

## ADRC E-Newsletter May, 2020



The ADRC E-Newsletter may also be viewed as a PDF at [www.PierceADRC.org](http://www.PierceADRC.org) "News & Events."

 [Like us on Facebook](#)

### **NETWORKING OPPORTUNITIES**

**➔ Check in advance whether networking meetings for May are being held. ⬅**

#### **Aging and LTC Providers Network - ONLINE**

First Thursday of each month, 8 – 9 a.m. (Refreshments compliments of Spring Ridge)

May 7 – Covid-19 Getting Back to 'Normal' with Dr. Anthony Chen, TPCHD

Pierce County Aging and Long-Term Care Providers Networking Meeting

Join the meeting online: <https://piercecountywa.zoom.us/j/92075458945>

Join the meeting by phone: 253-215-8782 or 888-788-0099 or 877-853-5247

Webinar ID: 920 7545 8945 – Password: 053656 – Press \*9 to ask a question

Contact [Bob Riler](#), ADR, 253-798-7384

#### **Health Care Providers Council of Pierce County – Check for ONLINE details**

Second Thursday of each month, 7:30 – 9 a.m.

Mtn. View Funeral Home, Celebration of Life Chapel, 4100 Steilacoom Blvd SW, Lakewood.

Contact [Melissa Martin](#), HCPC President, at 253-752-6870

#### **East County Providers Network**

Third Tuesday of each month, 8 a.m.

Location varies monthly

Contact [Laura Piacitelli](#), Stafford Suites, 253-862-1818

#### **Pierce County Care Transitions Collaborative (PCCTC)**

Third Thursday of each month from 7:30 to 9:00 a.m.

Brookdale Allenmore Independent Living, 2010 Union Ave., S., Tacoma

Contact [Melissa McPherson](#) at 253-302-9500

#### **South End (King County) Coalition**

Third Wednesday of each month at 8:15 – 9:15 a.m.

May 20 – El Dorado West Village Concepts of Burien, 1010 SW 134<sup>th</sup> St, Burien\

Schedule of meeting locations and times at [www.secoalition.com](http://www.secoalition.com)

#### **NW Networking**

Meets Wednesdays at 11:45 a.m. in Puyallup

Contact Lisa Doyle, CayCare, 253-237-1739 or visit [Facebook page](#)

#### **West Side Senior Providers Networking Group**

Meets Third Thursday at 1:00 p.m.

University Place Library, 3609 Market Pl., W., UP

Contact [Debbie Ruvo](#) at 253-370-1947

#### **SASH Coffee Time Networking**

Meets First Wednesday 9:00 – 10:30 a.m.

Willow Gardens, 4502 6<sup>th</sup> St., SE, Puyallup

Meets Fourth Wednesday 9:00 – 10:30 a.m.

Franke Tobey Jones Parlor, 5340 Bristol St., Tacoma (Watch for A-frames and balloons)

Contact [Sherry Corney](#) at 206-351-0956

## **LOCAL SERVICES**

### **Farmers Market Vouchers**

The Senior Farmer's Market Nutrition Program (SFMNP) provides low-income seniors with Farmer's Market Vouchers to purchase fresh produce at participating Farmer Markets and Farm Stores. This year SFMNP will be conducted via mail/e-mail only – first come, first served. Beginning May 11<sup>th</sup>, eligible residents will be able to request an application by calling the Aging & Disability Resource Center (ADRC) at (253) 798-4600 or online at [www.piercecountywa.gov/farmersmarket](http://www.piercecountywa.gov/farmersmarket). Eligible applicants must live in Pierce County, be 60 years old or older (55+ for Native American or Native Alaskan), have a valid government issued identification, and be considered Low-income (below 185% poverty level). To have an application mailed to you, please call the Aging & Disability Resource Center (ADRC) at (253) 798-4600 or 1-800-562-0332, 9 a.m. to 4 p.m., Monday – Friday. For more information and updates [visit our website](#). Due to COVID 19 we encourage you to contact your local Farmer's Market about hours of operation and social distancing procedures.

