

Elder Services

of Berkshire County, Inc. • Proudly promoting Elder Independence since 1974 •

Berkshire Senior

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The monthly newspaper for Berkshire County seniors

Free



Supportive Day Program dynamic duo, Janie Bates, Coordinator, and Manny Slaughter, Head Activity Leader, prepare for their day... "Let's Do It!...What a team!"

Fun at Froio in the Supportive Day Program, an option for seniors

By John Arthur Miller

As Pittsfield celebrates 25 years of senior successes at the Ralph J. Froio Center, we at Elder Services of Berkshire County wish to give a nod to one successful program that has been a great part of that Senior Center for over twenty years.

The Supportive Day Program has been helping to support elder independence for numerous seniors, capably led and championed by a great team.

The program is based on a social model where participants are generally independent with Activities of Daily Living (ADLs) but who require some assistance and supervision. It provides a safe environment, offering respite for families, with socialization and activities in a group setting. A trained

staff creates a supportive atmosphere, helping to meet the needs and interests of each participant.

I stopped in for a visit, experiencing and enjoying some trivia games and chair exercises after lunch, then a bit more active game of pool, followed by an afternoon snack and wonderful conversation. These are examples of the myriad and well-planned activities and schedule that engage the participants, many of whom are experiencing early stages of dementia.

I also had a chance to sit down for a chat with two of the amazing staff. Janie Bates, Coordinator, has been the petite but mighty, fiery but loving, fit leader of the program for the last twenty years. Manny Slaughter,

Head Activity Leader, has been the loveable, energy filled, dedicated assistant for the last six years. They are also assisted by Amanda Daury, another Activity Leader, and volunteers who complete a team filled with love and passion for the people of their group aptly named The Happy Club. Janie emphasized that Peggy Miles, Jack Soules and Cathy Soules, three regular volunteers, are "worth their weight in gold!"

The Happy Club begins for many with pick-up at their home by the Senior Center transportation van, arriving at the Froio Center at 9:00am. Family members can also drop off some folks. From 9 a.m. until 3 p.m. The Happy Club is a beehive of activity

FUN PAGE 14



Take a free "staycation" during July and August
See page 9



The sun keeps rising: Why seniors can't skip UV protection

By Robert A. Norman, M.D.

Congratulations. You've survived life's slings and arrows, and made it to your senior years. It took some brains. It took common sense. Now is not the time to abandon those assets.

Many older people seem to feel that after navigating past decades of life's pitfalls, they can cast caution to the winds – especially when it comes to sun exposure. The thinking may go like this: "I've never had skin cancer. It takes decades for skin cancer to develop, so I'm never

going to get it. I'm moving to Arizona and reveling in the sun."

The downside of longer life

The first flaw in that thinking is that none of us know how long we will live; Mickey Mantle, who died of cancer at age 63, famously said, "If I knew I was going to live this long, I'd have taken better care of myself." We need to keep taking care of ourselves to extend our lives and stay strong and healthy as long as possible.

The average lifespan in the industrial world has been rising steeply. By 2020, 25% of the US workforce will be composed of older workers — sometimes called the Silver Tsunami—and

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Like Elder Services of Berkshire County, Inc.



Elder Services Update

A letter from the Board of Directors



Toni Fontana, President Board of Directors

Elder Services of Berkshire County (ESBC) is an organization that serves the growing senior community of the Berkshires. Currently, approximately 21% of Berkshire County residents are seniors, and that number is growing each year.

ESBC has over 100 staff members and nearly 200 volunteers including 12 board members who oversee a compendium of programs and services.

Among the programs that ESBC provides are:

Meals on Wheels provides over 700 daily meals (206,500 meals served in 2017); Home Care services and management to support seniors aging at home; SHINE (Serving Health

Insurance Needs of Everyone), which counsels Berkshire county residents about Medicare options and annually saves our seniors an average of \$1,400 per person; the Money Management Program to help seniors manage their home budgets; and the Ombudsman program that advocates for long-term care residents.

Additionally, ESBC handles all sorts of assistance for elders, those living with dementia, their care partners, and family.

ESBC does its work based on the premise that our community has an obligation to support the most vulnerable homebound seniors who have worked all their lives and contributed to society, and who now need to feel that someone cares. ESBC believes that everyone has the right to live independently and to age with dignity.



Berkshire Senior

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Signed columns are the opinion of the writers and not necessarily the opinion of Elder Services. For medical, financial or other advice, seek a qualified professional in the appropriate field.

Elder Services and its programs are funded, in part, by the Massachusetts Executive Office of Elder Affairs.

State and federal funds provided to Elder Services are limited. Elder Services welcomes charitable donations to help meet the growing needs of Berkshire seniors, and gratefully acknowledges all donations.

We, the Board of Directors, are honored to serve Berkshire seniors, their care partners and their families. We are committed to the task of raising awareness of ESBC, its services, its effectiveness, and the importance of our programs and wide range of people served.

Please know that we care.

Toni Fontana, President Board of Directors

Elder Services thank you notes

Dear Lisa,

I received your information. It was informative so I thank you.

I look forward to meeting my geriatric case manager in the future. Do know from the get go, I appreciate your involvement on my behalf.

David D.

Dear Elder Services,

I wish to thank all who were involved in my obtaining an air conditioner for my home. Thank you so much. It is greatly appreciated.

Patricia S.

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Newsletter

Register TODAY to receive weekly updates, community news, and access to all things Berkshire Senior.

Sign up at www.Facebook.com/BerkshireSenior or email esbc@esbci.org with OPT-IN in the subject line.

Elder Services of Berkshire County, Inc. Berkshire Senior Bulletin

March Issue: Berkshire Senior Newspaper

Meals on Wheels Menu

Elder Services' Adult Family Care Program: A place to call home

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Inside the eNews Weekly

WANTED: Volunteers who want to make a difference

Massachusetts Long Term Ombudsman Training

LUNCH

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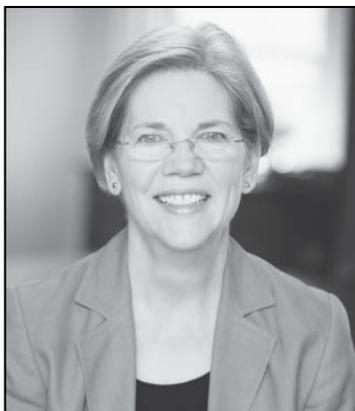
Meals on Wheels

Elder Services

Government Update

Protecting and strengthening health care for seniors

By U. S. Senator Elizabeth Warren



Medicare State Health Insurance Assistance Programs (SHIPs) are important programs operating in all 50 states that help beneficiaries enroll in the Medicare plans that are right for them, resolve billing issues, and navigate the Medicare system. Across the country, seniors and SHIP counselors are fighting to preserve this program, and I am committed to working to strengthen SHIP in the federal budget.

In Massachusetts, SHIP funds support the Serving the Health Insurance Needs of Everyone (SHINE) program, free to Medicare beneficiaries or those about to become eligible for Medicare. SHINE programs are available across the state through local councils on aging, senior centers, and other community-based agencies, or by phone.

I hear from seniors across the state who have questions about their Medicare coverage or need help navigating the Medicare system. The SHINE program has been an important tool for many beneficiaries. SHINE provides a guide as patients evaluate their options, seek to understand the new Medicare card, or look for ways to lower health care costs.

Cutting SHIP funds would have devastating consequences on the SHINE program and on seniors and people with disabilities. During the last budget fight, President Trump proposed wiping out funding for these important programs.¹ I'm glad that in the final FY 2018 funding bill, Congress instead protected these programs and actually increased funding by \$2 million.²

We are now in the middle of a new budget fight, and President Trump has once again proposed wiping out funding for SHIP.³ This senseless cut would only hurt seniors and people with disabilities, taking away one of the main resources available to help these individuals access the health care they deserve. I have been working with several other senators to push for additional funding for SHIP.

While we work to provide robust funding for SHIP, we must also continue fighting to strengthen Medicare. Republicans in Congress have supported proposals that would harm critical programs for seniors and individuals with disabilities, including turning Medicare into a voucher program or altering

Medicare eligibility requirements. I oppose these proposals because they would mean cutting benefits for seniors, people with disabilities, and families that need health coverage. Pushing medical costs onto the shoulders of our seniors who have already worked a lifetime for the promise of Medicare is

1 https://www.hhs.gov/sites/default/files/Consolidated%20BIB_ONLINE_remediated.pdf (p. 86)

2 <https://www.congress.gov/crec/2018/03/22/CREC-2018-03-22-bk3.pdf> (p.52)

3 <https://www.hhs.gov/sites/default/files/fy-2019-budget-in-brief.pdf> (p.110)

fundamentally wrong.

People worked hard to earn their Medicare coverage — it is not a handout. SHIP was designed to support our nation's seniors and people with permanent disabilities in their communities and make sure they get the care they were promised. As your senator in Washington, I am focused on protecting and strengthening every one of these promises.

