



This newsletter may also be viewed as a PDF at www.PierceADRC.org “News & Events.”

NETWORKING OPPORTUNITIES

Aging and LTC Providers Network

First Thursday of each month, 8 – 9 a.m.

Lighthouse Senior Center

5016 E. “A” Street, Tacoma

Contact Bob Riler, ADR, 798-7384 or briler@co.pierce.wa.us

Feb 6 – “Alzheimer’s Café” with Doug Harkness and Patti Dahlman, Full Life Care

Mar 6 – TBA

Health Care Providers Council of Pierce County

Second Thursday of each month, 7:45 – 9 a.m.

Narrows Glen, 8201 Sixth Ave, Tacoma

(Breakfast \$6; Coffee \$2)

Contact Melissa Martin at (253)752-6870

Feb 13 – “Elder Economic Security Initiative: Can You Afford to Grow Old in Pierce County?”

East County Providers Network

Third Tuesday of each month, 8 a.m.

Meeting rotates monthly. Call for location.

Contact Laura Fehrenbacher, Stafford Suites, (253) 862-1818

SASH Coffee and Networking for Pierce County

Ports of Call Restaurant

First Wednesday of each month, 9:30-11 a.m.

Feb 5 – La Quinta Inn Tacoma, 1425 E. 27th St.

Contact Beth Pereira at bethp@sashprogram.com or (425) 890-3059

South End (King County) Coalition

Third Wednesday of each month at 7:45 to 9:30 a.m.

Feb 19 - Avalon Health Care Center, 135 S. 336th St in Federal Way

Schedule of meeting locations and times at www.secoalition.com

Local Services

Flu season is here – and It’s Deadly

According to the U.S. Centers for Disease Control, the flu is now widespread in 35 states – including Washington. Pierce County has recorded its first death due to flu. Visit the [Tacoma Pierce County Health Department](#) for important information and a [flu vaccine finder](#). Share [NCOA’s free fact sheet, infographic, and brochure](#) on how seniors can protect themselves.

AG Focuses on Protecting Veterans from “Pension Poachers”

The AARP, Federal Trade Commission, and Attorneys General across the country have encountered “pension poachers” who pose as representatives of official-sounding veterans’ organizations in an effort to scam elderly veterans and their families out of their assets. These scammers convince veterans to transfer their assets to a trust or invest in insurance products in order to qualify for federal Aid and Attendance benefits. SB 6208 / HB 2390 seeks to protect senior veterans and their families from pension poachers. [Read more.](#)

Changes Announced for Beyond the Borders

The Beyond the Borders Connector routes in Sumner and Spanaway/South Hill are changing based on rider feedback and input from members of the community. Connector shuttle now runs 7.5 hours a day every 45 minutes. [Click for more info](#) or call TransPro at (888) 600-8043 or (253) 476-4657.

TACID Offers Free Classes

TACID is offering free weekly classes and workshops on a wide array of topics that help promote the independence of people with disabilities. Classes include, Ready for Work, Creating Work Goals and Plans, Strategies for Finding and Keeping Work, Managing Work and Benefits, Safety and Preparedness, Family Management, and Effective Self-Advocacy. For a complete schedule of peer support groups, classes & workshops, please [TACID online](#) or call (253) 565-9000 or visit 6315 S 19th Street in Tacoma.

Help for Medicare Premiums

Medicare Savings Programs help Medicare recipients pay for all or part of their Medicare premiums. Individuals who meet income and resource requirements are eligible. There are several different programs available covering various Medicare costs. [View details](#). If income is \$1,313/month or less for one person, or \$1,765/ month or less for a couple, individuals can see significant savings on Part A, Part B or Part D prescription drugs. Call the ADRC for details at (253) 798-4600 or (800) 562-0032.

New Resources for Seniors

Many federal and state programs have changed their eligibility thresholds and benefits for 2014. Columbia Legal Services has produced a summary of these changes on their Washington Law Help website:

- [Questions and Answers on Medicaid for Nursing Home Residents](#)
- [Question and Answers on the COPES Program](#)
- [The Medically Needy "Spendedown" Program: Medicaid for Adults 65 and Older or Disabled who Don't Get SSI](#)
- [Key Medicaid Standards as of January 2014](#)
- [Medicare Information for 2014](#)
- [SSI & SSP for Washington State 2014](#)
- [Social Security Information for 2014](#)
- [Consolidation of "Medically Needy" Long-Term Care Programs into COPES \(Revised December 17, 2013\)](#)

Down-payment Assistance Programs Available

PC2's Homeownership Program is currently accepting applications. If you haven't owned a home in 3 years, meet income criteria, and you or your dependent have a developmental disability, you may qualify for the program. \$9,000 - \$58,599 could be available to help you own your own home! PC2 assists families throughout every step of the home buying process by helping to assess the benefits and risks of homeownership, repair credit, evaluate mortgage options, qualify for financing, choose a Realtor, and explain the closing process. Families and individuals who are considering homeownership are invited to contact Diane Larsen at (253) 564-0707 x 101, or diane@pc2online.org.

