



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, ADRC, 798-7384 or briler@co.pierce.wa.us

- **Jan 2 – No Meeting**

Feb 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

Jan 9 – Networking (Annual membership dues \$50)

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.

- **No meeting January 1**

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 a.m.

Jan 15 – Location TBA

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

LOCAL SERVICES

ADRC Team Active in 2013

In 2013 ADRC case managers drove over 30,000 miles in 2013 to see their clients, engaged in over 2,800 face-to-face and took over 10,000 phone calls. In addition, the ADRC sponsored or participated in 123 community events reaching over 7,100 individuals. If you, a friend or colleague have a need please call the ADRC at (253) 798-4600 or visit www.PierceADRC.org.

Governor Releases Budget Proposal

Governor Inslee has released the [proposed 2014 supplemental budget](#). The legislature will take up the budget when it meets again for a “short session” on January 13. AARP identifies to 3 highlights: 1) Long Term Care Financing Study (\$500k) to examine options for leveraging private resources and delaying or diverting Medicaid utilization for long-term care services. 2) Retirement Savings Options for Small Businesses (\$250k) and 3) Strengthening Home and Community Based Services (296k) by

creating a viable plan to refinance Washington's personal care delivery system by implementing Community First Choice Option (CFCO), effective July 1, 2015. Chief Disappointment – Protecting Vulnerable Adults as this budget does not reflect the DSHS request for up to 42 new Adult Protective Services and Residential Care Services Investigators.

Governor Gets Input on Aging and Disability Issues

The Joint Executive Committee on Aging and Disability Issues issued a letter to Governor Inslee with four recommendations to be included in the upcoming state budget. 1) Adopt the Community First Choice option for Medicaid which aims to help improve evaluating needed levels of care and provide training and additional support to help people age in place. 2) Provide additional staff and training for Adult Protective Services. 3) Look closely at encourage savings for retirement and investment options for private reimbursement for long term care needs. 4) Begin the process of creating an Alzheimer's state plan. Senator Jeannie Darneille and Rep Laurie Jinkins of Pierce County are on the committee.

Prepare to Contact Your Legislators

The Legislature meets for a short 60-day session beginning January 13. Do you know your state legislators? Have any of them visited your facility to see what you do? Have you visited your legislators recently? They are all very willing and open to have constituents drop by or contact them, especially if you are concerned about issues before the Legislature. [Find out who your legislators are and how to contact them now.](#)

Advocacy Days Scheduled for Arc of Washington

The Arc of Washington has scheduled a series of Advocacy Days for the 2014 Legislative session. Each day begins at 10 a.m. and includes speakers, informational presentations and tips for success. Jan 22 – Briefing and Reception; Jan 29 – Supporting Families; Feb 5 – Medicaid Services; Feb 12 – Civic Rights; Feb 19 – Independent Living Day; Feb 26 – Employment. RSVP to the Arc of WA and for location information – (888) 754-8798.

Join LeadingAge Washington in Olympia

Please join LeadingAge staff, members and residents in Olympia on February 5, 2014. LeadingAge will take care of the details and provide you with an overview of the 2014 budget and bills. You'll also have a chance to meet with your state legislators. Contact [Cassi Meritt](#) for details. [Registration](#)

Activities Schedule for Children

Grandparents raising children and parents raising children with disabilities – as well as all families – will want to check out the new ParentMap calendar of activities. Many of the events listed are in the Tacoma area. [Check out the ParentMap.](#)

State Health Care Innovation Plan Sets Bold Path for Health Transformation in Washington

After eight months of work involving more than 1,000 contributors and a dozen state agencies, Washington has released a five-year initiative to transform health and health care in the state. The State Health Care Innovation Plan aims to deliver better health, better health care, and lower costs for 80 percent or more of the state's residents. Implementation of the Innovation Plan has the potential to generate more than \$730 million return on investment over the first three years. The plan aims to link clinical and community factors that support health and prevention of disease, spread effective payment and care delivery models that emphasize quality outcomes as opposed to the volume of care provided, and ensure integrated and coordinated care from the perspective of patients and their families. View the [Innovation Plan](#) and [Executive Summary](#).