To contact U.S. Senator Elizabeth Warren call 1-202-224-4543 or in Springfield 1-413-788-2690, or email her at her website www.warren.senate.gov.

Federal + State Elected Officials

It's important to keep your elected officials informed about what is important to you.

If you have questions or comments that you want to share with your officials, you can contact them using the information below:

Federal

U.S. Senator Elizabeth Warren: 1-202-224-4543, Springfield 1-413-788-2690, www.warren.senate.gov

U.S. Senator Edward Markey: 1-202-224-2742, Springfield 1-413-785-4610. www.markey.senate.gov

U.S. Rep Richard Neal: 442-0946, 1-413-785-0325, <http://neal.house.gov>

State

Governor Charlie Baker: 1-617-725-4005, 1-888-870-7770 (in state), 1-413-784-1200, www.mass.gov/governor

State Senator Adam Hinds: 1-413-344-456, 1-617-722-1625, adam.hinds@masenate.gov, Facebook: Senator Adam Hinds

State Rep John Barrett, III (1st Berkshire District): 664-6812, 1-617-722-2400, john.barrett@mahouse.gov

State Rep Paul Mark (2nd Berkshire District): 464-5635, 1-617-722-2692, Paul.Mark@mahouse.gov, www.paulwmark.com

State Rep Tricia Farley-Bouvier 3rd Berkshire District: 442-4300, 1-617-722-2240, Tricia.Farley-Bouvier@mahouse.gov, <http://triciafarleybouvier.com>

State Rep Smitty Pignatelli 4th Berkshire District: 637-0631, 1-617-722-2017, rep.smitty@mahouse.gov, www.facebook.com/RepWilliamSmittyPignatelli

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Document Checklist

GETTING OR RENEWING A MA DRIVER'S LICENSE, LEARNER'S PERMIT, OR MA ID CARD?

On March 26, 2018, you need documents showing U.S. citizenship or lawful presence as required by federal and state law. Review the checklist below for the types of documents you will need. All documents MUST be originals.

GET READY

STEP 1:

Locate your Social Security Number (Choose 1 document for REAL ID. For a Standard ID, SSN must be verified electronically.)

- SSN Card
- W-2 Form
- SSA-1099 Form
- Non-SSA-1099 Form
- Pay stub with applicant's name and SSN



*Applicant without an SSN must present an SSA denial notice, foreign passport, Visa, and I-94. Document presented must display full nine digits of SSN.

STEP 2:

Choose one lawful presence/ date of birth document

- U.S. Passport/Passport card
- Certified copy of U.S. birth certificate
- Certificate of Citizenship (Form N-560 or N-561)
- Certificate of Naturalization (Form N-561 or N-570)
- Consular Report of Birth Abroad (Form FS-240, DS-1350, FS-545)
- Permanent Resident Card (Form I-551)
- Employment Authorization Card (Form I-766 or I-688B)
- Foreign Passport with U.S. Visa affixed and I-94 Stamp



STEP 3:

Choose a MA residency document (2 for REAL ID, 1 for MA Standard ID)

- MA RMV-issued documents such as a renewal letter
- State/Federal/Municipal/City/Town/Country Agency-issued documents such as 1st class mail, MA-issued professional license with photo, Medicaid statement, firearms card, jury duty summons, court correspondence, property tax, or excise tax dated within 60 days
- Bills such as a utility bill, credit card statement, or medical statements dated within 60 days
- Lease, mortgage, or rental contract dated within 60 days
- Financial-related documents such as a bank statement with image of personal checks, W-2, pension statement, retirement statement, pay stub, SSA statement, or installment loan contract dated within 60 days
- School-issued documents such as school transcript, proof of enrollment, tuition bill, school record for the current year

GET YOUR LICENSE/ID

- Start application online at mass.gov/ID.
- For renewals applicants must choose:
 - Standard license or ID card: may be able to complete online.
 - REAL ID license or ID card: must visit a RMV Service Center or a AAA office (if member).
- All first-time applicants must visit a RMV Service Center and bring appropriate documents.
- A REAL ID license/ID costs the same as a Standard license/ID.

GO ONLINE TO LEARN MORE
mass.gov/ID

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Caregiving

Caregiving changes your life

BY Joseph Choon

Caring for a loved one or a significant other can be a daunting task. There are myriad caregivers and those they care for. Every caregiver, who they are caring for and their relationship is unique, the people are as individual as a snowflake or fallen autumn leaf.

Many caregivers experience a whole range issues stress, anger, isolation, a feeling of abandonment from friends and family, questioning self, financial burden, and a loss of a sense of fulfillment.

When a caregiver is caring for someone with a progressive disease like Alzheimer's or other dementias, Stroke, Multiple Sclerosis, Parkinson's disease, Muscular Dystrophy, Cerebral Palsy, or many other illnesses, their caregiving also becomes progressive. At early onset, caregiving requires only a few minutes a couple of days per weeks. Gradually those few minutes change to few hours and then a few hours daily and then to 24/7 care.

The caregiver's responsibilities change along with the progression. At first, the changes can be subtle. Then the care recipient may require assistance with walking, bathing, dressing or cooking. It may be that the care recipient can no longer balance a checkbook or manage their finances. These changes require the caregiver to take on these tasks. Over time, the caregiver emotionally and physically can hit a wall. They may ask themselves, "How did I get here." They are experiencing caregiver burnout.

Caregiver burnout can be

emotional and physical. They may experience depression, feelings of anger or guilt, engage in alcohol or drug abuse, gain or lose weight, changes in sleep, fatigue and many other symptoms.

Caregivers are special people. Not all of us has the ability or willingness to take on the commitment these caregivers have made. You may ask is there help available? The answer is yes. They can take advantage of resources in our local community. Many of these resources are free of charge. There are many Caregiver Support Groups in Berkshire County. Specific trainings such as Powerful Tools for Caregivers or Savvy Caregiver are usually one day a week for two hours and last for six weeks.

Often caregivers need help with being stressed over caregiving responsibilities, with the difficulty of balancing job, family and caregiving commitments, help with feelings of anxiety, anger, loss and/or sadness because of caregiving.

Elder Services of the Berkshires and its Family Caregiver Support Program are a wonderful resource for caregivers who are caring for someone over age 60, are caring for someone under age 60 who has an Alzheimer's disease or a related dementia, physical disability, developmental disability, or mental illness. If you or someone you know wants to access these resources, please contact the Elder Services' Information and Referral department at 499-0524.

Joseph Choon is Elder Services' Caregiver Coordinator.

"Today's Caregiver" Family Checklist

The most loving gift a person can give to one's family is to put your affairs in order before a disaster or medical emergency. To assist in providing that gift, "Today's Caregiver" has compiled the following list. The information and documents you should have prepared:

- All bank accounts, account numbers and types of accounts and the location of banks.
- Insurance Company, policy number, beneficiary as stated on the policies and type of insurance (health, life, long term care, automobile, etc).
- Deed and titles to ALL property.
- Loan/lien information, who holds them and if there are any death provisions.
- Social Security and Medicare numbers.
- Military history, affiliations and papers (including discharge papers).
- Up-to-date will in a safe place (inform family where the Will is located).
- Living Will or other Advanced Directive appropriate to your state of residence.
- Durable Power of Attorney.
- Instructions for funeral services and burial (if arrangements have been secured, name and location of funeral home.)

This material is courtesy of Today's Caregiver (caregiver.com).

Oral hygiene for those with Alzheimer's

Poor oral hygiene can lead to infection, gum disease, or toothaches. Demonstrating the steps of brushing can be a simple way to help a person with Alzheimer's brush her* own teeth. Allow her to imitate you, one step at a time. Sometimes if you start the motion, her lifelong habit may take over. Try guiding the hand that is holding the toothbrush until she takes over on her own. Brushing your teeth at the same time as the person may help encourage her.

Other suggestions for good oral hygiene:

- Dispense toothpaste as needed rather than leaving the tube out.
- Try using a long-handled or angled brush if you are doing the brushing.
- Be aware of medications that cause dryness of the mouth. Frequent mouth rinses can help dry mouth, but avoid commercial rinses that contain alcohol, which contributes to dryness.
- Continue routine dental appointments as long as possible.

If the person wears dentures, you may need to supervise the cleaning process and see that they fit properly. Poorly fitting dentures make it difficult to eat and digest food.

Questions About Services for Seniors?

Call Elder Services of Berkshire County! 499-0524

CAREGIVER DISCUSSION GROUPS



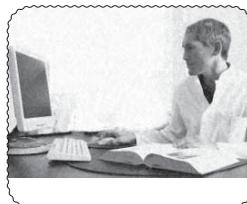
Elder Services' Caregiver Coordinator Joe Choon leads monthly caregiver discussion groups. Unless otherwise noted, the groups meet at Elder Services.

