



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
Jan 1 – No meeting
Feb 5 – 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 8 – Jeretta Scott, CapTel

Bridging the Gap

Second Friday of each month, 9:30 – 11:30 a.m.
Darol Tuttle Law Offices, 732 Broadway, Suite 202, Tacoma
Legal news, new ideas, networking for professionals

East County Providers Network

Third Tuesday of each month, 8 a.m.
Location varies monthly.
Contact Laura Fehrenbacher, Stafford Suites, (253) 862-1818 or lauraf@staffordcare.com

SASH Coffee and Networking for Pierce County

Ports of Call Restaurant
First Wednesday of each month, 8:30 – 10 a.m.
Jan 7 – La Quinta Inn Tacoma, 1425 E. 27th St.
Contact Rebecca Bomann at Rebecca@sashservices.com or (206) 501-4375

South End (King County) Coalition

Third Wednesday of each month at 7:45 – 9:30 a.m.
Jan 21 – TBA
Schedule of meeting locations and times at www.secoalition.com

Aging Smart – Gig Harbor

Fourth Thursday of each month at 8:30 – 9:30 a.m.
Sound Vista Village, 6633 McDonald Ave, Gig Harbor
Contact [Rebecca Rainsberger](#), (253) 509-2340

LOCAL SERVICES

2015 Legislative Session

The 2015 session of the Washington State Legislature opens Monday, January 12. The session is scheduled to conclude April 27.

Governor’s Budget

The Governor’s budget has been released. The budget includes two important decision packages. “Area Agency on Aging Case Management” – DSHS asked for \$28M (25% increase). Governor

Inslee put \$10.5M in his budget (around 11% increase). “Pre Medicaid Services” – DSHS asked for \$19M. Governor Inslee put it all in his budget. [View the DSHS summary.](#)

Developmental DisAbility Notebook Available

The [2015 Legislative Notebook](#) for Developmental DisAbility Issues is now online on the ARC of Washington State website.

Pierce County Legislators Named to Key State Senate Committees

The Senate Health Care Committee deals with issues concerning the state’s health care system, including health care facilities, health care professions, long-term care, state implementation of the federal Affordable Care Act and medical marijuana. Sen. Randi Becker, R-Eatonville, is chair and Sen. Bruce Dammeier, R-Puyallup, is vice chair. The Senate Human Services, Mental Health and Housing Committee deals with issues involving supported housing, social-service programs, foster care, youth and adult mental health issues. Sen. Steve O’Ban, R-Pierce County, is chair. The Senate Ways and Means Committee writes the state’s operating and capital budgets, oversees tax policy, and reviews all bills that affect state operating and capital-budget spending. Sen. Bruce Dammeier, R-Puyallup, is vice chair, education finance.

W4A 2015 Legislative Priorities

W4A – the Washington Association of Area Agencies on Aging – has posted its [legislative priorities](#) for the 2015 session. Priorities include strengthening aging in place resources, encouraging retirement and long term support savings and protecting vulnerable adults.

Arc of Washington Schedules Advocacy Days

Beginning January 28th the Arc of Washington will hold Advocacy Day on Wednesday during the legislative session. [Learn more online.](#) Jan 28 - Legislative Briefing; Feb 4 - Budget Overview; Feb 11 – Self-advocacy: Promoting Independence; Feb 18 - Medicaid Services; Feb 25 - Supported Living Rally; Ma 4 – Education; Mar 11 - Civil Rights; Ma 18 - Supporting Families; Mar 25 - Employment Supports Rally; Apr 1 - Autism Awareness Rally.

Chronic Disease Self-Management Workshop

Start 2015 out right with a new 6-week series of chronic disease self-management workshops. The workshops have become the proven leader in self-management for people with chronic health conditions. Learn how to control your pain, deal with fatigue, start an activity program, handle stress and relax, use medications effectively, solve problems and meet personal goals, make choices about your treatment and eat well to live well. Held every Thursday Feb 12 through March 19 from 1 to 3:30 p.m. at the Kincaid Court Apartments and Sumner Commons Apartments, 6210 Parker Rd. E. in Sumner. Register by calling the Healthy Communities Foundation and ask for Living Well registration at (360) 786-8690, ext. 127. Sponsored by Pierce County Community Connections and local partners.