What Does the Future Hold?

As the economy changes, so do the realities of senior care. Read Sarah Stevenson's predictions for the future of senior care and find out more about the housing trends shaping the industry. The rising cost of assisted living means that some families are looking at aging in place, home care, and multi-generational housing instead of more expensive nursing care options. Those who do opt for residential senior living will find a wide range of offerings in new, booming areas like eco-friendly housing and so-called "smart homes," as well as expanded amenities at more traditional assisted living communities. What overall trends can we expect to see in housing for older Americans? [Check out these eight predictions](#) for the near future of senior care.

Washington Healthplanfinder Spanish Paper Application

The revised Washington Healthplanfinder [Spanish paper application](#) is available and can be downloaded from the Health Care Authority [website](#). Online applications can be made at www.HealthPlanFinder.org.

Estate Recovery Clarified

The Health Care Authority has assured the public that they are amending their "estate recovery" rules to apply only to long-term care and related prescription and hospitalization costs for Medicaid recipients. There was some concern that the broader rules used for the past decade could negatively affect people over 55 who enrolled in Washington Apple Health under the Medicaid expansion. [Read HCA's news release](#).

No Deadlines for Medicaid Applications

The state Health Care Authority said that new applicants for Medicaid do not face enrollment deadlines like those buying insurance through the state's new health exchange. The state says Medicaid coverage is typically effective immediately on the day of application. People looking to buy health insurance through the Washington state exchange faced a Dec. 24 deadline to start the application process. Applicants must finish the process and pay the first monthly premium by Jan. 15 in order to ensure coverage starting in January.

WA Apple Health Grows

Washington Apple Health has now enrolled 159,186 through November 30, 2013. The Medicaid enrollment figures include some individuals whose eligibility is being converted, re-determined or renewed as opposed to newly determined. This is true for 64 percent of the immediately eligible population and 34 percent of the new adult population with coverage starting on January 1. This primarily occurs when individuals and families come to Washington Healthplanfinder to make an application for coverage and are either themselves already enrolled in Medicaid, or perhaps have family members in the program. In these cases, their eligibility is processed under the new modified adjusted gross income (MAGI) standard and they are reflected as new enrollments in the totals above. In Pierce County 17,373 individuals have enrolled.

Pierce Transit Launches Express Custom Bus Demonstration Project

Pierce Transit has introduced two new Express Custom Bus routes as a six-month demonstration project. Route 475 features two early morning trips from University Place to Olympia and two return trips in the afternoon, stopping at two Sounder Stations along the way. One-way fares are \$3 for Adults/Youth and \$1.50 Discounted Fare. A monthly Regional Pass is \$108 for Adults/Youth, and \$54 discounted fare with a regional reduced fare permit. Route 485 offers two northbound trips in the morning and two return trips in the afternoon between Olympia and Puyallup, with stops at Martin Way Park and Ride and Hawks Prairie Park and Ride. Fares for one ride are \$4.50 for Adults/Youth and \$2.25 for discounted fare. A monthly Regional Pass is \$162 for Adults/Youth and \$81 discounted fare with a regional reduced fare permit. The new routes are designed to meet the needs of commuters,

support Pierce County employers, and ease congestion on SR 512 and I-5 during weekday morning and afternoon commutes. For further information about the Express Custom Bus Demonstration Project, including fare information and trip planners, visit www.piercetransit.org.