### **Farmers' Market Season Is Back, But Physical Distance Still Required**

Farmers' markets are a popular and important place for communities across the state to buy fresh, healthy and locally-grown foods. Farmers' markets and produce stands are considered [essential businesses](#), which means they're ok to operate as long as proper measures are in place to keep workers and customers safe. DOH has issued [advice](#) for grocery stores that also can help farmers' market operators, and a blog post on [safely shopping for groceries](#). The bottom line: shopping for food at the farmers' market or local fruit stand isn't any different than shopping at the grocery store – stay physically distant from other shoppers, wear a face mask or covering, and only stay as long as is necessary to purchase essential items.

### **Governor's 2020 Supplemental Budget Update**

In anticipation of funding shortfalls due to the COVID-19 outbreak, Governor Inslee vetoed selected items in the budget that was passed by the State legislature. A [new stakeholder letter](#) provides an overview of the highlights and lowlights from AL TSA's perspective.

### **SHBA Update**

The Pierce County SHIBA program (Statewide Health Insurance Benefits Advisors) has changed their local hotline number. The new number is 253-212-3519. SHBA is still taking calls, just no in-person counseling at this time. Feel free to call anytime for help with health insurance issues.

### **Pierce County Parks Adds Specialized Recreation Group**

This new specialized recreation team will lead fun and interactive virtual activities including cooking, crafting, games, theme days like 'Quarantine-o-ween' and crazy hat day, as well as celebrate unique holidays like National Pet Day. They will talk to a special guest weekly, asking questions submitted by members of the group in an interview style setting. The group's activities are designed for a wide range of ages and ability levels. [Join or share the Facebook group](#) | [View the website](#). | [Watch the video](#). Contact Jen Spane, Recreation Supervisor at 253-798-4753 or [jen.spane@piercecountywa.gov](mailto:jen.spane@piercecountywa.gov).

### **Pierce Transit Rides for Essential Workers**

With services reduced, some essential workers who depend on transit were finding it hard to get to work. To help, PT is providing direct rides to and from work for essential workers who can no longer use the bus to get there due to service reductions. If you fall into that category or have employees who do, call 253-581-8000, option 2, to find out more. Potential riders will be asked a series of questions to make sure they qualify and get them scheduled for their rides.

### **Energy Assistance in a Time of COVID**

Energy assistance programs through [Metropolitan Development Council](#) (for residents within Tacoma city limits) and [Pierce County Energy Assistance](#) (for residents outside of Tacoma city limits) have been expanded, following an increase in Federal funding due to the COVID-19 outbreak. Both programs will now provide additional energy bill grants for clients who have been impacted by COVID-19 and qualify for the Low-Income Heating Energy Assistance Program (LIHEAP). Clients who have already applied for LIHEAP and clients who still want to apply for LIHEAP may be eligible for these additional COVID-19 grants. In addition, local energy utility companies including Tacoma Power, Puget Sound Energy, and Peninsula Light will be providing additional energy bill grants for client households within certain income limits. Clients should call their energy utility company for eligibility guidelines and application information.

### **2020 Census is Underway**

Have you responded to the 2020 Census? Almost 60% of Washingtonians have. It is crucial that everybody respond to the 2020 Census. Funding for many programs and services that are directed to older adults and individuals living with disabilities is dependent on responses to the Census – funding for Covid-19 services, for example. If people do not respond, federal funding for these programs will fall. The census is quick and easy. It will take about 10 minutes to complete. It's safe, secure, and confidential. Your information and privacy are protected. [Everyone can respond to the 2020 Census online](#) in one of 13 languages, with assistance available in many more. Or by phone at 1-844-330-2020. Or by mail. Paper forms should have arrived in your mailbox.