A Peer-to-Peer Parkinson's Support Program

Whether you are newly diagnosed, have had PD for many years, or care for someone with Parkinson's Disease, you may find it helpful to speak to someone who lives with Parkinson's everyday – just like you. PD Link Northwest is a group of volunteers who either have Parkinson's or are caring for someone with Parkinson's. All you need to do is contact Melissa at the Northwest Parkinson's

Foundation, (206) 748-9481 or (877) 980-7500. A PD Link Northwest volunteer will arrange to connect with you by phone or email. If you have Parkinson's or are caring for someone with Parkinson's, this program may be just what you've been waiting for!

Mighty Mouth Campaign Launched

The [Mighty Mouth campaign](#) – like The Mighty Mouth itself – can help you look good, feel great, and live better by unleashing the power of oral health. This campaign is all about helping people understand that oral health is essential to overall health. The Mighty Mouth website is the ultimate resource for unleashing the power of oral health. You'll find tools and how-to tips to help you keep your mouth and body healthy. There is even a comparison calculator to see how your oral health habits compare with others around the state. To be part of the campaign, [sign up here](#). Help everyone benefit from the power of The Mighty Mouth. Questions? Contact Washington Dental Service Foundation at foundation@deltadentalwa.com.

Self Advocates of Washington Meets at Star Center

Self Advocates of Washington meets weekly (on Monday evenings) at Metro Parks' Star Center in Tacoma, from 6:45-7:45pm. SAW will be utilizing a cutting-edge leadership curriculum for Self Advocates. Come learn how to be a leader, a team-player, a self-determined advocate, and gain knowledge about disability history rights! There will be movies, fun activities, and other ways to learn and engage. A different topic is covered each week. Metro Parks' quarterly fee is \$10 but two scholarship funds are available. Contact Kodi Smith-Doty at KDoty@TacomaParks.com or Shannon Carlson at (253) 571-8665 or Shannon@WeAreSaw.Org. Please visit our new website - www.WeAreSaw.org. The Star Center is located at 3873 S. 66th Street, Tacoma.

Tax Time – Free tax help available with VITA

Help lift hard-working families out of poverty: spread the word about VITA! The VITA (Volunteer Income Tax Assistance) program helps low and moderate-income households and seniors through FREE tax preparation. From early February through April 15, 22 locations throughout Pierce County will offer free tax help. Last year, nearly 5,000 households in Pierce County were helped by free tax sites. All sites are IRS-approved. View an [up-to-date list of VITA locations](#) or call 2-1-1 (United Way help line) for more information.

Health Care Authority Creates Quick Primer for Washington Apple Health

Washington State's Health Care Authority has posted a quick "how-to" primer on health coverage called Washington Apple Health. HCA has posted its ["how-to" primer](#) on its website.

Alzheimer's Café in Renton

Full Life Care invites persons with memory loss and their care partners to a new monthly Alzheimer's Café. From 2:30 to 4:00 p.m. at Luther's Table in downtown Renton (419 S 2nd St.). At Alzheimer's Café people living with dementia and their friends and family have the simple yet meaningful experience of connecting with others and enjoying a tasty treat in a community setting. The cafe has set aside a particular time to especially welcome people living with dementia -- with a simplified menu and staff who are aware of the customers' special needs. People living with dementia are invited to maintain a place in the community rather than becoming isolated or having to withdraw from enjoyable activities. The Café will be held every 3rd Thursday at Luther's Table. Cost: Just what's ordered from the cafe menu. For more information about these Alzheimer's Cafes, contact Doug Harkness, (206) 224-3757, dough@fulllifecare.org.