Prepare for Bad Weather on Mass Transit

Winter is technically here. Snow is always likely. Wait for the bus at the top of bottom of the hill closest to the stop. Signal the bus so that the operator has plenty of time to stop. Wait until the bus stops and the door opens before approaching the bus. Use handrails when getting on and off the bus. Wear highly visible and warm clothing. For Pierce Transit weather information and bus detours visit [Pierce Transit's website](#) or call (253) 581-8000. Shuttle riders should select "Option 2." For Sound Transit weather information and bus detours visit [Sound Transit's website](#) or the [Rider Alert page](#) or call (888) 889-6368 for Service Alerts. If you call either agency, know that their phone lines will be inundated with callers. It's best to use their websites to get information.

Volunteers Sought for Developmental Disabilities Advisory Board

Pierce County is seeking volunteers to serve on the Developmental Disabilities Advisory Board, which helps with planning to improve services and better meet the community's needs. The board assists the Department of Community Connections with reviewing and evaluating programs for Pierce County residents who experience developmental disabilities. The board also helps staff with planning to improve services and better meet the community's needs. Advisory Board membership is open to Pierce County residents who have an interest in developmental disability issues. The board welcomes applicants from all minority groups. The board meets bi-monthly from 4:30 to 5:30 p.m. at 3602 Pacific Avenue in Tacoma. Contact Brad Benoit at (253) 798-4332 or bbenoit@co.pierce.wa.us.

Library Celebrates World Book Night

Pierce County Library System invites members of the community to give out free books during World Book Night 2014. To be considered, apply by Jan. 5, 2014. On World Book Night (April 23, 2014), 25,000 book givers each give away 20 copies of a book they have read and loved. The volunteers share the joy of reading. They give the unexpected gift of a book to complete strangers. Book givers choose from a list of [35 titles](#) selected by a panel of librarians and booksellers. The books are specially-printed, not-for-resale World Book Night U.S. editions. Book givers pick up the free books at participating libraries and bookstores. Six Pierce County Libraries—Key Center, Lakewood, Parkland/Spanaway, South Hill, Summit and University Place—have registered as distribution points. [Apply to be a World Book Night book giver online.](#)

ESL For Russian Speaking At Ruston-Point Defiance

The Ruston-Point Defiance Senior Center is hosting a new ESL class starting in January. These classes will be starting on Saturday, January 18, at 10:00 a.m. The class is free and for the Russian community. Anyone wanting to attend can register by calling the Senior Center at (253) 756-0601. The class will be co-taught by Alice White and Yuliya Moskalenko.

Help Becoming a U.S. Citizen During Free Classes at Pierce County Libraries.

Participants will prepare for the citizenship exam, and learn about American history, democracy, interviews and vocabulary. Program is offered in collaboration with Tacoma Community House. TCH offers help in Russian, Spanish, Ukrainian and Vietnamese. They will help people with completion of Application for Naturalization N-400, fee waiver information and class requirements, including registration, information session and English level testing. Classes take place at the [Lakewood Pierce County Library](#), 6300 Wildaire Road S.W., on Saturdays, Jan.11 through March 15, 8:30 – 11:30 a.m. and at the [University Place Pierce County Library](#), 3609 Market Place W., Suite 100 on Tuesdays, Jan. 7 through March 18, 5:30 – 8:30 p.m. Registration is required. To sign up, contact

[Tacoma Community House](#), 1314 S. L St., in person, by phone: 253-383-3951, or by email citizenship@tacomacommunityhouse.org. Contact [Linda Farmer](#) or (253) 548-3428.

Fred Meyer Community Rewards

Are you a Fred Meyer customer? Starting January 6, you can support FISH Food Banks just by shopping at Fred Meyer with your Rewards Card! Fred Meyer will donate \$2.5 million each year to local schools, community organizations and nonprofits. All you have to do is link your Rewards Card to FISH Food Banks and use it when you shop at Fred Meyer! On or after January 6, just go to www.fredmeyer.com/communityrewards.