### **Help Wanted: Pierce County Elections**

The Pierce County Auditor's Office is accepting applications for election workers. This is part-time, temporary work to assist the Elections Department with the 2020 Presidential General Election on November 3. Earn up to \$15/hour. Work will be conducted July through August for the Primary Election and October through November for the General Election. [Find out how to apply.](#)

### **Many Lights Foundation Passes the Baton**

Many Lights was founded with a vision of building an intergenerational community called Hope Lights. Due to many circumstances, the Many Lights board has decided to stop operations and dissolve the nonprofit corporation. However, [Bridge Meadows](#), located in Portland Oregon, will pick up where Many Lights leaves. The goal to build an intergenerational community in Pierce County continues.

### **“See It, Snap It, Send It” Campaign Against Price Gouging**

Attorney General Bob Ferguson launched an awareness campaign encouraging Washingtonians to report price gouging in three easy steps: “See It, Snap It, Send It.” Ferguson is encouraging anyone who sees price gouging to snap a photo or take a screenshot, and then include the image with the complaint they file [at the Attorney General's website](#). Get more [information on filing complaints](#).

## COVID Resources

- [SAMHSA Crisis hotline](#): Call 1-800-985-5990 or text TalkWithUs to 66746
- Free VRI ASL services: [Linguabee VRI Services](#)
- [Registry for Deaf interpreters](#)
- [WA Law Help CoVID19 Page](#)
- [Nourish Pierce County](#)
- [Northwest Harvest](#)
- Information from [TPCHD Family Supports](#) page
- WA DOH COVID Community Health Line: 800-525-0127 or 360-236-4501
- [TPU Energy Assistance](#)

## Do You Have a File of Life from ADRC?

The folks who designed the original File of Life have a new insert specific to COVID-19. You can [download the form and fill it out online](#). If you would like to have a File of Life, contact the Aging and Disability Resource Center at 253-798-4600.

## Blood Donations by Appointment

[Cascade Regional Blood Centers](#) are accepting donations by appointment only. No walk-ins. Hundreds of mobile blood drives have been cancelled. The the Covid-19 pandemic and the annual flu season have resulted in a significant decrease in donations. Blood donors are exempt from the stay-at-home order. The 2019 n-CoV poses no risk to blood donors, either during the donation process or from attending organized blood drives. The 2019 n-CoV also poses no risk to patients receiving blood transfusions.

## NAMI Pierce County Support Groups Now Online

- Connection Recovery Support Group: Every Tuesday, 6:00-7:30 p.m. (Log in 30 minutes earlier for ZOOM training) [Register online](#).
- Family Support Group: Second Wednesday of each month, 6:00-7:30 p.m. (Log in 30 minutes earlier for ZOOM training) [Register online](#).
- Connection Recovery Support Group: Every Friday, 2:00-3:30 p.m. (Log in 30 minutes earlier for ZOOM training) [Register online](#).
- Family Support Group: Fourth Saturday of each month, 11:00 am-12:30 p.m. (Log in 30 minutes earlier for ZOOM training. [Register online](#).

For questions or information, call 253-677-6629 or contact us at [info@namipierce.org](mailto:info@namipierce.org).

## Center for Independence Recruiting Board Member

The primary responsibility of a CFI Board member is to ensure the financial stability of the Center for Independence. In addition, each Board member will help hire, supervise, and evaluate the Executive Director; Share the CFI mission in the community; set CFI policies and ensure they are adhered to; develop, approve, and carry out CFI's strategic plan; and assist with raising funds for the Center.

## Washington Health Alliance Community Checkup

The Alliance's [Community Checkup](#), a collection of reporting on variation in health care quality, overuse, pricing, and other subjects, is among the most robust in the nation. This report brings together results for 1,978 clinics, 376 medical groups, 123 hospitals, 16 health plans, 39 counties, and all nine Accountable Communities of Health on more than 110 performance measures.