Living Well Workshop Leader Training

The Living Well Chronic Disease Self-management workshops are designed to help 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 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. Enjoy helping others improve their health by being a workshop leader. Leader training will be held Feb 10-11 and 24-25 from 9 a.m. to 4:30 each day at the Eastside Tanbara health Center, 1708 E. 44th St. in Tacoma. Contact Dave Hughes for information and application at (360) 786-8690, ext 127 or by [e-mail](#).

New Videos on Changes to Personal Care and IFS

Two new video podcasts take a closer look at upcoming changes to programs that will affect tens of thousands of people. Although all of the changes are dependent on approval by the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid, the following interviewees answer many of the questions individuals and families are asking. [Changes Ahead for Personal Care](#) – Bea Rector of Home & Community Services talks about a new program ahead that will affect individuals receiving personal care. It's called Community First Choice. Hosted by Ed Holen and Sue Elliott. [Changes Ahead for Individual and Family Services](#) – Sheila Collins, Program Manager for DDA's Individual & Family Services (IFS), talks about upcoming changes to the program and what it will mean for clients currently enrolled in IFS. Hosted by Ed Holen and Sue Elliott.

FISH Food Banks Announces New Executive Director

The Board of Directors of FISH Food Banks of Pierce County has selected Sue Potter as the next Executive Director. Sue has worked with the Tacoma/Pierce County Habitat for Humanity affiliate since 2009 where she served as Director of Development & Communication for five years. She also worked for the University of Puget Sound, the Museum of Glass, Charles Wright Academy, and the Washington State History Museum and has served on numerous non-profit boards.

Early Stage Memory Loss Zoo Walk Continues into Spring 2015

Lutheran Community Services Northwest and the Alzheimer's Association are extending their weekly morning walks at the Point Defiance Zoo and Aquarium for those with early stage memory loss and their care partners. The Early State Memory Loss Zoo Walk allows participants to partake in a weekly morning walk through the zoo followed by coffee and conversation. The next series of 8 walks begins Feb 5 and includes free admission to the Zoo and Aquarium. Participants pay for their own beverages at the Plaza Café following the walk. To register, contact the Early Stage Memory Loss Coordinator with the Alzheimer's Association at (206) 529-3868 or 1-800-848-7097.

Avamere at Pacific Ridge Open House

Avamere at Pacific Ridge is holding an Open House on January 7 from 3:30 to 7:00 p.m. This occasion serves as a celebration of the Avamere Family of Companies' continued commitment to the Tacoma community through expanded health care continuum. Avamere at Pacific Ridge is a newly remodeled, behavioral health and memory care center. Tour the newly remodeled building while enjoying drinks and appetizers. Contact Molly Tunnell to RSVP by end of day 12/31/14 at (253) 355-4228 or mtunnell@avamere.com

New Food Co-Op opens at Prairie Ridge CSC

WonGen Central Community Services is open at the Prairie Ridge Community Service Center located at 14104 Prairie Ridge Drive, Bonney Lake. This food co-op will be serving "working poor" families throughout the greater area to regain financial stability by providing food, household goods, clothing, and adult education and consultation on personal finance management. Referral and application is required for this program. Donations of food, gently-used clothing, hygiene items, and household commodities are appreciated. Contact Mary Beth Holmes at (253) 861-6877 for more information and a referral form.

SilverSneakers at the Sumner Senior Center

The Sumner Senior Center now offers SilverSneakers "Classic" on Monday/Thursday 2:00-3:00pm and SilverSneaker "Circuit" on Tuesdays at 2:00pm. It's free with SilverSneakers membership OR pay just \$3 per class. Make the Sumner Senior Center your headquarters for fitness and let SilverSneakers help you get fit your way! For more info call 1-888-423-4632.

Help Paying Medicare

If you're on Medicare, you may qualify for help with Medicare premiums, deductibles, and cost-sharing. There are four programs that can help. They are called "Medicare Savings Programs" or "MSPs." Individuals who have incomes below \$1,314/month (\$1,770/mo for couples) should investigate this program that can help pay for Medicare Part A and/or B premiums deductibles, coinsurance and more. [Read more about the program](#). To learn more call the Pierce County Aging & Disability Resource Center at (253) 798-4600.

