, 2016  
**Time:** 5:30 pm to 8:30 pm  
**Registration Deadline:** February 12, 2016  
**Contact:** Cindy Carnahan  
   Email: cjcarnahan@phhealthcare.org  
   Phone: 814-375-3428
**Dauphin County**

**Event:** SA 9 Dauphin County Cross Training  
**Description:** Adult Protective Service Training – Presenters are Elena Welsh from Dauphin County AAA and Kirk Golden and Sheila Caperelli from Liberty Healthcare  
**Location:** Pheasant Hill Estates, 4400 Pheasant Hill Rd, Harrisburg PA, 17110  
**Date:** February 9, 2016 @ 10:00am  
**Contact:** vmonsted@ccpa.net

**Franklin County**

**Event:** SA 9 Franklin County Cross Training  
**Description:** Representatives from the following offices: Franklin County Legal Services, Franklin County MH/ID/EI, & Commuter Services of PA will present on available services.  
**Location:** Franklin County AAA, 600 Norland Ave, Suite 11, Chambersburg PA, 17201  
**Date:** February 9, 2016 @ 1:00pm  
**Contact:** arpickel@franklincountypa.gov or 717-261-0631

**Clearfield County**

**Event:** Childrens’ Health Fair – a partnership of CenClear and PennState Hershey  
**Description:** A FREE event for families with children ages 0-5 who are interested in learning about prenatal and child health, checking vision, hearing and developmental milestones and having an evening of family fun and much more.  
**Location:** CenClear – 1633 Philipsburg Bigler Highway, Philipsburg, PA 16866  
**Date:** February 4, 2016 (inclement weather date = February 11th)  
**Time:** 6:30 p.m. - 8:30 p.m.  
**Contact:** CenClear – (814) 342-5678, ext. 2261

**Announcements**

**Family Caregivers Needed for National LEAF Study.**  
Researchers at The University of California, San Francisco are testing the LEAF (Life Enhancing Activities for Family Caregivers) project for family caregivers of people with dementia designed to increase levels of positive emotion, which in turn can help lower stress and support ways of coping with the stresses of caregiving.  
Further information and enrollment is available at [http://leafstudy.ucsf.edu/](http://leafstudy.ucsf.edu/).

**Statewide Plan on Independent Living Comment Survey**

The Statewide Independent Living Council is gathering information about the concerns and ideas that people with disabilities have about living independently in Pennsylvania. This information will be used to conduct planning and to use resources to improve the quality of life in the future. The survey can be accessed by [clicking here](http://leafstudy.ucsf.edu/).

**ASA’s 2016 Leadership Institute**

ASA’s 2016 Leadership Institute will be held from March 20-24, 2016, in Washington, D.C. This is an opportunity to uncover your unique leadership qualities and become an agent of change within your organization and the field of aging.

This five-day leadership development intensive offers assessment of your communication and leadership styles, a review of major shifts in the field of aging, as well as presentations and networking opportunities with leaders in the field of aging.
Successful candidates are professionals in the field of aging with at least three years’ experience and a strong interest in building leadership skills. Full participation in pre-institute assessments, February webinar, and onsite activities is required to be awarded a certificate of completion. Learn more and enroll before February 18 at http://asaging.org/leader.

Senior Hunger Relief Toolkit
The Senior Hunger Task Force has created a Senior Hunger Relief Toolkit, and is hosting a free workshop for partners in the aging community, emergency food system, faith organizations, community leaders and healthcare and social service providers. Workshop will take place on February 11, 2016, 10:00am-12:00pm.

Philadelphia Corporation for Aging
642 N. Broad Street, 2nd Floor Conference Room
Philadelphia PA, 19130

Please RSVP by Feb. 1 to tsen@hungercoalition.org or call 215-430-0555 ext.101. Can't make the meeting? Download the toolkit here.

Grant Opportunities

DMVA Announces Veterans’ Trust Fund Grant Funding Opportunities
The Department of Military and Veterans Affairs (DMVA) announced the availability of up to $550,000 in competitive grants from the Veterans’ Trust Fund (VTF).

Grant information can be found at www.vtf.pa.gov. Grant applications must be received at DMVA by 4 p.m. Eastern Standard Time on Friday, Feb. 5, 2016. Late submissions will be administratively rejected without review.

HUD offers approximately $15 Million in Grants
The U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) today announced it is making approximately $15 million available to test a promising housing and services model for low-income seniors to age in their own homes and delay or avoid the need for nursing home care. Read HUD’s Notice of Funding Availability (NOFA).

HUD requires prospective grantees to submit applications electronically at www.grants.gov. Applicants are urged to sign up for their notification service to receive periodic updates or changes to these offerings.

** If you have something you wish to include, please contact us. Kindly direct your comments and suggestions to Drew Wilburne in the Press Office drwilburne@pa.gov.