## **Dementia Resource Catalyst Projects on Hold**

Governor Inslee issued a line-item veto of the \$926,000 that would create two Dementia Resource Catalyst projects that were sought by the Alzheimer's Association and the Dementia Action Collaborative. As explained by Jim Wilgus, Alzheimer's Association Chapter Executive Director, in this [statement](#), this new spending was among 147 projects vetoed because of the severe effect of the unprecedented COVID-19 virus on the state budget.

## **DD Virtual Town Hall Meeting**

The Developmental Disabilities Council, The Arc of Washington State, and the Developmental Disabilities Administration recently hosted virtual town hall meetings to talk about the impact of the COVID-19 (coronavirus) outbreak on the developmental disabilities community, and what is being done to meet the needs of people across the state. [Listen to the recorded meeting.](#)

## **SCAMS OF THE MONTH**

### **Instacart – Paying for More than your Groceries**

Instacart is the popular grocery delivery service. Instacart Shoppers are typically contracted through grocery stores. The Shopper's role is to actually pick out the groceries in the store, go through checkout with them and then deliver them to the customer. It seems some shoppers add their own items onto the order, bagging them separately and taking them for themselves although the customer had been the one to pay for those items. Stores don't often take responsibility. Some people report having been overcharged by as much as \$120. Buyer beware. (Source: ADRC)

### **Hang Up on Tech Support Calls**

It can be frustrating to have problems with your computer, especially now that so many people are working from home. But if you get a call from someone claiming to be a Microsoft technician, saying there are viruses on your system, hang up the phone. [It's a scam.](#) (Source: FTC)

## **LOCAL HAPPENINGS** (ADRC events highlighted)

*Scheduled events may be cancelled or postponed. We recommend you call first to confirm.*

### **May 5 – Aging Smart: Social Security – ONLINE**

When to claim Social Security benefits is one of the most important decisions for retirement. [john@wellspringfinancialplanners.com](mailto:john@wellspringfinancialplanners.com) is inviting you to a scheduled Zoom meeting – “Deciding When to Begin Social Security Benefits.” Held at 5 p.m. PT at <https://us04web.zoom.us/j/72219295024>  
Meeting ID: 722 1929 5024 More info on the [Aging Smart website](#).

### **May 5 – NAMI Behavioral Health Tele-Town Hall**

Join Insurance Commissioner Mike Kreidler, Senator Manka Dhingra, Representative Eileen Cody and Amber Leaders from Governor Inslee's office to learn about the access to behavioral health care during the COVID-19 pandemic. Held 10 a.m. to 11 a.m. [Click here to register for the tele-town hall.](#) If you have questions you'd like to ask the panel, email them to [bforbes@namiwa.org](mailto:bforbes@namiwa.org) before the meeting, or type them out in the Zoom chat function during the meeting and the moderator will read them.

### **May 5-6 Give Big**

GiveBIG is a special 48-hour event this year. Support nonprofits providing essential services; fighting for a more just world; and expanding our horizons through public spaces, art, and learning. In the best of times, nonprofits make life better for us all. In times like these, show up to ensure that they can meet rising demands, adjust programs, and be there on the other side of this crisis. [Learn more, find your cause and support your favorite nonprofit.](#)

**May 6-8 – Infant and Early Childhood Conference – CANCELLED**

The 2020 Infant and Early Childhood Conference is cancelled. Save the date for next year's Conference – May 5-7, 2021.

**May 7 – Aging & LTC Networking Meeting: Covid-19 Getting Back to 'Normal' – ONLINE**

*Featured speaker: Dr. Anthony Chen, Director, Tacoma Pierce County Health Department*

The COVID-19 pandemic has turned the field of long-term care upside down. While we are all anxious to get back to “normal,” will things ever be normal again? What will the next few months (late spring, summer and fall) look like in both best and worst-case scenarios. What will be expected of providers who serve older adults and individuals living with disabilities? What will be required of us to make sure that our services can continue so that this population can remain safe and secure at home in the long term? Join the meeting online: <https://piercecountywa.zoom.us/j/92075458945>. Join the meeting by phone: 253-215-8782 or 888-788-0099 or 877-853-5247 Webinar ID: 920 7545 8945 – Password: 053656 – Press \*9 to ask a question. For more information contact [Bob Riler](#), ADR, 253-798-7384.