Microsoft Announces Scholarship for Students with Disabilities

Microsoft has launched the [Microsoft DisAbility Scholarship](#) intended to empower and enable high school students with disabilities to go to college. The goal is to increase enrollment of persons living with a disability in higher education and, in the long term, decrease the unemployment bias for disabled persons. All candidates must be high school students [living with a disability](#) who plan to attend a 2 to 4 year University or College program, maintain a cumulative 3.0 GPA or equivalent and have declared a major from the approved list.

New Videos Highlight DDA Services

The Informing Families Building Trust video series continues to build. Videos highlight some of the services available from the Developmental Disabilities Administration. Recently added are videos detailing the Individual and Family Services program as well as the Home and Community Based Services waiver programs. More about the videos and links are available at the [DDA Services page](#) of the Informing Families Building Trust website.

Washington State Recruits Young Invincibles

Young adults (ages 18-34) make up nearly half of the uninsured population in Washington. The HealthBenefitExchange has developed a toolkit to help reach the young adults in our community and let them know about their new health coverage options. The toolkit contains a PowerPoint on the profile of uninsured young adults in Washington and ways to reach them, key messages for use with young adults, posters/fliers, Facebook and Twitter content, a fact sheet, videos and web banners. Young adults are disproportionately uninsured. Help them get covered. [Download the toolkit today.](#)

Insights and Strategies for Caregivers

Whether you are a family member, professional provider or want to further your education, you are invited to learn how to help support and care for those with Alzheimer's disease and dementia. Olympic Alzheimer's residence hosts Michael Bower, BA, ACC Education Specialist of the Alzheimer's Association of the Western & Central Washington State Chapter will be presenting

- February 11 @ 2:00 pm; Know the 10 Signs of Alzheimer's: Early Detection Matters
- Tuesday, February 25 @ 2:00 pm; Assessing and Addressing Pain
- Tuesday, March 11 @ 2:00 pm; Stay Safe
- Monday, March 25 @ 10:00 am; Making Bathing Pleasant
- Tuesday, April 15 @ 1:30-3:00 pm; Strategies for Having Conversations about Dementia
- Tuesday, April 29 @ 1:30-3:00 pm; Dementia and Hearing Loss

All seminars are free and open to the public. Refreshments provided. Held at Olympic Alzheimer's Residence, 3025 14th Ave NW in Gig Harbor. Seating is limited so please RSVP for these complimentary educational seminars to (253) 851-5306.

“Fraud Watch Network” Online Community in Full Swing

AARP and the Washington State Attorney General's Office's Fraud Watch Network is kicking into gear. If you haven't already, [sign up now](#) to receive access to information about how to protect yourself and your family from frauds and scams. Anyone can get the Watchdog Alerts, stay up on con artists' latest tricks, and find out what to do if you've been victimized. It's free for everyone because AARP is committed to safeguarding Americans' financial futures. You can also call 1-800-646-2283 to report frauds you come in contact with. If you haven't seen AARP's "John Doe: Identity Thief" TV spots, [click here](#) to see one of these clever ads that are blanketing the airwaves in Seattle and Spokane.

New App for PD Patients: Speak Up for Parkinson's

NWPF has just launched our very first iPad app called Speak Up for Parkinson's. Developed by David Newsom, son of Hal & Peggy Newsom, authors of the amazing book *Hope* and its companion insert *Who Takes Care of the Caregiver?* If you have an iPad, simply visit the app store and search "Speak

Up for Parkinson's." The app is free for users.

LOCAL HAPPENINGS

Feb 3 – You Are Not Alone

Come and learn about dementia and Alzheimer's disease with Lon Cole, a publish poet currently living with AD. Cole will read from his recent book of poems and discuss how AD has changed his live. Free. Held at the South Hill Library in Puyallup, 15420 Meridian E.

Feb 7 – The Secrets of Family Caregiving

Caring for a loved one at home is commonplace today. Caring for a spouse, caring for a parent, caring for a child, caring for another relative or friend – it's the new "normal." But caregiving has its own unique set of challenges. Learn from case managers and community providers how family caregivers can take advantage of programs and resources here in Pierce County. Learn about providing the best care possible at home and great ways to take care of yourself too. Free; please RSVP to (253) 798-8787. Held 12:10 to 12:50 p.m. at the Pierce County Annex Meeting Room. 2401 S. 35th Street in Tacoma. (Repeated Feb. 8 and 12. See below.)