- **2nd Tuesday, 10 - 11:30 a.m., at Elder Services**
- **3rd Wednesday, 1 - 2:30 p.m., Gt. Barrington COA**
- **4th Thursday, 1 - 2:30 p.m., North Adams' Spitzer Center**

New members are always welcome. There is no charge. Come for conversation, support, & helpful information.

For information call 499-0524 or 1-800-544-5242.

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The Center is at Elder Services, 877 South Street in Pittsfield and offers:

- books
- videos
- brochures
- journals
- and more

Use this invaluable resource when you or someone you know needs Alzheimer's information.

Call 499-0524 for more information.

SHINE (Serving the Health Insurance Needs of Everyone)



10 things to know about your new Medicare card

Medicare is mailing new Medicare cards starting in April 2018. Here are 10 things to know about your new Medicare card:

1. Mailing takes time: Your card may arrive at a different time than your friend's or neighbor's.
2. Destroy your old Medicare card: Once you get your new Medicare card, destroy your old Medicare card and start using your new card right away.
3. Guard your card: Only give your new Medicare Number to doctors, pharmacists, other health care providers, your insurers, or people you trust to work with Medicare on your behalf.
4. Your Medicare Number is unique: Your card has a new number instead of your Social Security Number. This new number is unique to you.
5. Your new card is paper: Paper cards are easier for many providers to use and copy, and they save taxpayers a lot of money. Plus, you can print your own replacement card if you need one!
6. Keep your new card with you: Carry your new card and show it to your health care providers when you need care.
7. Your doctor knows it's coming: Doctors, other health care facilities and providers will ask for your new Medicare card when you need care.
8. You can find your number: If you forget your new card, you, your doctor or other health care provider may be able to look up your Medicare Number online.
9. Keep your Medicare Advantage Card: If you're in a Medicare Advantage Plan (like an HMO or PPO), your Medicare Advantage Plan ID card is your main card for Medicare – you should still keep and use it whenever you need care. However, you also may be asked to show your new Medicare card, so you should carry this card too.
10. Help is available: If you don't get your new Medicare card by April 2019, call 1-800-MEDICARE (1-800-633-4227). TTY users can call 1-877-486-2048.

You have the right to get Medicare information in an accessible format, like large print, Braille, or audio. You also have the right to file a complaint if you feel you've been discriminated against. Visit cms.gov/about-us/agency-information/2010-2011-compliance-and-accessibility or call 1-800-MEDICARE (1-800-633-4227) for more information. TTY users can call 1-877-486-2048.



CMS Product No. 15018 January 2018

Where You Can Meet with a SHINE Counselor*

City/Town/Phone	Address
Adams 743-8333	Visitors Center 3 Hoosac Street
Becket/Otis/Sandisfield 269-0100 x107	Otis Town Hall One North Main Road
Dalton 684-2000	Senior Center 40 Field Street Extension
Great Barrington 528-1881	Claire Teague Senior Center 909 South Main Street
Hinsdale 655-2310 or 655-2929	Hinsdale Town Hall 39 South Street
Lanesborough 448-2682	Lanesborough COA 83 North Main Street
Lenox 637-5535	Community Center 65 Walker Street
North Adams 662-3125	Spitzer Center 116 Ashland Street.
Pittsfield 499-9346	Ralph J. Froio Senior Center 330 North Street
Stockbridge 298-4170 x263	Senior Center 50 Main Street
Williamstown 458-8250	Harper Center 118 Church Street

* There is no charge for meeting with SHINE counselors.

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BEWARE!

Scam artists are on the prowl.

Reputable repairmen do not knock on doors offering their services for some "needed repairs" they just happened to spot while driving by, such as: driveways, ice on the roof, steps, gutters, bargain rate tree trimming, etc.

Check their license plate number and report to the police.

Do not give out your Social Security number or checking account numbers over the phone. Ignore tempting offers.

Don't Be a Victim!

If it sounds too good to be true, it probably is.

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Berkshire Medical Center
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Excellence in Cardiology Care: Berkshire Medical Center

Health take-away

Wellness visits improve quality of care for Medicare patients

By Daniel Doyle, M.D.

As more and more Medicare patients take advantage of the free annual wellness visits and personalized prevention plans offered under the Affordable Care Act (ACA), older Americans are discovering a highly effective pathway to better physical and mental health. With their care now managed increasingly by close-working teams of health professionals under the direction of their primary care physicians, patients using the benefit are reporting they're healthier and have a much clearer sense of how to stay that way.

Medicare began offering the no-cost annual wellness visit benefit in 2011 as a way to proactively address risk factors and improve the health of Americans 65 and older. Not to be confused with an actual physical performed by a primary care doctor, wellness visits are once-a-year sessions at which patients are interviewed in detail — either by their doctor or a nurse practitioner (NP), physician assistant (PA) or a nurse affiliated with the practice — about their physical, cognitive and emotional health.

Other than getting weighed and having their blood pressure and other vital signs taken, the visit is essentially an interview and guidance session. It's a comprehensive risk assessment, updated annually, that looks at medical history, current conditions, current medications, fall risk and other home safety issues, physical functional ability, the level of stress in a patient's daily life, and a wide range of lifestyle factors such as diet, exercise and alcohol and tobacco use. Screenings for depression and cognitive impairment, including Alzheimer's and other forms of dementia, may also be ordered as part of the annual assessment. Finally, the visits also provide an opportunity to do advanced care planning, to make decisions about the care you would want to receive if at some point you become unable to speak for yourself.

Once the assessment is complete, the patient receives a personalized prevention plan detailing what was discussed and providing specific recommendations for follow-up screenings, immunizations and vaccines, general health maintenance, personal safety measures and various health services the patient needs to schedule during the coming weeks and months. Those recommended services may include appointments with medical specialists, nutrition

Medicare began offering the no-cost annual wellness visit benefit in 2011 as a way to proactively address risk factors and improve the health of Americans 65 and older.

counselors, mental health therapists and others who can help improve the patient's health. The plan becomes the patient's personal health checklist until the next annual wellness visit.

Patients new to Medicare must schedule an initial Welcome to Medicare visit with their doctor's office before the annual wellness visits can begin. That free introductory visit involves the same comprehensive risk assessment, but also includes a physical examination.

One of the great advantages of annual wellness visits is that they allow primary care physicians to create a team-based approach to patient care. Doctors who once worked largely on their own to manage the day-to-day, year-to-year health of their patients now are able to share some of that work with NPs, PAs and other qualified health professionals associated with the practice. So not only is the patient receiving a deeper degree of expert attention for whatever time it takes to do the assessments, but the physicians themselves are able to focus fully on the active care of their patients. They're freed up and better informed to provide a higher, more personally attentive level of care to each patient.

Since Medicare introduced the free wellness visits benefit seven years ago, the number of physician practices offering the visits and the number of patients signing up for them has grown steadily. But there's still a large number of patients who either are unaware of the benefit or slow to take advantage of it. If you're 65 or older or know someone who is, it's important to know that these annual wellness visits truly can become the center-point for staying healthy in your later years. For more information on the free Medicare annual wellness visit or to schedule one, ask your primary care physician or call his or her office.

Daniel Doyle, M.D., is chief of staff at Berkshire Medical Center. (This was originally published in the Berkshire Eagle, June 4, 2018.)

Medicare Corner

Your Monthly Answers to Common Questions

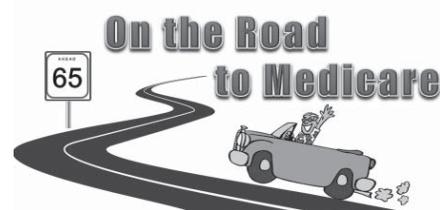
5 ways to become an informed Medicare consumer

Here are 5 things you can do to become an informed Medicare consumer:

1. **Know your rights.** As a person with Medicare, you have certain rights and protections designed to help protect you and make sure you get the health care services the law says you can get.
2. **Protect your identity.** Identity theft happens when someone uses your personal information without your consent to commit fraud or other crimes. Keep information like your Social Security Number, bank account numbers and Medicare Number safe. To help protect you from identity fraud, starting in April 2018, Medicare will mail new Medicare cards to all people with Medicare. Your new card will have a new Medicare Number that's unique to you. Get more information on how to protect yourself from identity theft.
3. **Help fight Medicare fraud.** Medicare fraud takes money from the Medicare program each year, which means higher health care costs for you. Learn how to report fraud.
4. **Get involved with other seniors with the Senior Medicare Patrol (SMP).** The SMP educates and empowers people with Medicare to take an active role in detecting and preventing health care fraud and abuse.
5. **Make informed Medicare choices.** Each year during the fall Open Enrollment Period (October 15 to December 7), review your plan to make sure it will meet your needs for the next year. If you're not satisfied with your current plan, you can switch during the Open Enrollment Period.