**May 9 – Images of Aging: On Golden Pond – CANCELLED**

**May 16 – Parkinson's Foundation Care Partner Summit | Cumbre Para Cuidadores – ONLINE**

Due to the situation regarding Covid-19, the Parkinson's Foundation has made the decision to shift the 2020 Care Partner Summit to an all-online event that will consist of a series of four panels discussing topics related to Parkinson's caregiving. The Care Partner Summit is recommended for anyone caring for someone living with PD, including spouses, partners, children or friends. The Summit will be streamed to viewers (9:00 a.m. to 12:30 pm PT) on May 16, 2020. You can register at [Parkinson.org/Summit](https://www.parkinson.org/Summit).

**May 19 – Safe Travels for Seniors Live Webinar – CANCELLED**

**May 21 – Effective Communication Strategies**

Deer Ridge Memory Care Community continues their [series of monthly workshops](#) with Maggie Christofferson from the Alzheimer's Association. Held 6 to 8 p.m. at the Puyallup Activity Center, 210 W. Pioneer Ave in Puyallup. A complimentary dinner is provided. [Advance registration](#) is requested. [Download the series flyer.](#) Contact Olivia Koelsch at 253-625-3104.

**May 27 – National Senior Health & Fitness Day**

The nation's largest older adult health and wellness event. More than 1,000 local groups will host health and wellness events for 100,000+ older adults across the country. [Click here](#) for more details about National Senior Health & Fitness Day.

**May 28 – Safe Travels for Seniors Live Webinar – CANCELLED**

**May 29 – Safe Travels for Seniors Live Webinar – CANCELLED**

**June 2 – Family Caregiver Day with the Tacoma Rainiers – CANCELLED**

**June 6 – Aging Expo – CANCELLED**

Plan on attending Aging Expo 2021 next year on May 1, 2021

**June 9-11 2020 Community Summit – CANCELLED**

The Washington State Department of Social and Health Services Developmental Disabilities Administration has cancelled the Community Summit in Wenatchee, Washington.

**June 13 – Images of Aging: On Golden Pond – TENTATIVE**

A cranky retired professor makes his annual pilgrimage with his wife to their New England summer cottage. The couple ends up caring for their grandson – not a good match. It looks as though this summer (which may very well be the professor's last) will be a depressing experience. On several levels relationships are healed and reconciliation emerges. Held at the Grand Cinema in Tacoma, 606 Fawcett Ave. Rated PG. Held at the Grand Cinema in Tacoma, 606 Fawcett Ave. Tickets required in advance on [Brown Paper Tickets](#) (after May 10) or by calling the ADRC at 253-798-4600. Be advised to call the ADRC to confirm film showing the week prior to June 13.

**June 15 – World Elder Abuse Awareness Day**

Communities around the world join together to raise awareness of elder abuse, neglect, and exploitation. [World Elder Abuse Awareness Day \(WEAAD\)](#) is an opportunity to renew our commitment to preserving the rights of older adults – including the basic human right to live with dignity, free from abuse and neglect. Use [the WEAAD toolkit](#) that includes fact sheets, sample articles and proclamations, graphics, sample social media content, and more to help you get involved. (Source: ACL)

**June 25 – Discovery 2020 – CANCELLED**

An event for healthcare professionals working in the aging and dementia fields. The program is built around the theme of transformation. The conference will help enrich and transform your professional practice as well as the lives of individuals and families living with Alzheimer's and other dementias with whom you work. Held 8:30 a.m. to 4 p.m. at the Lynnwood Convention Center. [Registration online.](#)

**July 11 – Tacoma Pride Festival**

Save the date. Downtown Tacoma. Noon to 6 p.m. [Learn more online.](#)

**July 13 – Social Security Disability**

Learn about this lifeline SSA program including application, benefits and employment. Held 4:00 – 5:30 p.m. at the Salishan Family Investment Center, 1724 E. 44<sup>th</sup> St., Tacoma. View event flyer.