Estate Recovery Explained

Columbia Legal Services has produced a [revised explanation of Estate Recovery](#). Estate recovery allows the Washington State Department of Social & Health Services (DSHS) and the Washington State Health Care Authority (HCA) to recover the Long Term Care and other medical services paid by the state. The HCA has many programs that pay for medical services. Under some of these programs, and with important limitations, the State is permitted to recover (to get back) the cost of the services it pays for out of the estate of the person who got the services. The estate-recovery law allows recovery from a recipient's estate under limited circumstances.

Probate Explained

The Washington State Bar Association has produced a [succinct explanation of probate](#). The 2-page handout discussed probate assets, filing probate, personal representatives, notification of creditors, taxes, closing probate and costs.

Carbon Monoxide Warnings

Because of the large number of immigrants in the area, King County Public Health has produced a series of Carbon Monoxide flyers in English and 23 other languages. The weather in our area is a shock to many recent immigrants who use unsafe practices to stay warm. [Learn more online](#).

2015 "Challenges in Caregiving" Open for Vendors

Registration is now open for vendors at the 22nd Annual "Challenges in Caregiving: Giving Care, Taking Care" Caregiver Conference. The conference will be held on June 1, 2015 (first Monday in June) at the Tukwila Community Center in Tukwila. The conference provides current practical information and skills that caregivers may use in their daily caregiving responsibilities. Over 400 participants are expected to attend the conference. The conference presents an excellent opportunity to connect businesses with caregivers while providing participants valuable information and materials related to caregiving. Space and facilities are limited to approximately 43 exhibitors on a first come (registered/paid) basis. Contact [John Mikel via e-mail](#) or (253) 798-2823.

EMPLOYMENT

The Department of Vocational Rehabilitation is recruiting for a Ticket-to-Work & Benefits Planning Program Specialist position that is stationed at the DVR State Office in Lacey. Here is a link to the job announcement that will be open until January 18: [TTW & Benefits Planning Program Specialist](#).

SCAM OF THE MONTH

How NOT to use a gift card

Thinking about giving a fancy new gadget as a holiday gift? Or maybe there's something on your wish list that Santa forgot to bring? If so, you might be tempted by an ad for high-tech at a low price. But if a merchant other than Amazon.com asks you to pay using an Amazon gift card, [it's probably a scam](#).

In fact, Amazon's gift card terms don't allow you to use Amazon gift cards to make payments anywhere besides amazon.com and a few specific sites.

RECOMMENDED READS FOR THE 50+

“Thrive : The Third Metric to Redefining Success and Creating a Life of Well-being, Wisdom, and Wonder” by Arianna Huffington. Our relentless pursuit of the two traditional metrics of success-- money and power – has led to an epidemic of burnout and stress-related illnesses, and an erosion in the quality of our relationships, family life, and, ironically, our careers. Huffington discusses a third metric for defining success – to truly thrive. That third metric includes our well-being, our ability to draw on our intuition and inner wisdom, our sense of wonder, and our capacity for compassion and giving. Drawing on the latest groundbreaking research and scientific findings in the fields of psychology, sports, sleep, and physiology that show the profound and transformative effects of meditation, mindfulness, unplugging, and giving, Arianna shows us the way to a revolution in our culture, our thinking, our workplace, and our lives. Call Number: 650.1 HUFFING 2014.

LOCAL HAPPENINGS

Jan 5 – Retirement for “Average” Folks

Advertising makes retirement look like one long tropical vacation. But the majority of Americans will experience something quite different. What will retirement look like for the “average” resident in Pierce County? This event will take an honest look at the resources and realities that can be tapped when retirement rolls around. Presented by Pierce County Aging & Disability Resources. Held at 7 p.m. the Bonney Lake Library, 18501 90th St., E in Bonney Lake. Free. No RSVP. Call (253) 798-8787 for info about weather postponement or cancellation.

Jan 10 – Fireside Educational Chats at Spring Ridge

Identifying the 10 signs of dementia. What is normal aging and what is not. Free. Held at 2 p.m. at Spring Ridge Assisted Living and Memory Care, 6856 E. Portland Ave in Tacoma. RSVP to (253) 474-1093.