Visit NCPW.gov to learn more about the campaign, see which agencies

and organizations are able to help you, and to find out if there are any activities happening in your area. Also, check out our videos for tips on preventing Medicare fraud.



Keep Your Heart Healthy



Visit your doctor regularly



Watch your diet & weight



Exercise regularly



Monitor your cholesterol



Reduce your stress



Reduce your alcohol intake

Transportation Options

Transportation options for seniors

Council On Aging (COA) Transportation

Some COA's & Senior Centers offer transportation, either using their own van or community volunteers. Transportation is usually provided to medical appointments, pharmacy, grocery shopping, banks, nutrition programs, nursing homes, etc. Most COAs either accept donations or charge a fee. The COAs listed below provide their own transportation:

- Lee COA: 21 Crossway St, 243-5545
- Lenox COA: 65 Walker St, 637-5535
- Sheffield COA: 25 Cook Rd, 229-7037
- Stockbridge COA: 50 Main St, 298-4170 x263
- Tyringham COA: Call Elder Services and ask for a Tyringham volunteer
- West Stockbridge COA: 21 Albany Rd, 232-0300 x340 or 232-0137

Southern Berkshire Elderly Transportation Co (SBETC)

A non-profit consortium of 8 towns (Alford, Egremont, Great Barrington, Monterey, Mt. Washington, New Marlborough, Otis, Sandisfield) providing transportation for elders and the disabled. Transports to medical appointments, grocery, adult day care, Great Barrington Senior Center, etc. Contact SBETC directly 528-4773. Schedule varies by town.

Elder Services of Berkshire County Volunteer Transportation www.esbci.org

ESBC provides transportation to anyone age 60 or older who is ambulatory. At least 48 hours advance notice is required. The volunteer driver will call the participant before pick up, drive them to the medical appointment and then drive them home. No fee.

American Cancer Society, Berkshire Unit www.cancer.org

Their Road to Recovery Program provides transportation by volunteer drivers for cancer patients to medical appointments related to their diagnosis. Patients must be ambulatory. 48 hours advance notice recommended; ride availability not guaranteed. Contact 1- 800-227-2345.

Veteran's Transportation www.veteranfamilyrides.com

Veterans & Families Transportation Call Center: coordinates transportation services for military veterans and their families, including to Pittsfield's VA clinic, and VA facilities in Leeds and Albany, N.Y. It will also connect local vets to the VA shuttle in Leeds that provides transportation to outlying veterans' facilities. Open weekdays from 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. Submit transportation requests by calling 413-418-4300 or toll free 1-855-483-8743 or visiting www.veteranfamilyrides.com.

Taxi Companies

Park Taxi
235 Water St, Lee
243-0020

Taxico
40 Rosseter St, Great Barrington
528-0911

CRT Inc Cabulance
18 Oak St., Pittsfield
447-3800 www.crtcabulance.com

Cabulance/ Wheelchair Van Companies

County Ambulance Service
175 Wahconah St., Pittsfield

Lenox Taxi
8 Fairview Ave, Lenox
637-3015

Ambulance Company www.countyamb.com

County Ambulance Service
175 Wahconah St., Pittsfield
499-2527

Ride Match (www.massridematch.org)

A regional online directory of transportation options (private, public, and non-profit) for seniors, people with disabilities or anyone needing to travel in Massachusetts.

Berkshire Regional Transit Authority (BRTA) www.berkshirerta.com

The BRTA offers a fixed route bus service as well as subsidies for taxi and chaircar (a van with a wheelchair lift) services. Cash and CharlieCard (plastic Smart card with built in chip) accepted:

Fixed Route: Bus service operates Monday to Friday 5:45 a.m. to 7:20 p.m. and Saturday 7:15 a.m. to 7 p.m. Half fare for persons age 60 or older: cash, \$.85 local (2 towns) & \$2.25 system-wide (3+ towns); with Charlie Card, \$.70 local & \$1.80 system-wide. Transfers with Charlie Card only- free local & discounted system-wide. Discounted 7-day and 30-day passes also available. All BRTA buses are equipped with devices that lower the front steps of the bus to make it easier to board the bus. For bus schedule information call 499-BRTA (2782) or 1-800-292-BRTA.

Taxi Tickets: For anyone age 60 or older - proof of age required. Tickets can be purchased through the BRTA at a discounted rate. Each ticket has a cost of \$.80, but can be redeemed for a face value of \$1 through County Rainbow Taxi only (499-4300). Tickets are used like cash, but if payment exceeds fare, change will not be given. The tickets may not be used to "tip" the driver

Chaircar Tickets: Disabled persons who are mobility impaired outside the home will be issued a BRTA-ID. They have unlimited use of the chaircar tickets for door to door service. BRTA chaircar tickets are \$7.50 for first town of travel and 1/3 that cost for additional towns.

Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA): Under the ADA Act, the BRTA must provide paratransit service for the disabled that are comparable to the fixed route service. The BRTA does so through private taxi and chaircar service and sells ADA tickets to qualified persons with disabilities. The beige ADA ticket (\$2.50 each) can be used for both the Local in-town \$2.50 fare and system-wide in-town \$7.50 fare. A green ADA ticket (\$3.50 each) is used for the Local adjoining fare of \$3.50, while the salmon ADA ticket (\$9.00 each) is used for the system-wide maximum fare of \$9.00. All ADA tickets are used on the paratransit vehicles for origin to destination service within the BRTA fixed route service area and/or hours of service. ADA tickets are accepted by most taxi and chaircar vendors. Trip reservations must be made no later than 4pm the day before the service is to be provided and up to 14 days in advance. Service is provided only if the origin and destination of the trip are within 3/4 of a mile of the fixed route bus service.

Ticket Purchase:

- In Person: at the BRTA Intermodal Center, Pittsfield; for more info call 499-2782 Option 4
- Via Mail: Payment must accompany request in order to send tickets by return mail. Mail to the BRTA, One Columbus Ave, Ste 201, Pittsfield, MA 01201 Attention TICKETS
- Via email: Payment must be received prior to mailing of ticket order.

Email addresses:

Kaylyn.hunkler@berkshirerta.com

Lisa.Parise@berkshirerta.com

Barbara.white@berkshirerta.com

Some agencies purchase tickets in bulk – these tickets are normally used for their own clients and not for resale to the general public.

Make a Difference! Drive a Senior

Elder Services invites you to join our team of exceptional volunteers who make a difference in the lives of others.

Many area seniors without transportation rely on the dedication and commitment of our volunteers who drive them to and from medical and other appointments.

Volunteers are an integral part of Elder Services, and volunteer opportunities abound for those who would like to share their time and talents to help meet the needs of Berkshire seniors.

To sign up as a **Volunteer Driver**, please call Elder Services at 499-0524.

Berkshire Staycation

Take a free "staycation" during July and August



The Berkshires boasts over a hundred cultural attractions, including art, theater, dance, music, film and historic sites, many of which are world-renowned. You don't have to be a wealthy to enjoy them. There are a host of free events taking place throughout the summer. Among them are The Highland Street Foundation's summer-long Free Fun Fridays program (highlandstreet.org/programs/free-fun-fridays) that offers visitors no-cost admission to many cultural venues.

And don't forget the Library Pass Program. Many local libraries provide free general admission passes for up to two adults and two children to local museums. Check with your local library for availability. Free happenings throughout the county are listed below.

South County

- Norman Rockwell Museum in Stockbridge, www.nrm.org: Free Fun Friday!, August 31
- Mahaiwe Performing Arts Center in Great Barrington, www.mahaiwe.org: Free Fun Friday! July 13, MatheMagic! at 11a.m.
- Chesterwood in Stockbridge, chesterwood.org: Free Fun Friday!, July 13.
- Jacob's Pillow Dance Festival, www.jacobspillow.org: Free outdoor performances on the Inside/ Out Stage every Wednesday through Saturday at 6:15 p.m. during the Festival through Aug 25. Free Fun Friday!, August 10.
- Naumkeag, Trustees of the Reservations in Stockbridge, www.thetrustees.org/places-to-visit/berkshires/naumkeag.html: Free Fun Friday! August 3.