Center for Independence Announces New Executive Director

Patt Kosier has been selected as the new Executive Director at the Center for Independence. CFI serves as a resource for individuals with disabilities to fully access and participate in the community through outreach, advocacy, and independent living skills development. Patt served as the administrator for the Ticket to Work program for the majority of Western Washington for over 10 years and was most recently the Associate Director for CFI. She replaces Trina Forest who retired after more than six years as CFI's Executive Director.

Are \$20 "Hearing Aids" a Good Bargain?

There is a new trend we will be seeing more and more of in stores, newspapers, and advertisements: inexpensive personal sound amplification products being sold at your local drugstore. One of the reasons you'll see more ads and products focused on hearing amplification is because we are entering the retirement age of the huge Baby Boomer population (people born between 1946-1964), many of whom are not adequately prepared financially for retirement and who may be living longer but are less healthy. These health problems are red flags for acquired hearing loss and/or tinnitus. Also, just as vision tends to change with age so can hearing. This is often a gradual change over a period of years, and often the person who is hard of hearing does not realize it. [Learn more](#) at the post by guest blogger Candace Kukino, Au.D., Director of Audiology at Hearing, Speech & Deafness Center.

Become a Living Well Workshop Leader

The Living Well with Chronic Conditions Workshop helps people with chronic conditions such as diabetes, heart disease, arthritis, lung disease, pain, anxiety, depression, or other chronic illness take charge of their health care challenges and improve quality of life. Living Well workshops are designed to help chronic disease patients create a more positive outlook and to live a more fulfilling life. Workshops are led by peer trainers – many of whom have a chronic disease themselves – and meet once a week for 2.5 hours over the course of six weeks. Leader training will be held Jan 15-16 and 22-23, 9 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. each day at The Evergreen College – Tacoma, 1210 6th Ave. in Tacoma. Space is limited. Call for an Application at (360) 786-8690, ext. 127. Adults living or working in Pierce County with chronic health conditions are especially encouraged to apply for the leadership training.

Hundreds of state's disabled may have lost out on services

Hundreds of developmentally disabled residents may have been deprived of services — such as behavioral therapy, personal-care training and skill-building exercises — for as long as 21 years. Federal regulators determined that Washington state has for two years illegally denied needed services to 27 developmentally disabled residents at a Spokane-area facility. It turns out the problem is much bigger. [Read more](#).

Healthy Active Independent for Life

Looking for an exercise opportunity? HAIL is a program geared to the individual personal needs, not just a basic class. If someone can't do something the exercise is modified for them. Instructor is Kim

Fields, a certified health and fitness professional if a degree in diagnostic health and fitness from Pierce College. She has 20 years in the field specializing in the older adult population. HAIL exercise classes are held Tuesday & Thursdays from 10 to 11 a.m. at the United Lutheran Church, 1231 S. 76st Street in Tacoma. For more information contact Kim at hailexercise@outlook.com.

DOL Reports on Abuse of Disabled Parking Placards and Plates

Each day, people with and without disabilities have difficulty finding parking within many urban areas of the state. It is perceived by some that there is abuse in the use of disabled parking placards and disabled special license plates. The Legislature directed the Department of Licensing (DOL) to establish a work group to study disabled placard and special license plate use and to develop a strategic plan to end any abuse. [View the final report.](#)

RTSS Has Busy Year

Rebuilding Together South Sound has recapped their 2013 activities.

Rebuilding Day 2013: Built/repared 35 ramps & porches with safe handrails & steps, Installed 16 grab bars in showers, Installed new flooring in 19 homes, Installed or repaired 6 roofs, Electrical and/or plumbing repairs at 14 homes, Installed new windows and/or doors at 5 homes, Painted the interior of 14 homes, Did major yard work at 20 homes, Nearly \$300,000 in-kind donations.

Home Modification & Emergency Repairs FY12: Built or repaired 11 handicap access ramps, Installed 1 walk-in shower, Installed 15 grab bars in showers, Installed or repaired flooring in 4 homes, Installed or repaired 15 roofs, Replaced or repaired 5 water heaters, Installed 8 handrails, Electrical repairs at 10 homes, Heating repair or restoration at 5 homes, Plumbing repairs at 17 homes.