Feb 7-9 – The 2014 West Region EMS Conference

For more information visit the [Conference Registration & Information](#) website. Held at the Great Wolf Lodge, Grand Mound – Centralia, WA. Contact Lori Clary, WREMS Injury Prevention Coordinator, at (360) 705-9019 or lori@wrems.com

Feb 8 – The Secrets of Family Caregiving

(See Feb 7 for details.) Please RSVP to (253) 798-8787. Held 10 to 11 a.m. at the Soundview Building, 3602 Pacific Avenue in Tacoma.

Feb 11 – Food, Mood, and You - Fighting Cancer with Naturopathic Nutrition

This information packed lecture is for cancer patients, caregivers and anyone who is interested in better nutrition. Dan Labriola, ND, from Northwest Natural Health, will explore the connections between what you eat and how you feel. Learn how this applies to the challenges faced during cancer treatment and recovery, and illness in general. Discover the benefits of anti-inflammatory foods as well as the best foods for immune support. Meal suggestions and recipes are included. Registration required. Call Gilda's Club at 1-866-200-2383 (toll free) or sign up directly online at www.gildasclubseattle.org.

Feb 12 – The Secrets of Family Caregiving

(See Feb 7 for details.) Please RSVP to (253) 798-8787. Held 12:10 to 12:50 p.m. at the County City Building, 7th Floor Rainier Conference Room, 930 Tacoma Avenue in Tacoma.

Feb 12 – Nurses Day Out

Sponsored by LeadingAge Washington, the event is designed for new and seasoned nurses, nurse managers, supervisors, directors, and assistants in assisted living and skilled nursing settings. Agenda topics include behavior management, restraints, nursing management, medication aides and more. \$189 registration; \$159 members. Held at Cedarbrook Lodge in SeaTac. [Online registration available](#).

Feb 12 – Housing Justice Info Session and Free Legal Clinic

The Tacoma-Pierce County Housing Justice Project (www.tacomaprobono.org) will be hosting a free Landlord-Tenant information session and free legal clinic. The training will be an overview of the Landlord-Tenant Laws (RCW 59.18) and Fair Housing Laws with a spotlight on repairs, damages, deposits, and reasonable accommodations. Participants will also be able to sit down with one of the

volunteer attorneys and get free legal advice at the clinic. Info session begins at 2 p.m., Legal clinic at 4 p.m. RSVP [online](#) or call (253) 572-5134.

Feb 13 – PC2 & Parent to Parent

If you have an older adult son or daughter and would like to meet with other families, please join PC2 for a monthly pizza party. These gatherings will provide opportunities for networking with each other as well as resource and information sharing with PC2 and P2P staff. Held at 5:30 p.m. at the PC2 offices, 3716 Pacific Avenue, Suite A in Tacoma. Call (253) 564-0707 to RSVP or for more info. (Your son/daughter is welcome to join the party too!)

Feb 18 –Alzheimer’s Advocacy Day 2014

Join other advocates from around Washington State, take action and speak up for legislation in support of persons with Alzheimer's and other dementias and their families. We'll flood the state Capitol purple and provide opportunities for advocates to learn about the legislative process, meet face-to-face with their elected officials, tell their personal stories to those who can make decisions affecting caregivers and families, and bring awareness to the importance of policy priorities. Held from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. [Click for more details](#). To register e-mail advocacy@alzwa.org or call (206) 529-3867.

Feb 19 – Volunteer Roundup

Make your community a better place to work and live. Mountain View Community Center – 3607 122nd Ave E in Edgewood – is hosting a Volunteer Roundup from 11 a.m. to 5 p.m. Come learn about opportunities to serve youth, families and seniors in our communities. More information at www.mtviewcc.org or contact@mtviewcc.org or call (253) 826-4329

Feb 19 – Caregiving In America

They've been called "humble heroes," those in our community who take care of an aging parent or loved one with a chronic disease. Often separated by thousands of miles, family members battling distance also face great pressures as they try to manage the care of their parents. This Washington Post forum will look at best practices in the workplace as more companies address the needs of employees who are caregivers. Speakers include Rick Steves, author and TV host, Nancy Hooyman, University of Washington School of Social Work and more. Held 9 to 11 a.m. at W Hotel Seattle, 1112 Fourth Avenue in Seattle. [Register here](#)

Feb 20 – Senior Lobby Day at the State Capitol

The 2014 Senior Lobby Day will be held at United Churches, 110 11th Ave SE in Olympia from 8 a.m. to 4 p.m. Day includes several well known speakers and panel discussions on issues such as the Budget, Elder Abuse, Guardianship, and Transportation. Early Bird Registration is \$20 to be paid by Feb 11. Registrants receive a Legislative Tool Kit, a Senior Lobby Royal Blue Scarf, Continental Breakfast, Box Lunch and an afternoon overview with coffee to include a review of the meetings scheduled with Legislators. [Register online](#) and pay by PayPal or send your check to Washington State Senior Citizens' Lobby, 1501 South Capitol Way #103, Olympia, WA 98501. More info at www.waseniorlobby.org.