Jan 10 – Talent Search Audition Day

United by Music North America (UBMNA) and TACID host auditions for musically talented people with developmental and intellectual challenges to audition and join professional mentors. Some people may be invited to join UBMNA at future festivals and events. Free. Held 2 to 5 p.m. at TACID, 6315 S. 19th Street in Tacoma. RSVP for artist day auditions at: marsha@tacid.org or call (253) 565-9000.

Jan 12 – Retirement for “Average” Folks

(See Jan 5 for description.) Held at 12:10 p.m. the Pierce County Annex, 2401 S 35th St in Tacoma. Free. No RSVP. Call (253) 798-8787 for info about weather postponement or cancellation. Held at 7 p.m. the Gig Harbor Library, 4424 Pt. Fosdick Dr., NW in Gig Harbor. Free. No RSVP. Call (253) 798-8787 for info about weather postponement or cancellation.

Jan 13 – Retirement for “Average” Folks

(See Jan 5 for description.) Held at 12:10 p.m. the County City Building, 930 S. Tacoma Ave in Tacoma. Free. No RSVP. Call (253) 798-8787 for info about weather postponement or cancellation.

Jan 13 – Social Security Disability

A focused presentation and discussion about Social Security for individuals with disabilities. Information also provided about creating your own MySocialSecurity account. Held at 2 p.m. at TACID, 6315 S 19th St in Tacoma. For more information call the ADRC at (253) 798-4600.

Jan 13 – Social Security Retirement Basics

A presentation about Social Security, retirement, spousal, disability, and related issues for beneficiaries. Information also provided about creating your own MySocialSecurity account. Held at 4 p.m. at TACID, 6315 S 19th St in Tacoma. For more information call the ADRC at (253) 798-4600.

Jan 16 – Senior Matters: A Multidisciplinary Approach to Elder Care

A special conference bringing together various professionals serving the aging community. Keynote: “Aging Gracefully” with Linda Evans. Presentations include “Illusive Social Security Secrets” with Andy Landis and “Why Traditional Planning Will Fail Seniors.” Breakout sessions on dementia, Long-Term Care insurance, guardianship, crisis planning, non-crisis planning and more. Held at Highline College, 2400 S. 240th St in Des Moines. Limited seating. [Info and registration online.](#)

Jan 24 – Fireside Educational Chats at Spring Ridge

Identifying caregiver stress and the resources that can help. Free. Held at 2 p.m. at Spring Ridge Assisted Living and Memory Care, 6856 E. Portland Ave in Tacoma. RSVP to (253) 474-1093.

Jan 29 – Point In Time Count

National street and shelter point-in-time count. The annual survey is used as the primary data source for federal agencies to understand homelessness trends and track progress against the goals and objectives contained in “Opening Doors,” the Federal Strategic Plan to End Homelessness. For information or to volunteer contact [Rae Anne Giron](#) at (253) 798-6931.

Jan 29 – Dementia Series: Assessing Dependence

A round table discussion for professionals in the field of aging. Focuses on defining dependence and discussion how to measure. Also evaluate the merits of staging the disease process. Held 8:30-10:00 a.m. at the Alzheimer’s Association, 100 W. Harrison in Seattle. 1.5 CEUs \$27/session of \$65/3 sessions. [Register online.](#) Call (206) 799-7108 or [e-mail.](#)

Feb 2 – Retirement for “Average” Folks

(See Jan 5 for description.) Held at 7 p.m. the South Hill Library, 15420 Meridian E. Free. No RSVP. Call (253) 798-8787 for info about weather postponement or cancellation.

Feb 3 – Retirement for “Average” Folks

(See Jan 5 for description.) Held at 7 p.m. the University Place Library, 3609 Market Place W. Free. No RSVP. Call (253) 798-8787 for info about weather postponement or cancellation.

Feb 7 – Retirement for “Average” Folks

(See Jan 5 for description.) Held at 10 a.m. at the Soundview Building, 3602 Pacific Ave. S. Free. No RSVP. Call (253) 798-8787 for info about weather postponement or cancellation.