Central County

- Third Thursdays Festival, Pittsfield, www.discoverpittsfield.com/3rdthursdays: July 19 (Theme: World Culture) & August 16 (Theme: Touch a Truck).
- The Mount: Edith Wharton's Home in Lenox, www.edithwharton.org: Music after Hours, Fridays & Saturdays in July & August, 5 to 8 p.m., free music, bring your own lawn chairs, no outside food or drink.
- Ventfort Hall Mansion & Gilded Age Museum, www.gildedage.org: Free Fun Friday! July 13.
- Tanglewood, www.bso.org: Free Fun Friday!, July 27-Family Fun Fest 3 to 5:30 p.m. & stay on the lawn for the 8pm BSO concert. Berkshire Night- Friday, July 13, 8 p.m., Ticket distribution will begin Monday, July 9th, 10 a.m.
- Hancock Shaker Village, hancockshakervillage.org: Free Fun Friday! July 6. Massachusetts EBT card holders are eligible for free admission for up to two adults and all kids 17 years and under (card holder must be present and show EBT card with photo to redeem offer)
- Berkshire Museum in Pittsfield, berkshireremuseum.org: Free Fun Friday!, August 17. Enjoy the Berkshire Now gallery free of charge during Pittsfield's First Fridays Artswalk, each month features a new theme.
- First Fridays Artswalk, Downtown Pittsfield's UpStreet Cultural District, 5 to 8 p.m. with artists' work on display in about a dozen shows. First Friday of the month, through September. www.firstfridaysartswalk.com
- Live on the Lake community concert series at Burbank Park on Onota Lake in Pittsfield. Wednesday evenings from 6 to 8 p.m. through August. www.cityofpittsfield.org/city_hall/community_development/parks_and_recreation/summer/live_on_the_lake.php.
- Lenox Concerts in the Park. Wednesday Nights at Lilac Park, 6:30pm, July and August.

North County

- Clark Art Institute in Williamstown, www.clarkart.edu: Free Summer Family Day, Sunday July 8.
- Mass MOCA in North Adams, massmoca.org: Free Fun Friday! August 24.
- Williamstown Theatre Festival, wtfestival.org/main-events:
- Sunday Lawn Talks July 1- Aug 19. All Talks begin at 1:15 p.m. No reservations required.

Hot tips for keeping cool this summer

By Laura Feakes

Summer is a great time for enjoying the outdoors, family and the pleasant weather. While the season has its perks, it can also be dangerous if the proper precautions aren't taken to ensure safety and hydration. Excessive heat forces your body to work harder than usual, which can result in a health-related illness, such as sunburn, heat exhaustion, dehydration and even heat stroke.

Most heat related sicknesses are a result of prolonged exposure to the sun but can also become an issue in a hot, stuffy apartment or home. Older people in particular are at greater risk of heat related complications as they don't sweat as effectively and have poorer circulation than younger people. Obesity, heart disease, dementia, diabetes and other chronic medical conditions can compound the risk. So can certain medications, especially diuretics or those prescribed for hypertension and Parkinson's disease.

Stay Alert! Watch for the warning signs and symptoms of these heat illnesses:

Heat Cramps occur after vigorous activities like playing tennis. Their signs are painful abdominal spasms and cramps in major muscles such as the legs and abdomen. Cramps subside with rest, cooling down and plenty of water.

Heat Exhaustion has many symptoms- fever, heavy sweating, fainting, rapid pulse, low blood pressure, clammy skin, ashen skin tone and nausea. Overexertion and not drinking enough water is the usual cause. To treat it, go indoors with a fan or air conditioning or to a shady spot, apply cool compresses, immediately lie down with your legs elevated, loosen tight clothes, and drink cool water or sports beverages.

Heat Stroke (Sunstroke) can be life-threatening and requires immediate medical help. The symptoms include not only those associated with heat exhaustion, but also very rapid pulse and breathing, delirium, unconsciousness, and lack of perspiration to cool the body.

Risk factors for heat stroke include:

- Dehydration
- Age over 65
- Obesity
- Consuming alcohol in hot weather
- Having chronic heart or lung disease

There are many surprisingly easy and simple ways to stave off these illnesses. Here are some of the most common and easiest ways to stay safe from the summer heat whether you are indoors or outside enjoying nature's beauty:

Stay Hydrated! This is the easiest way to stay cool and comfortable and is often ignored. Drink plenty of water during hot weather. The warm temperatures can dehydrate you quickly, so it is very important to have plenty of fluids available. Some signs of dehydration include: decreased amount of urine or less frequent urination, strong dark urine, dry skin or cracked lips, sleepiness, headache, increased heart rate.

Some medications have the side effect of fluid and electrolyte loss increasing the risk of dehydration. Others require a stable blood level to maintain effectiveness, so even mild dehydration can cause those blood levels to rise to dangerous levels, creating serious health consequences. Increasing fluid intake on hot days can help prevent such events. You should always check with a pharmacist or doctor to ensure that medications will not cause you or your loved ones to be more susceptible to heat-related problems.

REMEMBER: Popsicles, watermelon, cantaloupe, fruit salads and jello

TIPS PAGE 11

- Taiga in the Berkshires, Aug 12-15, Main Stage. Free and family-friendly new play. Reservations required.
- Williams College Museum of Art, wma.williams.edu: Free admission all year round, open every day.
- Bascom Lodge, Mt Greylock Summit, Adams, www.bascomlodge.net/1/Calendar. Wednesday and Sunday evenings 6 to 7 p.m. the Lodge presents a variety of free talks, demonstrations and music programmed around the history, nature and culture of the region.
- Windsor Lake Concerts, corner of Kemp Avenue and Bradley Street in North Adams. Concerts every Wednesday at 6:30 p.m. through August 29, cancelled for rain.

Elder Services

We Remember April Memorial Donations

Erna Bach

Mr. Walter Creer
Berkshire Retirement Home

Lavona Pero

Mr. & Mrs. Ronald Pero



General Donations

Mr. & Mrs. Edward M. Reilly
Ms. Irene F. Ropelewski
Mr. Scott Habeeb

Ms. Elizabeth Watson
Mr. Averill Williams

Meals On Wheels

Dr. & Mrs. Eugene Talbot

Elder Independence Appeal

Elder Independence Appeal
Ms. Dorothy Babeau
Mr. Nathan Doctrow
Mrs. Ursula McGowen

Ms. Maxine Phillips
Mr. & Mrs. Harold Rudin
Mr. William E. Thompson
Mr. Jeff Waingrow

Editor's Note:

Unless requested otherwise, each month Berkshire Senior publishes the names of donors to Elder Services and those honored by the donations. These funds help Elder Services provide Berkshire seniors with programs and services to help them remain independent. Contributions are tax-deductible to the extent of the law.

Did You Know?

Many businesses offer senior discounts so always check with your local grocery, pharmacy, and other businesses or call them ahead to see if they do have senior discounts and senior discount days.

Some local groceries stores pick up seniors and others have programs that result in gas discounts.

You Can Donate to Elder Services Online!

Just go to www.esbci.org & click the IDONATE button!

Scroll down the page to see a number of options for supporting Berkshire seniors. You can provide an e-check, use your credit or debit card, or donate non-cash items. You can donate to the "Greatest Service Need" or choose to designate your gift to the Elder Independence Appeal, Meals on Wheels, the Elder Care Fund, or make a Memorial or In Honor of Donation.

THANK YOU FOR YOUR HELP!



Watch Berkshire Senior TV to learn more about Fallon Health Care

John Lutz hosted his final episode of Berkshire Senior Television in June with guests Kim Salmon and Deb Daviao of Fallon Health Care. Tune in next month for a new host and talk of fresh local foods.

Elder Services and Berkshire Regional Planning Commission saved a life

By Bonny DiTomasso

It was a typical day in the Berkshires. The sun was shining in the morning but by the afternoon, the sky was dark with signs of an impending storm. As it would turn out, this was a predictor of challenges ahead.

Around 10:30 a.m., Elder Services' Volunteer Services Department received a frantic call from a Social Worker at a Boston Area hospital inquiring if our volunteers could drive a patient from Hinsdale to Boston for an 8 a.m. pre-operative assessment the next day. During the course of the conversation, the caller explained that the person in question was afflicted with a life-threatening illness, which required specialized treatment at their facility and the person could not afford to pay privately for transportation to Boston. The Social Worker stated that the patient was very discouraged and was considering canceling her scheduled treatment, which could be disastrous.

Realizing the seriousness of this person's need, Elder Services quickly leapt into action. Emails were sent and phone calls were made to several vendors and community partners, including the Berkshire Regional Planning Commission (BRPC), which had partnered with Elder Services on a pilot transportation grant. One of the transportation vendors agreed to transport the patient roundtrip from her home in Hinsdale at 4:30 a.m. so she could be in Boston by 8 a.m. Through our collaboration with the BRPC, the transportation cost was absorbed by the grant and the patient received her treatment the next day.

The woman featured in this story has recently completed her life sustaining treatment in Boston and is leading a full, disease-free life in the beautiful Berkshires.

Bonnie DiTomasso is Elder Services' Home & Community Based Programs Supervisor.

Elder Services Speaks 200 Languages!



Beginning English speaker? Did you know that Elder Services has the ability to communicate with individuals speaking over 200 different languages? Don't let language be a barrier to getting services for you, your aging parents or grandparents.

Call us today at 499-0524 for more information.

Elder Services

TIPS PAGE 9

Elder Services Adult Family Care Program can help put the *family* in your loved one's care!