Introducing “Maude’s Two-Minute Meddlings”

Emeritus is offering a weekly video series with tips for seniors and the people who love them. The series provides valuable tips and information to help seniors and the people who care for them lead safer and healthier lives. The videos star the animated character of Maude, who likes to dole out advice and meddle in people’s lives – but always for their benefit. [View the videos.](#)

LOCAL HAPPENINGS

Jan 13 – Legislative Session Begins in Olympia

Jan 16 – Helping the Hoarder in Your Life

SAHS educational event is for families of people who hoard. Taught by Karen Kent, Northwest expert on the topic of hoarding among seniors. As a Licensed Mental Health Counselor and Geriatric Mental Health Specialist, Karen provides valuable insights for families to better understand their loved ones who hoard. Learn about loved ones who hoard, the causes of hoarding and valuable coping mechanisms during stressful life transitions with hoarders. Held 6 p.m. to 8 p.m. at the SASH Home Office, Seatac City Hall Building, 4800 S. 188th St., Suite 220 in Seatac. \$25 registration fee includes light refreshments and materials. Register at www.sash-events.com.

Jan 21 - Mature Men's Potluck!

The Tacoma Rainbow Center is hosting a special potluck dinner for gay, bisexual, or transgender men, 50ish & older. This is an opportunity to meet other men in this age group for great conversation. Bring a dish for the first GBT Mature Men's Potluck. Held 5:30 to 6:45 p.m. at the Rainbow Center, 2215 Pacific Ave, Tacoma. For questions or if you need additional information send an email to maconvista@hotmail.com. This is a Pre-SAGE Tacoma Event.

Jan 22 – Development Disabilities Briefing & Reception

People with disabilities and organizations that represent them will hold the 2014 Public Policy Briefing from 2 to 4 p.m. at the General Administration Building, 210 11th Ave, SW in Olympia. Following from 5:30 to 7:30 is the 34th Annual Legislative Reception held in the Columbia Room in the Legislative Building on the State Capitol. Questions about the briefing – Diana@arcwa.org. Questions about the reception – david.maltman@dds.wa.gov or (800) 634-4473.

Jan 23-24 – Powerful Tools for Caregivers

A new Powerful Tools Class Leader Training will be held in Olympia. The cost is \$75 for non-profit, government employees or volunteers and \$150 for other participants. Completion of the training allows Class Leaders teams to present “Powerful Tools for Caregivers” - a six week educational series designed to provide family caregivers with tools needed to take care of themselves while caring for a loved one. Classes consist of interactive sessions, discussions and brainstorming to help participants take the “tools” they choose and put them into action in their lives. For more information, registration or accommodation for the training please contact John McBride at the Lewis Mason Thurston Area Agency on Aging, 360-664-3162 ext. 139 or john.mcbride@dshs.wa.gov.

Jan 25 - Writing Your Will: Tips Everyone Needs To Know

A large percentage of people die without a will. It's easy to put it off. But doing so isn't that difficult. It doesn't take much time, effort or money. And it can prevent tremendous problems in the event of someone's death. Learn about the basics of writing a will at this information-only presentation. Learn about who needs a will, why do I need a will, if an attorney is needed, what's in a will, and more. Sponsored by Pierce County Community Connections Aging & Disability Resources. Held 10:00 – 11:30 a.m. at the Soundview Building, 3602 Pacific Avenue in Tacoma. Please RSVP in advance by calling (253) 798-8787.

Jan 25 – Project Homeless Connect

This quarterly event moves to Spanaway Middle School, 15701 B Street E. Free on-site information and/or services available including medical care, Veterans support, haircuts, Access Point 4 Housing, give a-ways, dental care, chemical dependency, I.D. replacement, food benefits, health insurance, enrollment and much more. Doors open 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. For more information visit www.pchomelessconnect.com or e-mail coordinator@pchomelessconnect.com.