Feb 22 – Women to Women: Living Longer, Living Smarter

Do you remember the old saying, “A woman's work is never done?” You've worked hard for a place to call home, a family, a job, and maybe a few extras. But life's still calling. Finding the time to focus on your future is particularly important for women, who generally have more years to cover in retirement with fewer resources. Join us and discover how you can better prepare for your future. This is a community forum designed by and for women who want to build a successful life strategy for the future. Get the most out of life for a safe, healthy and secure tomorrow. Free. All participants will

receive valuable tools and resources. Lunch provided. Space limited. Held at Bethlehem Lutheran Church, 101 E. 38th Street in Tacoma. [Register online](#) or call (877) 926-8300. Sponsored jointly by AARP and the Pierce County Aging & Disability Resource Center.

Feb 26 – Employment For All Advocacy Day

Breakfast and morning rally at the Red Lion Hotel, 2300 Evergreen Park Dr SW in Olympia with Shuttle bus service available to the Capitol. Advocacy Day begins at 10 a.m. with an hour briefing on current issues and the afternoon is spent advocating at the Capitol, ending about 3:00 p.m. The Arc features a highlighted topic each week - the morning briefing will also cover late breaking news on budget items and bills of interest relating to individuals with developmental disabilities. You're your own legislative appointments. If you need assistance or more info, call (888) 754-8798, ext. 105.

Feb 28 – Thriving in Uncertainty

Life is uncertain after a cancer diagnosis. In this 3-hour workshop provided by Harmony Hill, learn how to find joy and peace in the moment, even when facing uncertainty about the outcome of test results, procedures and the other challenges that often come when our lives are affected by cancer. Held at St. Anthony Hospital Cancer Center Classroom; 11511 Canterwood Blvd. NW, Gig Harbor. No cost for this workshop. To register please submit an [online interest form](#) and indicate the date of the workshop you are interested in attending, email programs@harmonyhill.org or call 360-898-2363.

Mar 10 – Reduce the Misuse

The Pierce County Long-Term Care Ombudsman Program sponsors a series of free seminars to help family members learn about the misuse of anti-psychotic medications that have been improperly marketed and used as treatments for the behavioral symptoms of dementia. Held at 1 p.m. at the Bonney Lake Library, 18501 90th Street E. in Bonney Lake. For more information contact the Pierce County Ombudsman program at 798-3789.

Mar 12 – Reduce the Misuse

(See Mar 10 for description.) Held at 6:30 p.m. at the Spanaway Library, 13718 Pacific Avenue, S. in Tacoma.

Mar 13 – Pierce County Resource Fair

PAVE'S Community Inclusion Program and Pierce County Coalition for Developmental Disabilities hosts this annual event for families, educators, professionals and the community at large. Information on family supports, recreation, school-to-work transition, early intervention, residential services, employment, adult services, Social Security, self advocacy and county & state human services. Free refreshments and activities. Held at Franklin Pierce High School, 11002 18th Ave E in Tacoma. For more information, contact Tami McGrath at (253) 564-0707 or tami@pc2online.org.

Mar 14 – Legislative Session in Olympia Scheduled to End

Mar 17 – Reduce the Misuse

(See Mar 10 for description.) Held at noon at the Pierce County Annex Main Meeting Room, 2401 S. 35th S. in Tacoma.

Mar 19 – Reduce the Misuse

(See Mar 10 for description.) Held at 2:15 p.m. at the Tacoma Wheelock Library, 3722 N. 26th St in Tacoma.

Mar 20 – Get the Word Out: Emergency Messaging to Vulnerable Populations

Learn more about emergency notification and warning to vulnerable populations, including the development and dissemination of key messages and the use of diverse networks to deliver time-sensitive, life-safety information. Intended for emergency managers, public information officers, representatives from community and faith organizations. Free event; lunch provided. Register online. Held 8 a.m. to 4 p.m. at the Southcenter DoubleTree Suites, 16500 Southcenter Parkway, Seattle. Sponsored by the UASI Vulnerable Populations Disaster Planning Steering Committee.