Feb 10 – Retirement for “Average” Folks

(See Jan 5 for description.) Held at 7 p.m. the Parkland/Spanaway Library, 13718 Pacific Ave., S. Free. No RSVP. Call (253) 798-8787 for info about weather postponement or cancellation.

Feb 14 – Fireside Educational Chats at Spring Ridge

Learn how to serve people with hearing loss and understand the risks of untreated hearing loss, effective communication strategies and bio/psycho/social impact of hearing loss. Free. Held at 2 p.m. at Spring Ridge Assisted Living and Memory Care, 6856 E. Portland Ave in Tacoma. RSVP to (253) 474-1093.

Feb 25 – Alzheimer’s Advocacy Day

The Alzheimer’s Association holds its Advocacy Day in Olympia. Participants will receive a briefing on state issues related to Alzheimer's and other dementias, and how to advocate that day in meetings with legislators and legislative staff. Register: mbarrett@alz.org or call (206) 529-3867.

Feb 26 – Senior Lobby Day

Olympia. Save the date. More details to follow.

Feb 26 – Dementia Series: Co-Partnering

A round table discussion for professionals in the field of aging. Focuses on reciprocity in caregiving and how co-caring is a dynamic process. Held 8:30-10:00 a.m. at the Alzheimer’s Association, 100 W. Harrison in Seattle. 1.5 CEUs \$27/session of \$65/3 sessions. [Register online](#). Call (206) 799-7108 or [e-mail](#).

Feb 28 – Fireside Educational Chats at Spring Ridge

Learn about common behaviors in people with hearing loss and/or dementia and how untreated hearing loss can contribute to dementia, intervention steps, identifying hearing loss and mitigating issues. Free. Held at 2 p.m. at Spring Ridge Assisted Living and Memory Care, 6856 E. Portland Ave in Tacoma. RSVP to (253) 474-1093.

Mar 31 – Guardianships for Individuals with Developmental Disabilities

Join attorney Timothy Williams for PC2’s first spring informational meeting. Held at 6 p.m. at the Pierce County Coalition for Developmental Disabilities, 3716 Pacific Avenue, Suite #A in Tacoma. Call (253) 564-0707 for details.

April 7 – Options for the Future

What you would do or how you would get information if you need to care for a loved one – especially if it was a sudden need? Everyday people face this dilemma but most have little knowledge of available resources. Join us for an information-only presentation with experts in our community on options for aging adults and people with disabilities. Jointly sponsored by Health Care Providers Council of Pierce County and the Aging & Disability Resource Center. Held 6:30 – 8:30 p.m. at the Milgard Family Hope Center, 8502 Skansie Ave in Gig Harbor. Free; no RSVP.

Mar 26 – Dementia Series: Doll Therapy

A round table discussion for professionals in the field of aging. Focuses on effectiveness of doll therapy as a behavioral intervention and assess the ethical issues of using doll therapy for dementia patients. Held 8:30-10:00 a.m. at the Alzheimer’s Association, 100 W. Harrison in Seattle. 1.5 CEUs \$27/session of \$65/3 sessions. [Register online](#). Call (206) 799-7108 or [e-mail](#).

June 6-7 – Tacoma Relay for Life

Change for 2015 moving to a Saturday / Sunday event. Health fair is from 11 a.m. to 5 p.m. Opening ceremonies Saturday at noon. For information about participating contact [Cissy Gustafson](#). Location remains at Mt. Tahoma High School.

July 26, 1990 – Americans with Disability Act signed into law – 25th Anniversary

Sign the [pledge to recommit](#) to the ADA. [Organizations and government](#) entities can sign the ADA Proclamation.

July 30, 1965 – Medicare signed into law – 50th Anniversary

Aug 14, 1935 – Social Security signed into law – 80th Anniversary

Q&A of the Month

Question: The next session of the Legislature starts in January and I have heard about several issues that are of interest to me. How can I make my voice heard?