**July 15 – Tax Day**

The federal tax deadline this year has been automatically extended to July 15th.

**July 25 – Rebuilding Day**

Rebuilding Day has been rescheduled from April to July 25<sup>th</sup> (if we are able). Rebuilding Together South Sound is looking forward to celebrating our 1,000<sup>th</sup> house (!!!) and our 20<sup>th</sup> Anniversary next year. Learn more at [www.RebuildingTogetherSS.org](http://www.RebuildingTogetherSS.org).

### **Aug 5 – Cancer Survivorship Conference – REVISED EVENT**

Plans are underway to make this event into a “virtual conference” rather than an in-person event as usual. Stay tuned for more details. [Learn more online.](#)

### **August 13 – Senior Lifestyle Fair and Expo – NEW DATE**

Hosted by [Bonaventure of Puyallup](#), this free community event provides lots of information and resources for older adults. Learn about nutrition, healthy aging, exercise, living options and the soon-to-open Bonaventure of Puyallup featuring state-of-the-art amenities for retirement, assisted living, and memory care. Held 10 a.m. to 3 p.m. at the Pioneer Park Pavilion in Puyallup. No RSVP required. Call 253-387-8166 for details.

### **Sept 5 – Annual Veterans Resource Fair – NEW DATE**

Free event coordinated by [Nine9line Veteran Services](#) by Veterans for Veterans and their families. A community partnership between various veteran owned agencies, nonprofits, federal, state, and local county agencies whose aim is to provide an annual and reliable place and event where Veterans and their families can obtain direct connections and information on many different types of veteran specific programs and resources. Event provides community services, VA benefits, legal services, medical screenings & dental resources, financial education & assistance, disability claims & benefits, transition services and much more. Held 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. at the Tacoma Dome.

### **Sept 18 – 8th Annual VA Mental Health Summit**

NineLine Veteran Services along with the U.S & WA State Department of Veteran Affairs, The National Alliance 2 End Veteran Suicide and several other organizations are planning this year’s cultivation of Mental health outcomes, celebrations, shortcomings and needs through what happens to be the best year yet! Held at South Seattle College.

### **Sept 19 – Alzheimer’s Conference**

Held at Pacific Lutheran University.

### **Sept 22 – Fall Prevention Day**

Held at the Mel Korum YMCA in South Hill.

### **Oct 14 – Making the Link**

Held 11 a.m. to 4 p.m. at the McGavick Center at Clover Park Technical College.

### **Oct 26-28 – LeadingAge Washington’s 69th Annual Conference & EXPO**

Held in Spokane. [Conference details.](#)

### **ADRC Q&A**

**Question:** I got my stimulus check. But if I cash it I fear getting kicked off Medicaid.

**Answer:** You don’t have to worry about that. It will not count toward eligibility for any Medicaid programs, Medicare programs, Medicare Savings Programs, Limited Income Support, Part D assistance or any other programs. Will it count towards your taxable income for 2020? No, this money is not considered income. It won’t be taxable and it won’t affect your income tax bracket for 2020. Some people have been hearing that the stimulus is an “advance” that’ll appear on the tax return you file in

2021 for the 2020 tax year — a tax credit that wouldn't have been there if it wasn't for these stimulus checks. The Internal Revenue Service isn't giving you some of your 2020 tax refund upfront. The stimulus check will be in addition to what you would have otherwise expected.