Mar 24-26 – Extended Three-Day Cancer Retreat

Harmony Hill's three-day retreat offers an immersion in healing, nurturing and community. Learn self-care and stress management techniques with others going through similar challenges. This is a general cancer retreat open to men/women/companions. For more details and to register, [click here](#).

Mar 25 – Tools for Success

A free conference for persons with disabilities focusing on preparation for employment and presented by community organizations. Workshops on technology, resume tips, interviewing skills, navigating employment services and more. [Pre-Registration Required](#). Accommodations will be provided if requested by March 14. Held 8:00am – 1:00pm Tacoma Community College Campus 6501 South 19th Street, Tacoma. More at [event website](#) or call (253) 565-2266.

Mar 26 – Reduce the Misuse

(See Mar 10 for description.) Held at 2 p.m. at the Gig Harbor Boys and Girls Club, 8502 Skansie Avenue in Gig Harbor.

Apr 3 - Resident Focused Dining

LeadingAge Washington hosts this day-long event with sessions focused on designing accessible dining, food costs, the culture change in dining standards and survey regulations. Held 8:30 a.m. to 3:00 p.m. at the Landmark on the Sound Event Center, 23660 Marine View Dr. S. in Des Moines. \$125/\$95 registration. [Register online](#) or contact cmeritt@LeadingAgeWa.org.

April 12 - Puyallup Senior Health & Wellness Fair

A wide variety of senior-focused services will share their information with the community. And the local Kiwanis will be serving their famous pancake breakfast. Get good health information, learn about new resources and perhaps win a door prize. Held 8 a.m. to 12 noon at the Puyallup Activity Center, 210 W. Pioneer in downtown Puyallup. For vendor opportunities and event details contact Tammy Baxter at (253) 863-1834.

Apr 21 – Dine Out for Life

When you Dine Out on April 24th, you join the fight against AIDS. Eat at any of the participating South Sound restaurants who will be donating 25% of your food and non-alcoholic beverage bill to support HIV/AIDS prevention, and care services in Pierce, Thurston and Lewis Counties. More at www.diningoutforlife.com/tacoma.

May 6 & 7 – Emergency Planning Institute

The Pierce County Emergency Planning Institute trains staff from social service agencies, long term care facilities and churches about planning and creating plans for disasters. Participants will have a basic understanding of Incident Command, receive an introduction to disaster issues, develop and/or enhance their agency plan(s) and learn how to update, train and exercise those plans. Held 9 a.m. to 4 p.m. each day. [Register online](#). For questions, contact Sheri Badger at (253) 798-2204 or sbadger@co.pierce.wa.us.

May 16 – Alzheimer’s Regional Conference

This one day conference filled with evidence based education is designed for professionals. Receive a total of 5 CE and CEU credits for attendance at four 90-minute sessions. We also welcome Family Caregivers to attend. We have exciting new topics and speakers we are working on for this year. Watch for more details. Questions? EmailDiscoveryConf@alzwa.org or call 206-529-3894.

May 28 - National Senior Health & Fitness Day

The common goal for this day is to help keep older Americans healthy and fit. 100,000 older adults will participate in activities at more than 1,000 locations throughout the U.S. The day is organized as a public-private partnership by the Mature Market Resource Center, a national information clearinghouse for the older adult market. Visit the [National Senior Health & Fitness Day website](#) for details. (Source: Mature Market Resource Ctr.)

June 2 – Challenges in Caregiving: Giving Care, Taking Care

The [Challenges in Caregiving conference](#) is for family and community caregivers and offers practical, up-to-date resources and information to help you in your caregiving responsibilities. Keynote speaker is Elaine Sanchez, author, speaker and co-founder of CaregiverHelp.com. Over twenty workshop sessions will be offered during the day. You choose the sessions you need most in your own situation. Resource and information exhibits offer displays of caregiving services, products, and literature from 8 am – 3 pm. \$30 – family and volunteer caregivers; \$50 agency caregivers. Vendor opportunities contact jmikel@co.pierce.wa.us. Participant registration opens in April, 2014.

Sept 30 & Oct 1 – Emergency Planning Institute

See May 6 & 7 for details. [Register online](#). For questions, contact Sheri Badger at (253) 798-2204 or sbadger@co.pierce.wa.us.

Q&A of the Month

Question: I used to get a copy of my Social Security benefits estimate every year around my birthday. I haven’t seen it. Is there a problem?