Answer: It's pretty easy to make your voice heard by legislators during the session. You can do this by mail, e-mail or phone. First, know which district you live in. If you are Internet savvy you can do that online at <http://app.leg.wa.gov/districtfinder/>. That will give you the name, address, office phone number and e-mail of the legislator. Each legislator has their own web page - for Senators at <http://www.leg.wa.gov/senate/senators/Pages/default.aspx> and for Representatives at <http://www.leg.wa.gov/house/representatives/Pages/default.aspx>. Another good, easy and effective way to communicate is via the toll-free Legislative hotline at 1-(800)-562-6000. The number for individuals with hearing impairments is 1-(800)-635-9993. Operators take your message and forward them on to your legislators. You can leave a message 8 am to 8 pm Monday – Friday and Saturday from 9 am to 1 pm. The best advice we can give is to keep your message focused and short. Clearly identify the issue about which you are calling or e-mailing, and state your position. Just a few sentences is best. Also, be sure that the issue you are contacting your legislator about is a State issue and not something handled at the federal level. Lastly, thank your legislator for taking the time to listen to your concerns.

NATIONALLY

NPR Takes on Antipsychotic Drugs in Nursing Homes

National Public Radio (NPR) aired two stories on antipsychotic drugs and their impact in American nursing homes. For older people with dementia, these drugs are often given just for sedation and they can be deadly. In 2012 the federal government started a campaign to get nursing homes to reduce their use of these drugs. But the government rarely penalizes nursing homes when they don't get with the program. [Read/listen to the Morning Edition story](#). But some nursing homes have taken the federal mandate to heart and now address behavioral issues without antipsychotic drugs. [Read/listen to the All Things Considered story](#). NOTE: The Pierce County Long Term Care Ombudsman program offers a one-hour workshop on "Dementia: Setting the Record Straight." This presentation includes information about the misuse of antipsychotic medications. Call (253) 798-3789. (Source: NPR)

Videos Explain Health Insurance in Spanish

[El seguro de salud, explicado: ¡los YouToons lo tienen cubierto!](#) is a Spanish version of the five-minute cartoon video *Health Insurance Explained – The YouToons Have It Covered*, a light-hearted treatment of a difficult and important topic. It breaks down important health insurance concepts, such as premiums and provider networks, and explains how individuals pay for coverage and obtain medical care and prescription drugs when enrolled in various types of health insurance, including HMOs and PPOs. Additionally, [la calculadora del Mercado de Seguros Médicos](#), the Health Insurance Marketplace Calculator in Spanish, now includes zip code-specific data on 2015 marketplace plans. It allows consumers to generate estimates of their health insurance premiums and government subsidies based on zip code, household income, family size and ages of family members. [The calculator](#) also helps people determine whether they could be eligible for Medicaid. (Source: KFF)

FY15 Funding Bill: What It Means for Aging Programs

A \$1 trillion, 1,603-page FY15 funding package was among the last pieces of business of the 113th Congress. The legislation will fund government programs through Sept. 30, 2015. What's included for aging programs such as the Older Americans Act, falls prevention, chronic disease, and elder justice? [Get the highlights](#) | [Download our funding table](#) (Source: NCOA)

Obama Administration Takes Sides in Disability Suit Against Uber

The [Obama administration weighed in](#) on the side of advocates for the blind in a San Francisco federal court suit accusing ride-on-demand company Uber of discriminating against passengers with guide dogs. In its court filing, the Justice Department said companies like Uber are covered by the Americans with Disabilities Act, which requires equal treatment and reasonable accommodations for disabled customers. Uber has denied discriminating but has also argued that it is not a public-service provider — a “public accommodation” — covered by the disability law. Uber also argued that it does not directly provide transportation services but merely signs contracts with independent drivers. (Source: SFGate)

Weighing Community Living Options for Seniors

Older adults who are thinking about where to live in retirement have a host of issues to consider—taxes, costs, community services, and much more. We've compiled some questions that can help them explore which option might be the best fit for their situation. [See issues to consider](#) | [Get more tips for staying independent](#). (Source: NCOA)

Inclusive Emergency Planning

Ensure that emergency preparations make adequate provisions for individuals with disabilities. Resources from the National Organization on Disability can help you assess your emergency plans and develop protocols that protect everyone. [Learn more online](#). (Source: NOD)

Focus on Community-Based Care

Many states - including Washington - are making inroads to move individuals out of facilities and into community settings. Ohio, Texas and Washington account for 40 percent of the nation's home placements. But there are challenges in enabling individuals to live more independent lives. Medicaid rules often stand in the way. [Listen to the NPR story](#).