Jan 25 – Helping the Hoarder in Your Life

Held 10 a.m. to noon. See Jan 16 for description, location and registration info.

Jan 28 – Social Security: What You Need To Know

If you are planning on receiving Social Security, or if you want to learn more about maximizing your benefits, this is for you. Learn about current benefits and eligibility requirements, early or delayed benefits, disability and much more. Speaker is Kirk Larson from Social Security. Free; no RSVP. Held 4-5:30 p.m. at the Puyallup Library, 324 South Meridian in Puyallup. For more info call the ADRC at (253) 798-4600.

Feb 10 – Workshop with Teepa Snow – Save the Date

With 5 Million Americans suffering from Alzheimer's and other dementias, facing the challenges of this disease will mean equipping ourselves with techniques and practical knowledge for providing the highest quality of life and care. Local care management company, Sound Options, will be hosting a 1-day dementia training event featuring expert dementia educator and occupational therapist, Teepa Snow MS, OTR/L, FAOTA. Her practical insight and engaging delivery will make for an educational experience not to miss. Whether you are a family caregiver or an eldercare professional, you'll glean practical knowledge and techniques for dementia care and communication. Continuing education credits will be available. Event details will follow.

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. [Registration available after Jan 2.](#)

Feb 14 –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 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. The will include 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. Each Registrant will receive a Registration Packet, 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 you scheduled with your 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

Advocacy Days offer a way for you to learn about the legislative process in person. 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. Wednesdays during the legislative session at the GA Building. The day starts 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. Please make legislative appointments at least two weeks in advance. If you need assistance or more information, call 1.888.754.8798, ext. 105.

Feb 28 – Thriving in Uncertainty

Life is uncertain and after a cancer diagnosis, this can be greatly magnified. In this three-hour workshop provided by Harmony Hill, we will explore how we can find joy and peace in the moment, even when we are facing uncertainty about the outcome of test results, procedures and the other

challenges that often come when our lives are affected by cancer. Come join us as we explore the mystery that is life and learn how to move forward from a place of peace and groundedness together. St. Anthony Hospital Cancer Center Classroom; 11511 Canterwood Blvd. NW, Gig Harbor. This workshop is available at no cost thanks to the sponsorship of Franciscan Health System. 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 14 – Legislative Session in Olympia Scheduled to End

March 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](#).

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. At the end of the training, 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. Day 1 at Pierce County Emergency Operations Center, 2501 S. 35th St., Suite D in Tacoma; Day 2 at Tacoma Lutheran Retirement Community, 1301 N. Highlands Parkway in Tacoma. [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? Email DiscoveryConf@alzwa.org or call 206-529-3894

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

This [annual caregiver conference](#) is designed for family and community caregivers and offers practical, up-to-date resources and information to help you in your caregiving responsibilities. Dynamic speakers from a variety of backgrounds including health care, rehabilitation, social work, and law will share their expertise and knowledge in twenty sessions offered throughout the day. You choose the sessions you need most in your own situation. Resource and Information Exhibits offer informational displays of caregiving services, products, and literature from 8 am – 3 pm. Vendor opportunities and participant registration coming soon. Contact jmikel@co.pierce.wa.us.

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: What coverage options does an adult have if they have a complex mental illness diagnosis.

Answer: Under the Affordable Care Act, as of January 2014, no insurer can turn down a person for coverage because of a mental health condition. Depending on a person's income, they may qualify for subsidized coverage where coverage of mental health and substance abuse services will be required as an essential health benefit. Or a person may qualify for Medicaid under the health law's provisions that

expand coverage to adults with incomes up to 138 percent of the federal poverty level, or about \$16,000 a year. It's best to visit www.HealthPlanFinder.org or call 1-(855)-WAFINDER.