## **NATIONAL NEWS**

### **May is Older Americans Month 2020 – “Make Your Mark”**

Every May, the Administration for Community Living leads our nation's observance of [Older Americans Month](#). The 2020 theme is “Make Your Mark,” A theme selected to encourage and celebrate countless contributions that older adults make to our communities. Their time, experience, and talents benefit family, peers, and neighbors every day. Communities, organizations, and individuals of all ages are also making their marks. This year's theme highlights the difference everyone can make – in the lives of older adults, in support of caregivers, and to strengthen communities. (Source: ACL)

### **May is National Nurses Month**

As part of the “Year of the Nurse and Midwife” celebration, the [American Nurses Association will expand National Nurses Week](#), traditionally celebrated from May 6 to May 12 each year, to a month-long celebration in May to expand opportunities to elevate and celebrate nursing. (Source: AANA)

### **COVID-19 Crisis Threatens Beleaguered Assisted Living Industry**

Many assisted living communities were struggling financially before coronavirus suddenly appeared. Now their situation is really getting tough. Challenged by deepening financial pressures, sicker residents, limited oversight and too few employees, they now face a crisis that could force companies into bankruptcy, roil the industry and even close some facilities – putting frail seniors at greater-than-ever risk. [Read more](#). (Source: KHN)

### **Seniors with COVID-19 Show Unusual Symptoms**

COVID-19 is typically signaled by three symptoms: a fever, an insistent cough and shortness of breath. But older adults — the age group most at risk of severe complications or death from this condition — [may have none of these characteristics](#). (Source: KHN)

### **The Other COVID Risks: How Race, Income, ZIP Code Influence Who Lives or Dies**

Doctors know that people with [underlying health conditions](#) — such as [the 40% of Americans](#) who live with diabetes, hypertension, asthma and other chronic diseases — are more vulnerable to COVID-19. So are patients without access to intensive care or mechanical ventilators. Yet some public health experts contend that social and economic conditions — long overlooked by government leaders, policymakers and the public — are even more powerful indicators of who will survive the pandemic. [A toxic mix of racial, financial and geographic disadvantage can prove deadly](#). (Source: KHN)

### **New COVID-19 video for Spanish speakers**

Getting timely, accurate information about the pandemic to older adults whose primary language is Spanish is challenging. Look to our YouTube channel and website for shareable resources you can offer to Spanish-speaking seniors and their families so they can safely navigate the COVID-19 pandemic. [Watch the video](#) | [See our other Spanish resources](#). (Source: NCOA)

### **Fake COVID Blood Tests**

Blood tests that claim to detect past exposure to the coronavirus are starting to hit the market. But even tests that claim to be more than 90% accurate apparently are not. The tests come from dozens of manufacturers and do not need FDA approval. ([Listening time, 5:49](#) or [read the story](#)) (Source: NPR)

### **Protections for Residents and Families in Nursing Homes**

The nation's 1.3 million nursing facility residents are among those at the greatest risk of illness and death from COVID-19. Justice in Aging and other national and state organizations, [sent a letter to CMS](#) Administrator Verma, outlining six concrete recommendations that will offer more protection to residents, and better support residents' ability to make decisions regarding their health care and place of residence. (Source: Justice in Aging)

### **Economic Stimulus Payments to SSI Recipients**

Supplemental Security Income (SSI) recipients will receive automatic Economic Impact Payments directly from the Treasury Department. Treasury anticipates these automatic payments no later than early May. SSI recipients with no qualifying children do not need to take any action in order to receive their \$1,200 economic impact payment. The payments will be automatic. SSI recipients who have qualifying children under age 17, however, should now go to the [IRS's webpage](#) and visit the Non-Filers: Enter Your Payment Info section to provide their information. They may be eligible to receive the \$500 per dependent child payment in addition to their \$1,200 individual payment. (Source: SSA)