Older Americans Month Empowers Older Adults and Communities to “Get into the Act”

The Administration for Community Living (ACL) celebrates Older Americans Month each May to recognize older Americans for their contributions. In honor of the upcoming 50th anniversary of the Older Americans Act (OAA), we are focused on how older adults are taking charge of their health, getting engaged in their communities, and making a positive impact in the lives of others. The 2015 Older Americans Month 2015 theme is “Get into the Act.” More to come. (Source: ACL)

Congress Agrees To Widen Federal Help For Disabled

Congress has given final approval to [legislation to help individuals with disabilities](#), allowing Americans with disabilities to open tax-free bank accounts to pay for needs such as education, housing and health care. The move paves the way for creation of the accounts beginning next year for as many as 54 million people with disabilities and their families. (Source: AP)

Mental Health Services Denied by Insurance Companies

When insurance companies deny the mentally ill the treatment their doctors prescribe, seriously ill people are often discharged, and can be a danger to themselves or others. [Scott Pelley reports](#). (Source: CBS)

The Eight Most Bogus Health Claims Of 2014

Every day seems to turn up opportunities to abuse science in new and perverse ways, especially when it comes to health. You open a newspaper or news site, and you read about a health claim making the rounds: a diet that will give you the energy of a teenager, an exercise routine that will elongate your legs, a policy that will protect Americans from scary viruses. Many of these claims – even the ones that come from the lips of the most esteemed doctors and public officials – aren't backed by any good evidence. Some even run in the opposite direction of what the best-available evidence tells us. [Read the top 8 bogus claims](#). (Source: Vox)

CMS Releases 2015 SSI and Spousal Impoverishment Standards

Nursing home care is expensive, which is why Congress amended the Medicaid law and enacted “spousal impoverishment” provisions to protect a certain amount of a couple’s income/resources for the spouse remaining at home. The Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS) recently published the minimum and maximum amount of resources and income that can be protected for a spouse in the community in 2015, as well as maximum federal Supplemental Security Income (SSI) payments. [Learn more](#) (Source: NCOA)

Annual Disability Statistics Compendium Released

The new 2014 Disability Statistics Compendium aggregates disability statistics published by various federal agencies in order to assist policymakers and others who work on disability issues. It is compiled by the Research and Training Center on Disability Statistics and Demographics, which is funded by the U.S. Department of Education's National Institute for Disability and Rehabilitation Research. [Learn more about the Annual Disability Statistics compendium](#). (Source: Dept of Ed.)

What You Know about Aging is Probably Wrong

Find out “[Why Everything You Know about Aging is Probably Wrong](#).” This article appeared in the Wall Street Journal and captures six commonly held myths. What you will read will likely surprise you. (Source: WSJ)

Jane Seymour’s Secrets to Feeling Young After 50

Actress Jane Seymour, host of the new PBS series Feel Grand for people 50+, reveals that she is shocked by how young she looks and feels as she does not feel like someone in their mid-60s. Seymour keeps herself physically and emotionally healthy. She believes being creative is key to aging well. Being creative allows you to express yourself in many different ways even if you’re not sure how to start. [Read more](#). (Source: Huffington Post)

PLAN AHEAD – MARCH IS...

Red Cross, Brain Injury Awareness, Colorectal Cancer Awareness, Deaf History, Listening Awareness, Women’s, Caffeine Awareness, Chronic Fatigue Syndrome, Color Therapy, Ethics, Eye Donor, Nutrition, Social Work and Poison Prevention Month; Write a Letter of Appreciation (1-7), Consumer Protection (1-7), Storm Preparedness (1-7), Save Your Vision (1-7), Health Information (15-21), Brain Awareness (16-22), Flood Safety (16-20), Well-Elderly or Wellderly (16-22), Cleaning (22-28) and LGBT Health Awareness (23-29) Weeks; Read Across American (2), Ear Care (3), World Book (5), Women’s Rights & International Peace (8), Consumer Rights (15), Well-Elderly or Wellderly (16),