- Do you have a family member with a medical condition limiting his or her ability to live independently?
- Are you caring for a family member age 60 or older or a chronically disabled adult between the ages of 18 & 59?

If you answered yes, then:

- Elder Services may be able to provide you with support through a Medicaid-funded program, Adult Family Care.
- Caregivers of eligible clients receive a tax-free monthly stipend and clinical support from a registered nurse and a social worker.

For more information about Adult Family Care, call Elder Services at 499-0524

all contain a lot of water. And summertime is the perfect time to indulge in such treats. But avoid caffeine or alcohol.

Limit High Energy Activity and Exercise! Strenuous activities can overload your body in hot temperatures. Try to exercise during the early morning or late evenings when temperatures are typically cooler. Take regular breaks when possible if you have to work outdoors in the heat.

Protect Your Skin! It's very important to protect your skin from the damaging rays of the sun. Sunscreen is a necessity when you know you'll be outside for a prolonged period of the time. Apply it liberally to all exposed skin at least 30-60 minutes before going out and frequently thereafter especially during peak sun hours or after sweating or swimming. Not only will this help prevent sunburn but skin cancer as well. Too much sun is also a risk factor for cataracts, so use sunglasses that block UVA and UVB ultraviolet rays. And don't forget your wide brimmed hat to lessen sun exposure to the face and neck as these are two spots that are very vulnerable to contact with the sun.

REMEMBER: Certain medications can cause people to burn more rapidly and more severely.

Take Action! If you do not have air conditioning in your home, go somewhere that does. A movie theater, the mall, a friend or relative's home or a community senior center are all good options. If you need to get out of the house and don't drive a car, call a taxi, a friend or a transportation service. Do NOT wait outside for the bus in extreme heat.

If you are absolutely unable to leave the house and do not have air conditioning, take a cool bath or shower to lower your body temperature on extremely hot days. Keeping the drapes or blinds closed during the daytime hours on a hot summer day can also reduce the indoor temperature of your home by a few degrees.

REMEMBER: If you observe signs of severe heat stress or heat exhaustion, move the affected person immediately to the nearest cool shade and cool them quickly using whatever methods you can- spray with water, apply a cold compress, place in the shower. Have someone call 911 for immediate medical assistance.

Don't forget your pet! Pets can get dehydrated quickly, so give them **plenty of water** when it's hot or humid. Make sure they have a shady place to get out of the sun, be careful not to over-exercise them, and keep them indoors when it's extremely hot. Never leave pets alone in a closed vehicle. Massachusetts law prohibits pet owners from leaving animals inside vehicles during extreme heat. The law also prohibits dogs being tethered outdoors for more than 15 minutes during a weather advisory or watch, as well as extreme weather conditions.

Finally, be a good neighbor. Check on family, friends, and neighbors, especially the elderly, those who live alone, those with medical conditions, those who may need additional assistance, and those who may not have air conditioning.

Laura Feakes is one of Elder Services' Information & Referral Specialists.

The comfort and safety of knowing that you took the right medication at the right time

FAST ACCESS TO ESSENTIAL INFORMATION: THE TOP OF EACH INDIVIDUAL BLISTER LISTS YOUR NAME, THE MEDICATION WITHIN AND THE TIME IT SHOULD BE TAKEN.

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On-Site Laundry	Resident Services
Tenant Activities	Wellness Programs
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Convenient Location	Pet Friendly

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Your Health

SKIN PAGE 1

epidemiological, biological and molecular data all point to skin cancer as predominantly a disease of the elderly. Between 40% and 50% of Americans who live to age 65 will have skin cancer at least once. Caucasian men over age 65 have had a 5.1% annual increase in melanoma incidence since 1975—the highest annual increase of any gender or age group. It has also been reported that more than half of skin cancer-related deaths occur in persons more than 65 years old. The longer people live, the more likely they are to develop skin cancer, and the greater their chances of dying from it.

There are many reasons for this. First, most skin cancers result from sun damage over the course of our lives, and seniors have lived longer; they have had the most sun exposure and sustained the most damage from ultraviolet (UV) light. Both sunburns and suntans damage our skin's DNA, breaking down the skin's tissues so that it ages before its time, and producing genetic defects that can lead to skin cancer. Suffering just five sunburns over your lifetime more than doubles your chances of developing melanoma, and each successive tan or sunburn raises the risks further. We never know exactly how much damage will trigger a skin cancer, but studies show that one bad burn in older age may be the straw that broke the camel's back.

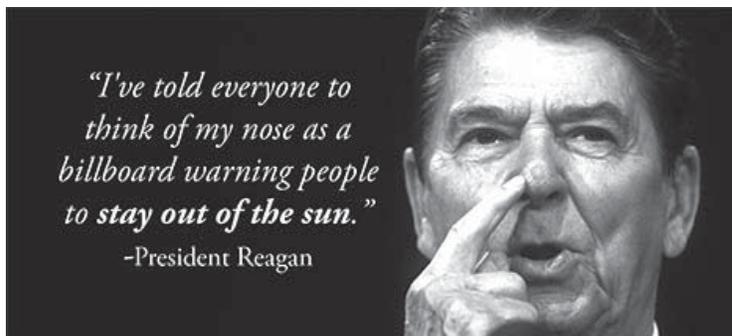
Diminished defenses

Making matters worse, as the damage mounts, our ability to stave it off keeps diminishing. As we age, our skin undergoes changes that weaken our defenses against skin disease: reduced immune systems, poorer healing capacity, thinner skin, and damage from bodily assaults from smoking to pollution. These changes all contribute to accelerated skin aging and increase our risk for skin cancer.

Intrinsic vs. Extrinsic aging

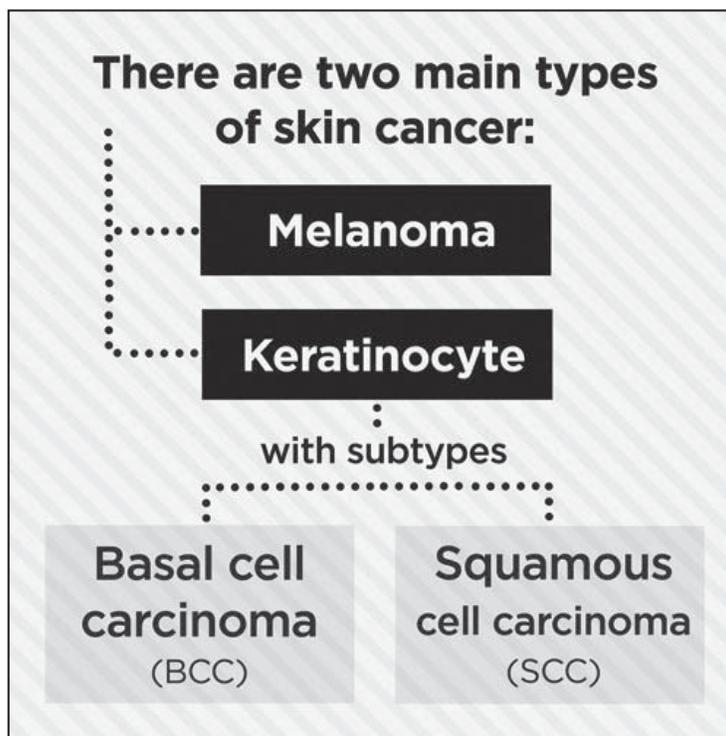
Two types of skin aging exist: intrinsic, or normal chronological aging, which occurs in all individuals, and extrinsic aging, caused by external factors such as ultraviolet (UV) light exposure (both sunlight and tanning beds), industrial chemicals, human immunodeficiency virus and environmental pollutants. Both play a part in skin cancer.

Intrinsic Aging: In our advanced years, our skin loses fat and water content and becomes thinner, allowing UV light to penetrate more deeply. Compounding the problem, the body's natural ability to repair damaged DNA diminishes, increasing the likelihood of abnormal cell growth that can cause mutations leading to skin cancer. The overall



natural decline in our immune systems not only may allow prior DNA damage to progress to cancer, but leaves us more susceptible to cancers from future DNA damage. Many diseases and conditions related to aging contribute to this immune decline. Atherosclerosis, diabetes mellitus, and congestive heart failure, for example, are known to impede blood flow and decrease immune

that later led to skin precancers and cancers. That left some older people thinking, "The damage is done, and there's nothing I can do about it." However, subsequent research showed that we continue to have substantial UV exposure as long as we live; the majority of exposure occurs after age 40. This later exposure is often what kicks on skin cancers, so sun protection



responses, reducing the skin's ability to heal.

Extrinsic Aging: If all that's not bad enough, we regularly expose our skin to agents that further weaken our defenses. Above all, many older individuals vastly increase their UV exposure, moving to sunnier climates and engaging in more outdoor activities like golf, fishing, and tennis. Since UV light itself suppresses the immune system, this exacerbates our natural immune decline and facilitates the development of skin cancer. UV light also breaks down elastic tissue (elastin) in the skin over time, leading to wrinkles, sagging, discoloration, and blotchiness.