NATIONALLY

Veterans Crisis Line

The holidays can be stressful. If you know a Veteran having a difficult time, let him or her know that support is only a call/chat/text away. The Veterans Crisis Line is a free, confidential resource that Veterans and Service members in need and their loved ones can access anytime. Call 1-800-273-8255 and Press 1, chat online at VeteransCrisisLine.net/Chat, or text to 838255 for free, confidential support, 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, 365 days a year.

Online Health History Tool Launched

[Surgeon Generals My Family Health Portrait](#) tool is a free and easy online tool to record health history. Acting Surgeon General Boris Lushniak encourages everyone to spend time talking with their family about their health. "A patient's family health history is an easy, quick and inexpensive way to get a rough estimate of how strongly a particular disease runs in a family. Knowing your family health history can help your clinician identify screening and treatment options that are personalized for you," says Lushniak. Consumers are able to capture and organize their family members' information and share it with other family members and health care professionals. (Source: Surgeon General)

New Tool for Struggling Seniors: EconomicCheckUp®

The National Council on Aging *(NCOA) has launched a new online tool to help older adults improve their financial security. EconomicCheckUp® asks a series of questions to help seniors identify benefits and services that could save them money, cut expenses, get trained for and find a job, and better utilize their assets. Early tests in 25 communities found that seniors using the tool saved up to \$3,000 a year on average. [Visit EconomicCheckUp® now](#). (Source: NCOA)

Learn About Ticket To Work

[Meet Ben! An Introduction to the Ticket to Work Program](#) is a video that explains the program. Ben receives disability benefits but wants to work. The YouTube video follows his journey to navigate the Ticket to Work program and his options for finding services to help him along the way. In the 4-minute video, Ben learns what happens when you contact the Ticket to Work Help Line, his options for selecting a service provider to help him meet his work goals and how to make a plan for going to work. (Source: SSA)

Older Americans Month 2014 Theme Announced

The Administration for Community Living has announced the theme for next May's Older Americans Month observance: "Safe Today. Healthy Tomorrow." The focus is on injury prevention among older adults, something NCOA promotes through our Falls Free® Initiative. Watch for more information in the new year! [Explore the Falls Free Initiative®](#) (Source: ACL)

Senate Launches New Anti-fraud Hotline and Website

If you suspect a senior has been the victim of a scam or fraud, the U.S. Senate Special Committee on Aging has set up a new toll-free hotline to help at 1-855-303-9470 or via the committee website. The committee's investigators have experience in fraud concerning retirement savings, identity theft, phone scams, Medicare, Social Security, and other consumer issues. (Source: NCOA)

Publication Talks about End of Life Issues

[Let's Talk: Starting the Conversation about Health, Legal, Financial and End-of-Life Issues](#) is a new guide for families. The Eldercare Locator, in partnership with The Conversation Project, launched its 11th Home for the Holidays campaign with the release of a new guide for families to help start conversations about health, legal, financial, and end-of-life issues. This guide seeks to eliminate the "conversation disconnect" by providing the public with the topics, tools and information they need to discuss planning for the future and end-of-life issues. (Source: AoA)

Resource and Forum for Family Caregivers

[AgingCare.com](#) is a free nationwide online community that connects people caring for elderly parents to other caregivers, personalized information, and local resources. To provide practical advice, dependable information, and support to its audience, AgingCare.com has created a powerful knowledge culture unlike any other – one where a thoughtful community of elder care experts and caregivers share ideas and deliver useful, reliable content. AgingCare.com was born out of the realization that there was no centralized resource for information on managing care for elderly parents. By providing a comfortable setting for caregivers, AgingCare.com has become the trusted resource for exchanging ideas, sharing conversations and finding credible information for those seeking elder care solutions. Visit [AgingCare.com](#) and check out the activity in their [Caregiver Forum](#). Contact Richard Nix at (718) 816-4287 or richard.nix@AgingCare.com. (Source: AgingCare)