Answer: There’s no problem. In light of the current budget situation, the Social Security Administration has eliminated the annual mailed Social Security Statement and suspended the Request a Social Security Statement by phone service. You should visit “my Social Security” at www.socialsecurity.gov/myaccount to obtain your statement. Don’t worry, it’s fast, it’s safe, and it’s easy. At each stage of your life, a “my Social Security” account is for you. Your personal online “my Social Security” account is a valuable source of information beginning in your working years and continuing throughout the time you receive Social Security benefits. If you receive benefits, you can use a “my Social Security” online account to get your benefit verification letter for proof of income; check your payment information; change your address; change your phone number; or change your direct deposit. It’s much faster than calling Social Security by phone. In addition, it helps save our tax dollars!

NATIONALLY

Crooks Target Tax Returns

As Americans gear up to work on their tax returns, so are the crooks. In 2010, 15% of all ID theft complaints to the FTC dealt with tax returns. In 2013 that jumped to 43 percent. If the crook is successful, your legitimate return will be kicked out and the refund denied because the IRS computers will show that you were already paid. Your legitimate return could be delayed for months. Experts

say that filing your tax return early may be the best defense. Send in your tax return to the IRS for processing before the crooks have an opportunity. (Source: NBC News)

OnLine Resource Helps People with Alzheimer's

[I Have Alzheimer's](#) was developed by the Alzheimer's Association with input from people living with the disease. This 23 page online resource is designed to help empower those living in the early stage of the disease to move past the feeling of isolation that often comes with a diagnosis and on to planning, preparing, receiving support and living their best life after diagnosis. (Source: Alz Assoc)

Stricter Autism Criteria Unlikely To Reduce Services For Kids

[NPR reports](#) that the clinical definition for when a child has some form of autism has been tightened. And these narrower criteria for [autism spectrum disorder](#) probably will reduce the number of kids who meet the new standard. But researchers say the changes, which were rolled out last May, are likely to have a bigger effect on government statistics than on the care of the nation's children. (Source: NPR)

Financial Aid for Students with Disabilities

[Financial Aid for Disabled Students](#) is an online scholarship guide for students with disabilities. It includes over 70 scholarships specifically for students with disabilities, thoroughly explaining eligibility, award amounts, and how to apply. (Source: OnlineSchools.org)

Medicare Educational Opportunity

The Medicare Rights Center has launched its new professional training resource, [Medicare Rights Universtiy \(MRU\)](#), which offers professionals a clear path to learning Medicare. The site allows professionals to take advantage of MRU's comprehensive, guided learning experience—complete with a four level Core Curriculum, downloadable course materials, and quizzes to test your learning. Register for MRU at www.MedicareRightsUniversity.org. If you have any questions about MRU please contact me at swatts@medicarerights.org. (Source: MRC)

Medicare Changes on Rehab

The case of Jimmo v. Sebelius requires the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS) to revise portions of its program manuals. It is important for caregivers to know that Medicare has now explicitly stated (as of January 7) that claims for rehabilitation services cannot be denied because a patient has failed to improve. "Because this Medicare policy is new, it is important for family caregivers to know about it and to be prepared to advocate for an individualized assessment of their family member to gain approval for the necessary skilled services. If necessary, denials can be appealed." For more information, visit [Next Step in Care](#) or the [Center for Medicare Advocacy](#). (Source: Caregiving.org)

CMS Proposes New Emergency Preparedness Rules

CMS has proposed more stringent emergency preparedness rules for long-term care communities. The rules would be similar to what is being proposed for hospitals, with some specific requirements that long-term care communities be able to account for every resident during an emergency. The comment period for rule-making extends to February 25th. [Read more](#). (Source: McKnight's LTC News)

Medicare To Cover More Mental Health Treatment For Seniors

Older adults on Medicare have regularly been charged more for visits to a mental health professional than to their family physician. In 2008, a law was changed to require Medicare to increase its payments for mental health outpatient services, and now seniors on Medicare will pay the same 20% co-pay for mental health services as they pay for most other medical care. [Read more](#). (Source: NYTimes)

Analysis Confirms High Health Care Costs for People with Medicare

The [Kaiser Family Foundation \(KFF\) reports](#) that Medicare households spent 14 percent of their budget on health care costs in 2012, compared to 5 percent among non-Medicare households. This percentage increases as beneficiaries get older. Additionally, Medicare households with modest incomes spend more of their budget on health care than Medicare households with higher incomes. Over 65 percent of beneficiaries income – went towards paying health insurance premiums for Medicare Part B, Medicare Advantage plans, Medicare Part D (prescription drug coverage) and supplemental health coverage, such as Medigap and retiree health plans. (Source: KFF)