The skin is especially susceptible to sun damage since it covers the entire surface of the body; it is the first organ to come in direct contact with UV rays. We once thought that most sun damage occurred before age 18, and that this early damage triggered most of the genetic changes

remains vital throughout our lives.

Prevention: not that tough

Since we know that UV exposure is its primary cause, skin cancer is almost entirely preventable. Fortunately for older people, prevention is not that big a burden. It just takes some consistent precaution. It's pretty much a three-pronged program: 1) stay out of tanning beds, 2) use effective sun protection, and 3) check your skin. The first part is exceedingly easy: simply never climb into a tanning bed; more people develop skin cancer because of UV tanning than develop lung cancer because of smoking.

Proper sun protection starts with timing: The hours between 10 a.m. and 4 p.m. are typically the most UV-intense, so plan outside adventures for early morning or late afternoon. When you do go outside, seek shade from the direct sun, and wear sun-safe clothing, including a long-sleeved shirt and long pants made of densely

woven materials, a wide-brimmed hat, and UV-filtering sunglasses. Use an SPF 15 or higher broad spectrum sunscreen (SPF 30+, water-resistant sunscreen for extended or intense outdoor exposures such as on the golf course), and reapply at least every two hours or immediately after swimming or heavy sweating.

It also helps to be aware of your skin type, since fair-skinned people with light-colored eyes and hair (Types 1 and II) suffer sun damage more easily. Go to skincancer.org/quiz to find your skin type.

Finally, along with protecting your skin, watch for suspicious growths. The Skin Cancer Foundation recommends head-to-toe self-examination once a month and an annual visit to a dermatologist for a professional total-body exam. This will give you the best chance of discovering skin cancer at an early, easily treatable stage. Be alert to any growth with an irregular border, multiple colors, and increased size or any other notable change. Persistent pain, irritation, itching, bleeding or crusting at any skin site should also be brought to your dermatologist's attention, as well as any new lesion appearing after age 40.

The dermatologist can also partially repair some of your lifelong sun damage, using techniques such as lasers and photodynamic therapy, dermabrasion, and topical medications like retinoids, helping to rejuvenate your skin while also removing precancerous lesions, thereby reducing your risk of skin cancer.

Conclusions

You've probably heard more than one older person say something like, "When I was young, no one used sunscreen. It's too late to change the past, so if I get skin cancer, I get it." You now know that's not true; it's never too late to reduce your skin cancer risk.

Follow our advice, and you will vastly improve your chances of avoiding skin cancer or catching it when it is easily treatable. I also want to emphasize the importance of overall health. Well-balanced nutrition, good sleep, and UV protection, for example, help keep your immune system strong so that you can better fight off skin diseases. Also, dangerous habits like smoking, excessive alcohol consumption, and drug dependency all contribute to dermatological issues. The bad effects of bad habits add up, increasing your chance of any and all diseases, including skin cancers. So take care of yourself.

Published by the Skin Cancer Foundation (www.skincancer.org) August 14, 2015

For Your Information

THE MASSACHUSETTS SENIOR LEGAL HELPLINE



(800) 342-5297



ARE YOU 60+ AND IN NEED OF LEGAL HELP?

The Helpline is a project of the Volunteer Lawyers Project of Boston. We provide free legal information and referral services to Massachusetts residents who are 60 years old or older.

The Helpline is open Monday through Friday 9AM-12PM.

Can I get a free attorney?

Most callers will not be eligible for a free attorney. Helpline advocates can help you find out if you *are* eligible and complete an application for services with a Massachusetts civil legal services program. Legal services law types include: Social Security/SSI, Veterans Benefits, Mass Health, Medicare, Consumer, Public Benefits, Unemployment, Foreclosures, Utilities, Guardianship, Wills/Advance Directives, Bankruptcy, Housing, Family law, and Nursing Home.

Can I get referrals to reduced fee and private bar attorneys?

If you are not eligible for a free attorney and have some ability to pay an attorney, we can refer you to reduced fee attorney referral programs where attorneys will charge you on a sliding scale based on your income.

We can also refer you to private bar attorney referral programs. Private attorneys will charge for their services. Some cases, such as medical malpractice, workmen's compensation, personal injury, and Social Security benefits denials do not require you to pay money upfront in order to get an attorney. The attorney fees are taken from your award only if you win your case.

Can I get free legal information or referrals?

Yes. Your Helpline advocate will research your legal issue and provide you with information or referrals on most legal topics. We can also text, e-mail, or mail you links or written materials.

What if I need help with a non-legal issue?

Please see the other side for a full list of resources helpful to Massachusetts seniors.

A project of the Volunteer Lawyers Project of Boston funded by a grant from the Administration for Community Living

How Long to Keep Legal and Financial Documents

Document	How Long to Keep It
Bank statements	1 year, unless needed to support tax filings
Birth certificates, marriage licenses, divorce decrees, passports, education records, military service records	Forever
Contracts	Until updated
Credit card records	Until paid, unless needed to support tax filings
Home purchase and improvement records	As long as you own the property
Household inventory	Forever; update as needed
Insurance, life	Forever
Insurance, car, home, etc.	Until you renew the policy
Investment statements	Shred your monthly statements; keep annual statements until you sell the investments
Investment certificates	Until you cash or sell the item
Loan documents	Until you sell the item the loan was for
Real estate deeds	As long as you own the property
Receipts for large purchases	Until you sell or discard the item
Service contracts and warranties	Until you sell or discard the item
Social Security card	Forever
Social Security statement	When you get your new statement online, shred the old one
Tax records	7 years from the filing date
Vehicle titles	Until you sell or dispose of the car
Will	Until updated

We Need You

Volunteer in your Community

You've got just what it takes to help your neighbors in need. Many older, low-income taxpayers miss out on credits and deductions they've earned because they can't afford to pay for professional tax preparation. With the help of neighbors like you, AARP Foundation Tax-Aide offers free tax filing help to those who need it most. You can make a big difference in someone else's life. We'll show you how.

We're looking for compassionate and friendly individuals to join our team of local volunteers for the 2019 tax season. Our volunteers receive training and continued support in a welcoming environment. And as our current volunteers say, you'll not only learn new skills but also get that great feeling from helping someone else.

Apply at aarpfoundation.org/taxaide

Or call 1-888-227-7669

For Berkshire County information call 1-413-243-3569

Recent volunteers include: Engineer, Doctor, Lawyer, Teacher, Student, Professor, Accountant, Military, Administration, Tax Preparer, Homemaker, Finance, Retired.

Sites include: Williamstown, North Adams, Adams, Dalton, Pittsfield, Lenox, Lee, Great Barrington

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Our Community

A better way to age-in-place? Exploring the Village model

You have the opportunity to participate in a Community Survey for residents of Adams, Cheshire, Clarksburg, Florida, North Adams and Savoy.

AgeFriendly Berkshires and its community partners are studying the creation of a volunteer "village" that would assist adult residents who wish to remain independent in their own home or community, for as long as possible.

A "Village" provides services and activities for its members mostly through volunteer help, provided by other members and a small, paid staff. In some cases, membership provides access to services for an additional fee. Because Village members have someone to call for

help at any time, joining a Village can help increase each member's safety and connection to community. Membership can be open to people of any age, who want to develop new friendships, learn new skills, share talents or enjoy social activities, while helping or receiving help, from others.

Adult residents of northern Berkshire County are invited to answer this survey, 1 per household. The questions will help us assess the services or activities that you might need or want a "village" to provide. All responses are confidential!

To take the online survey, go to: <https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/northberkvillages>



Sheffield's Council on Aging hosts an information session about Medicare

Sheffield's Council on Aging (COA) recently hosted an info session for people navigating Medicare options and needs. Attended by about a dozen folks, the program was facilitated by Sheffield COA Executive Director Kathie Loring (left) and Peta Shepherd, a regional consultant with BCBS (right). Also attending was Elder Services' Options Counselor John Arthur Miller who is also a SHINE Counselor.

FUN PAGE 1

whether it be more quiet thoughtful games, more active exercise, lunch, mid-morning and afternoon snacks, or a restful viewing of "The Price is Right," before packing up for the ride home. There are also many appropriate events and visits off site. Capacity for The Happy Club regulated by law is 15 members and fluctuates by circumstance and the health of the participants, some also choosing to come only 2 to 3 days per week rather than five.

This program at the Senior Center, working closely with Elder Services, receives many referrals who are eligible for the State Homecare Program, and may include participation in this Supportive Day Program. The process for determining The Happy Club eligibility generally is in three stages. First, a telephone screening is done by the Coordinator with the family/prospective participant to determine general eligibility, i.e. age of 55 or older, financial and transportation arrangement. Second, an observation visit is arranged that the family and prospective participant can attend for about 20-30 minutes to "see the action". Then, thirdly, the prospective participant attends without family for a free "assessment day" to participate,

be involved at their own level, and determine if The Happy Club could be a beneficial part of their day. After follow up with family and staff, hopefully it's "off to the races!" with benefits for participants, respite for family caregivers, and lots of fun for this dedicated staff.