New Resource: Mentalhealth.gov

The Administration for Community Living recently launched www.mentalhealth.gov, a new website featuring easy-to-understand information about basic signs of mental health problems, how to talk about mental health, and how to find help. (Source: ACL)

New Rule Eases Claim Requirements for Vets with TBI

The Veterans Affairs Department is trying to make it easier for veterans diagnosed with traumatic brain injury and certain other ailments connected to TBI to obtain more disability pay, according to a [new regulation](#). The change eliminates the need for veterans suffering from TBI and any of five other specific illnesses to provide more evidence linking the second illness to the service-connected traumatic brain injury. The new rule affects vets suffering from Parkinson's disease, certain types of dementia, depression, unprovoked seizures, or certain diseases of the hypothalamus and pituitary glands. There is no specific time frame for filing claims associated with the onset of Parkinson's or unprovoked seizures under the new rule. For vets suffering certain types of dementia, the disease must manifest within 15 years after moderate or severe TBI; depression, within three years of moderate or severe TBI, or within a year of mild TBI; and for hypothalamus and pituitary problems, within 12 months of moderate or severe TBI. Vets still can file a claim to establish a link between the two diseases even if they don't meet the time and severity thresholds. (Source: VA)

Disability Statistics Compendium Now Available

[2013 Compendium on Disability Statistics](#) is a web-based tool from the American Association of People with Disabilities (AAPD) and pools disability statistics published by various federal agencies together in one place. When working on legislative and other matters relating to persons with disabilities, the tool will make finding and using disability statistics easier. (Source: ADRC-TAE)

Important Changes to Medicare Coverage in 2014

People with Medicare who get home health benefits or who are in need of skilled care should be aware of two new updates from Medicare. As of Nov. 19, the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS) requires additional and stricter criteria for meeting the definition of "homebound" status for home health care coverage. And, in upholding the recent *Jimmo vs. Sebelius* settlement, CMS revised its policy manual and clarifies that a person cannot be denied skilled care coverage solely because his

condition may not improve or has “plateaued.” [Learn more about new homebound criteria](#) | [Read guidance on Jimmo vs. Sebelius](#) (Source: NCOA)

Mandela Signer 'Moving His Hands ... but There Was no Meaning'

As one world leader after another paid homage to Nelson Mandela at a memorial service, the man standing at arm's length from them appeared to interpret their words in sign language. But advocates for the deaf say he was a faker. [View the ABC News video report.](#) (Source: ABC News)

Amputee Coalition Expands Web site

Thanks to an educational grant funded by Purdue Pharma, the Amputee Coalition has developed new materials to help people with limb loss work with their healthcare providers to manage pain effectively. The resources for pain management are located on the Coalition’s Web site. Separately, through a generous grant from the BADER Consortium, the Coalition has secured funding to develop a series of Web pages dedicated to its research initiatives. These pages will be developed with the guidance from members of the Coalition’s Scientific and Medical Advisory Committee (SciMAC). [Visit the Amputee Coalition website.](#) (Source: Amputee Coalition)

PLAN AHEAD – MARCH IS...

Red Cross, Brain Injury Awareness, Colorectal Cancer Awareness, Credit Education, Deaf History, Listening Awareness, Women’s, Chronic Fatigue Syndrome, Eye Donor, MS Education & Awareness, Kidney, Nutrition, Social Work, Poison Prevention and Vision Months; Consumer Protection (2-8), Severe Storm Preparedness (2-8), Women’s (8-14), Brain Awareness (10-16), Health Information Professionals (16-22), Flood Safety (17-21) and Tsunami Awareness (23-29) Weeks; Read Across America (3), Book (6), Check Your Batteries (9), Women & Girls HIV/AIDS Awareness (10), Registered Dietitian (12), Kidney (13), Consumer Rights (15), Well-Elderly or Wellderly (17), Brain Injury Awareness (21), Down Syndrome (21) and Tuberculosis (24) 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.