MADP Closes Feb 14

You can switch from your Medicare private health plan (Med Advantage) to Original Medicare during the Medicare Advantage Disenrollment Period (MADP). The MADP occurs every year from January 1 to February 14. (Source: MRC)

SOAR – Searchable Online Accommodation Resource

This website offers a series of short trainings providing basic information about [reasonable accommodations](#) for people with different types of disabilities, including vision and hearing, dexterity and cognitive disabilities. Simple [modifications to the work environment](#) and [assistive technologies](#) enable people with disabilities to perform their jobs, and allow employers to benefit from the skills and talents they bring to the workplace. (Source: SOAR)

Can a Dietary Supplement Treat a Concussion? No

The Food and Drug Administration (FDA) is warning consumers to avoid products marketed as dietary supplements that claim to prevent, treat or cure concussions and other traumatic brain injuries (TBIs). These claims are not backed by scientific evidence and FDA is concerned that false assurances of a faster recovery will convince someone who has suffered a concussion to resume activities too early to be safe. [Read this consumer update to learn more.](#) (Source: FDA)

Disability.gov: A Great Resource for Clients with Disabilities

Disability.gov is the federal government website for comprehensive information about disability-related programs, services, policies, laws and regulations. Both counselors and clients can use the site to learn more about Social Security and other disability benefits, employment, housing, and more. [Visit disability.gov.](#) (Source: NCOA)

For High-Risk Women, Some Breast Cancer Drugs To Be Free

Starting September 2014, women at increased risk for breast cancer will be able to get some drugs shown to help prevent the disease without a co-pay. The U.S. Preventive Services Task Force recommended that clinicians give medications such as tamoxifen or raloxifene to such women to reduce their risk of the disease. Under the Affordable Care Act, items or services rated A or B by the independent review board of physicians and academics must be covered by insurers without a co-pay or deductible. (Source: Kaiser Health News)

Money Smarts for 2014

Spend less, save more. That's on a lot of people's lists for 2014. Get help holding onto your money with new booklets from the Consumer Financial Protection Bureau. Learn more about [Report problems with banks, credit cards, mortgages and loans](#); [Avoid mortgage assistance scams](#); [Stop mystery credit card fees](#); [Find the best credit card for your needs](#); [Figure out where your money goes and set a savings goal](#); [Protect your finances in the event of a disaster](#). You can find all the CFPB's

many English and Spanish offerings by entering CFPB in the Search bar on Publications.U.S.A.gov.
(Source: CFPB)

To Buy or Not To Buy

Price tags say a lot. There's more to a price that ends in .99 or .98 or .04. If you are wondering whether to buy or not, you need to know the code. The deals site Rather Be Shopping rounded up some of these price codes. [Learn more about prices](#) and [download a handy PDF](#) with codes. (Source: Consumerist)

Michelle Obama Joins AARP

Michelle Obama celebrated her 50th birthday on January 17 by tweeting a picture of herself holding up her AARP card. She tweeted, quote, "Excited to join Barack" in the 50-plus club today. "Check out my AARP card!" President Barack Obama turned 50 in 2011.

PLAN AHEAD – APRIL IS...

ASPCA; alcohol Awareness, Autism Awareness, Cancer Control, Child Abuse Prevention, Defeat Diabetes, Fair Housing, Financial Literacy, African American Women's Fitness, Occupational Therapy, Parkinson's, Sarcoidosis Awareness, Stress Awareness and Women's Eye Health and Safety Month; Medication Safety (1-7), Volunteer (6-12), Crime Victims Rights (13-22), Health Information Privacy and Security (14-19), Consumer Awareness (18-23), Occupational Health Nursing (18-25) and Oral, Head and Neck Cancer Awareness (21-25) Weeks; Walking (2), Sexual Assault Awareness (2), Autism (2), ASPCA (10), Alcohol Screening (10), Parkinson's Disease (11), Library Workers (15), Health Care Decisions (16), Adult Autism (18), Book (23), Red Hat Society (25), Rebuilding (26) and Safety & Health at Work (28) Days.

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This information is provided as a service of the Pierce County Aging & Disability Resource Center and is intended for sharing throughout the county. To receive or discontinue this e-newsletter, please contact Bob Riler at (253) 798-7384 or briler@co.pierce.wa.us.