There are also groups of young people, four year olds through college age interns, who visit The Happy Club to fulfill requirements for school projects or just to visit. A young Scout group visiting learned a lot from an older man's long ago scouting experience. All had a great time sharing hiking and camping stories.

Both Janie and Manny have families of their own, but The Happy Club is an additional family for both of them. Understandably, this group is constantly in transition because of health challenges and even death. Each change can bring grief, but they both bounce back with new participants, new challenges, and living with their charges in the moment, seeing and being with people where they are.

There is an awful lot of laughter at The Happy Club. If you know a person or persons that may benefit from this Supportive Day Program at the Froio Senior Center in Pittsfield, give Janie Bates a call at 499-9346.

MOLARI

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LGBTQ Women's Group

A group led by LGBTQ Women for LGBTQ Women.
Open to women of all generations.

**2nd Saturday of each month
2 to 4 PM**

**Unitarian Universalist Church
Garden Room
175 Wendell Ave
Pittsfield, MA**

Rainbow Seniors is a social group for LGBTQ seniors and their friends. We are supported in part by Title III of the Older Americans Act. Our fiscal agent is the Northern Berkshire Community Coalition and our guru and guide is Elder Services of Berkshire County.

For more information, email Kenneth Mercure at kenneth@rainbowseniors.org
Visit our website at www.rainbowseniors.org
Check us out on Facebook: www.facebook.com/berkshirerainbowseniors

Northern Berkshire Parkinson's Support Group

The Northern Berkshire Parkinson's Support group meets on the last Friday of the month at 1 p.m. at 651 Henderson Road, Williamstown.

Meetings are open to all who want like to learn more about Parkinson's disease including caregivers, family members, etc. For more information, call 458-8427.

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Llame por favor 499-0524
 o 1-800-544-5242



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Elder Services' Nutrition Program

Elder Services' Senior Lunch Sites



Elder Services offers hot, nutritious noontime meals at senior lunch sites located throughout Berkshire County. Anyone 60 or over can reserve a meal at any of the sites by calling the site they would like to attend by 11:30 a.m. the previous day. There is a suggested donation of \$2.00 per meal.

City/Town/Phone	Address	Meal Times	Days Meals Served				
			M	T	W	Th	F
Adams 743-8333	Community Center 3 Hoosac St.	11:30 a.m.	√	√	√	√	√
Becket 623-8934	Town Hall Route 8	11:00 a.m.		√		√	
Cheshire 743-9719	Senior Center 119 School St.	11:30 a.m.	√	√	√		
Dalton 684-2000	Senior Center 40 Field St. Ext.	Noon	√			√	
Great Barrington 528-4118	Claire Teague Senior Ctr. 917 South Main St.	11:30 a.m.	√	√	√	√	√
Lanesboro 442-2682	Town Hall 83 North Main St.	11:30 a.m.		√		√	
Lee 243-5545	Senior Center 21 Crossway Village	11:30 a.m.	√	√	√	√	√
Lenox 637-5535	Community Center 65 Walker St.	Noon	√				√

City/Town/Phone	Address	Meal Times	Days Meals Served				
			M	T	W	Th	F
North Adams 662-3125	Spitzer Center 116 Ashland St.	11:30 a.m.	√	√	√	√	√
Pittsfield 499-9346	Ralph J. Froio Senior Ctr. 330 North St.	11:30 a.m.	√	√	√	√	√
Pittsfield-Kosher 442-2200	Cong. Knesset Israel 16 Colt Rd.	Noon	√	√		√	
Stockbridge 298-4170, x263	Senior Center 50 Main St.	Noon			√		
Stockbridge 298-3222	Heaton Court 5 Pine St.	11:30 a.m.		√		√	
Sheffield 229-7037	Senior Center 25 Cook Road	Noon			√		
Williamstown 458-8350	Harper Center 118 Church St.	11:30 a.m.	√	√	√	√	

July

SENIORS 60 YEARS OF AGE OR OLDER

Suggested Donation - \$2.00

All contributions are returned to the community toward the cost of the Nutrition Program and Services.

If You Receive Meals on Wheels & Are **Not** Going to be Home

PLEASE TELL YOUR MOW DRIVER OR
CALL US TOLL FREE
BY 9 A.M. at 1-800-981-5201.

Dietary Information

All meals include 1% Milk 110 calories/125 mg sodium. Calories and sodium from salad dressings, margarine, crackers and condiments are not included. * High Sodium. **Modifications for restricted sugar available. Nutrition information provided is not exact but will help guide you.

MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY
2 Chicken and Sausage Casserole * 711 Egg Noodles 4 Collard Greens 33 Oat Nut Bread 230 Tropical Fruit Mix 10 Calories: 644 Sodium: 1,113	3 Italian Meatballs 210 WG Penne w/ Sauce 154 Mixed Vegetables 43 100% Whole Wheat Bread 150 Chocolate Chip Cookie ** 222 Calories: 930 Sodium: 904	4 INDEPENDENCE DAY	5 Independence Day Cheeseburger * 504 Sliced Roasted Potatoes 49 Oriental Mixed Vegetables 9 Hamburger Bun 320 Watermelon 2 Calories: 802 Sodium: 1009	6 Roast Turkey with Gravy * 504 Sweet Potatoes 35 Cauliflower w/Pimiento 17 100% Whole Wheat Bread 150 Spiced Apples 5 Calories: 546 Sodium: 836
9 Beef Burgundy 84 Mashed Potatoes 31 Sonoma Blend Vegetable 51 Dinner Roll 160 Apricots 10 Calories: 668 Sodium: 461	10 Bone in Chicken/Gravy 197 Roasted Potatoes 49 Broccoli 9 12 Grain Bread 200 Diced Peaches 5 Calories: 626 Sodium: 585	11 Beef Chili 184 Steamed Brown Rice 4 Brussels Sprouts 12 Corn Bread 291 Fruit Cocktail 4 Calories: 726 Sodium: 620	12 Baked Pollock 97 Sweet Potatoes 35 Green Beans 3 Oat Nut Bread 230 Fresh Orange 0 Calories: 609 Sodium: 490	13 Chicken Fajita 97 Rice & Beans 71 Corn 1 Tortilla 170 Diced Pears 5 Calories: 718 Sodium: 469
16 Roast Pork with Gravy 117 Roasted Potatoes 49 Peas w/Pimiento 58 12 Grain Bread 200 Applesauce 14 Calories: 650 Sodium: 563	17 Tuna Salad 230 Tossed Garden Salad 67 Potato Salad 63 Hot Dog Roll 320 Mandarin Oranges with Pineapple 4 Calories: 615 Sodium: 809	18 Veal w/Peppers 490 Rice Pilaf w/Noodles 9 Broccoli 9 Oat Nut Bread 230 Fruit Cocktail 5 Calories: 783 Sodium: 868	19 Chicken Marsala 122 Mashed Potatoes 31 Carrots 43 12 Grain Bread 200 Fresh Peach 0 Calories: 537 Sodium: 521	20 Sloppy Joe 175 Potato Puffs 360 Mixed Vegetables 43 Hamburg Bun 320 Ice Cream ** 46 Calories: 885 Sodium: 1069
23 Chicken Salad 227 Pasta Salad 218 Cold Spiced Beets 179 100% Whole Wheat Bread 320 Tropical Fruit Salad 10 Calories: 934 Sodium: 1079	24 Shepherd's Pie 72 Mashed Potatoes 31 Green Beans Almondine 3 Whole Grain Biscuit 440 Apricots 10 Calories: 707 Sodium: 681	25 Orange Chicken 71 Sweet Potatoes 35 Winter Squash 2 100% Whole Wheat Bread 150 Applesauce 14 Calories: 660 Sodium: 397	26 Beef Stew 79 Roasted Potatoes 49 Brussels Sprouts 12 Dinner Roll 160 Diced Pears 5 Calories: 698 Sodium: 430	27 High Sodium Meal Chef Salad with Ham/Chicken/Cheese 455 Chickpea and Tomato Salad 379 Carrot Raisin Salad 160 12 Grain Bread 200 Fresh Fruit Salad 1 Calories: 805 Sodium: 1320
30 Baked Haddock 296 Potatoes Au gratin 109 Sugar Snap Peas 4 Oat Nut Bread 230 Mandarin Oranges with Pineapple 4 Calories: 534 Sodium: 768	31 Macaroni & Cheese * 627 Stewed Tomatoes 12 Peas and Carrots 51 12 Grain Bread 200 Fruited Gelatin** 82 Calories: 681 Sodium: 1097			