### **Private Insurers Pay Premium Rebates to Consumers in 2020**

A [new analysis](#) estimates that private insurance companies expect to pay a record of \$2.7 billion in rebates to consumers this fall due to excessive premiums in recent years. The rebates are nearly double last year's then-record \$1.3 billion total. The rebates result from the Affordable Care Act's medical loss ratio (MLR) provision, which requires insurers to spend at least 80% of their premium income (85% for large group plans) on claims and quality improvement over the past three years. Insurers that do not meet that requirement must refund the difference as rebates. (Source: KFF)

### **Social Security Solvency Report**

The Social Security Board of Trustees [released its annual report](#) on the long-term financial status of the Social Security Trust Funds. The OASI Trust Fund is projected to become depleted in 2034 with 76% of benefits payable at that time. The DI Trust Fund is estimated to become depleted in 2065, extended 13 years from last year's estimate of 2052, with 92 percent of benefits still payable. The projections do not reflect the potential effects of the COVID-19 pandemic on the program. (Source: SSA)

### **Music Can Unlock Memories and Build Connections**

These days of "stay home" can be confusing and stressful for people living with dementia. Studies have shown that listening to familiar music can reduce anxiety, depression and aggressive behavior in people living with dementia. The [Spring issue of ALZ magazine](#) explores how some individuals can access precious memories by hearing specific songs. (Source: Alz Assoc)

### **ACL Releases Annual Report on Centers for Independent Living**

The recently released Annual Report on Centers for Independent Living is available by [clicking here](#). The report reflects the more than 236,000 individuals who, in Program Year 2018, benefited from community-based services to live independently in communities across our nation. (Source: ACL)

**Medicaid Nearing “Eye of The Storm” as Newly Unemployed Look for Coverage**

The coronavirus outbreak has forced millions out of work and the federal-state health program for low-income people could face [unprecedented strains](#) as many states don’t necessarily have the resources or systems in place to meet the demand. (Source: KHN)

**AARP Launches Mutual Aid Groups**

Mutual aid groups are informal groups of volunteers that band together to find effective ways to support those people most in need who live in their local community. Mutual aid can include picking up groceries, providing financial assistance, or lending emotional support to your neighbors. [Visit the website](#) to find a group or start a group or even request help. (Source: AARP)

**Isolation vs. Solitude**

We have all been concerned about isolation and loneliness lately but little is known about the experience of solitude. Solitude is defined by the absence of interaction with others, but is not characterized by a particular type of emotion like loneliness. [A recent study explored the experience of solitude](#) among middle-aged and older adults. (Source: Mather Institute)

**New Video Available on Medicare Coverage and Payment of Virtual Services**

CMS released a video for providers and professionals providing answers to common questions about the Medicare telehealth services benefit. CMS is expanding this benefit on a temporary and emergency basis. [Watch the video.](#) (Source: CMS)

**Guardianships During the COVID-19 Pandemic**

Guardians for older adults and adults with disabilities may have questions about fulfilling their duties and staying connected to people they represent. Guardianship experts have created [a FAQ document](#) with answers, actionable tips, and links to key resources. This resource is aimed at family guardians, professional guardians, public guardians, and all others who are affected by this issue, and will be regularly updated with new information and links. (Source: NCLER)

**PLAN AHEAD (Always 2 months ahead) – July 2020**

Alzheimer’s, Brain Injury, Cancer from the Sun, Cataract, Dairy Alternatives, Pride, Dementia Care Professionals, Men’s Health, Migraine, Pet Preparedness, Safety, Oral Health, and PTSD Awareness Month; Bed Bug Awareness (7-13), Headache Awareness (7-13) , Nursing Assistants (11-18), Flag (14-20) and Men’s Health (15-21) Weeks; Heimlich Maneuver (1), Environment (5), Cancer Survivors (7), APS (9), Alcoholics Anonymous (10), Abused Women and Children (13), Blood Donor (14), Elder Abuse Awareness (15), Autistic Pride (18) and Public Service (23) Days.

#####

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 [bob.riler@piercecountywa.gov](mailto:bob.riler@piercecountywa.gov).