

World Elder Abuse Awareness Day, June 15th

Each year an estimated 5 million older persons are abuse, neglected, and exploited. In addition, elders throughout the United States lose an estimated \$2.6 billion or more annually due to elder financial abuse and exploitation, funds that could have been used to pay for basic needs such as housing, food, and medical care. Unfortunately, no one is immune to abuse, neglect, and exploitation. Yet it is estimated that only about one in five of those crimes are ever discovered..

What is Elder Abuse?

In general, elder abuse refers to intentional or neglectful acts by a caregiver or “trusted” individual that lead to, harm of a vulnerable elder. Physical abuse; neglect; emotional or psy-

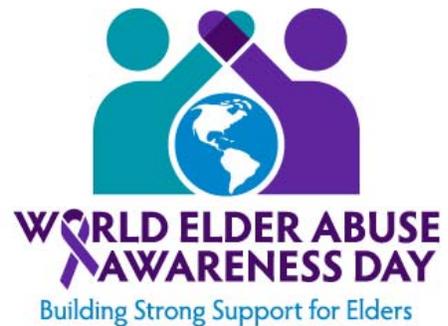
chological abuse; verbal abuse; and abandonment are considered forms of elder abuse.

Who is at Risk?

Elder abuse can occur anywhere—in the home, in nursing homes, or other institutions. It affects seniors across all socio-economic groups, cultures, and races. Based on available information, women and “older” elders are more likely to be victimized. Dementia is a significant risk factor. Mental health and substance abuse issues—of both abusers and victims—are risk factors. Isolation can also contribute to risk.

World Elder Abuse Awareness Day is June 15, 2017 and its

purpose is to provide an opportunity for communities to promote a better understanding of abuse and neglect of older persons by raising awareness of the cultural, social, economic and demographic processes affecting elder abuse and neglect. (www.acl.gov)



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Special points of interest:

- If you know someone who is interested in receiving this Enewsletter, please have them contact Kim at (610) 782-3096 or email kimberlymelusky@lehighcounty.org.
- Feel free to print or email this newsletter.

May is Older Americans Month

Older Americans Month is celebrated in May and the theme for 2017 is **Age Out Loud**. This theme is intended to give a new voice—one that reflects what today's older adults have to say about aging.

The 2017 theme gives an opportunity to shine a light on many important issues and trends. More than ever before, older Americans are working longer, trying new things, and engaging in their communities. They are taking charge, striving for wellness, focusing on independence, and advocating for themselves and others. They expect to continue to live their lives to the fullest, and they insist on changes that make that possible.

Each year Lehigh County Aging and Adult Services honors older adults who live quietly among us.

The event is held in May during Older Americans Month. This year's **Unsung Hero Event** will be held on May 17, 2017 at 1:00 p.m.



Chronic Disease Self-Management Education

About 80% of older adults have at least one chronic disease, and 68% have at least two. Many adults with conditions such as arthritis, asthma, diabetes, lung disease, heart disease, stroke, osteoporosis, and others struggle to find ways to manage their condition. Chronic Disease Self-Management Education has been proven to help older adults better manage their chronic conditions, improve their quality of life, and lower health care costs.

These workshops are designed to help people gain self-confidence in their ability to control their symptoms and learn how their health problems affect their lives. These small group workshops help folks learn to deal with frustration, fatigue, pain and isolation; maintain and improve strength, flexibility, and endurance; manage medications; communicate more effectively with family, friends, and health professionals; and healthy eating.

Chronic Disease Self-Management Education will be offered at Lehigh Valley Active Life on Wednesdays, May 3 through June 7, 2017 from 9:00 a.m. to 11:30 a.m. Contact Monica Yastrzab-Kempf, RN Consultant at (610) 782-3618. There is no charge for this class.

Aging with Intellectual Disabilities Conference

PA Link and the Lehigh and Northampton County Aging/ID Team will be holding a conference on **“Empowering Older Adults with Intellectual Disabilities”** on Wednesday, June 7, 2017 from 7:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. at DeSales University Center in Center Valley.

This conference is for supervisors and staff from the offices of aging, intellectual disabilities, and mental health; Service Coordination entities; staff from personal care homes, assisted living facilities, nursing homes, and group homes; staff from pro-

vider agencies of aging and intellectual disabilities; and families of adults with developmental disabilities.

Conference participants will be able to:

- Develop a plan to put ethical safeguards in place at the practice & policy level.
- Identify emerging trends and practices around supported decision-making as an alternative to guardianship.
- Recognize the importance of trauma-informed approaches & identify examples.
- Understand how person centered planning can enhance quality of life.
- Describe elements of a healthy sexuality safety plan.
- Identify ways music therapy benefits all ages and abilities.
- Identify new positive paradigms for aging.

Conference is limited to 150 participants and cost is \$45.00. Deadline to register is Friday, May 19, 2017.

For a conference brochure and registration, please contact kimberlymelusky@lehighcounty.org.

PA Caregiver Support Program

The Caregiver Support Program (CSP) is designed to assist family and other unpaid adult primary caregivers caring for functionally dependent older persons and adult relatives with chronic dementia. The program’s goal is to reduce caregiver stress and burden through benefits and resource counseling, access to support groups, caregiving skills training and education, support and financial reimbursement for expenses

incurred in purchasing caregiving related services (including respite), supplies, durable goods, home modifications and assistive technology. Reimbursement benefits are subject to cost sharing.

Grandparenting Program

The Federal CSP provides services for older (age 55 and above) related primary caregivers of children age 18 or younger, living in the same household. Priority is given to those older related primary

caregivers of children with severe disabilities. Families that receive services through a waiver program are not eligible for this program.

To get more information on these programs, or to refer someone for an assessment to see if they qualify for these programs, please call Lehigh County Information and Referral at (610) 782-3200.

DO YOU HAVE MEDICARE?

Do you have questions about your coverage or current plan? Do you want to know if you are eligible to save money on your prescription drug costs and/or your Part B premium? Are you currently in the donut hole and need assistance? The APPRISE PROGRAM can help!

What is APPRISE?

APPRISE is a free health insurance counseling program designed to help all Pennsylvanians with Medicare. APPRISE counselors are specially trained staff and volunteers who can answer your questions and provide you with objective, easy-to-understand information.

You may qualify for financial assistance programs! APPRISE wants to make sure you and your friends who have Medicare know about the Extra Help and Medicare Savings Programs.

Extra Help

Can help lower your prescription drug co-payments and premiums, and cover the cost of the coverage gap!

You may qualify if:

- If you are single and have total monthly income of less than \$1,508/month; and less than \$13,820 in resources
- If you are married and have a total monthly income of less than \$2,030/month; and less than \$27,600 in resources

*There are certain deductions taken for Extra Help. You may qualify even if you are above these limits.

Medicare Savings Program

Can help you with the payment of your Part B premium!

You may qualify if:

- If you are single and have a total monthly income of less than \$1,357/month; and less than \$7,390 in resources
- If you are married and have a total monthly income of less than \$1,827/month; and less than \$11,090 in resources

*Medicare Savings Programs can possibly help with the payment of your Medicare Part A and Part B cost-sharing. There are certain deductions taken for Medicare Savings Programs. You may qualify even if you are above these limits.

How can the APPRISE Program help you?

APPRISE can help with:

- Medicare
- Medicare Prescription Drug Plans (Part D)
- Medicare Advantage Plans
- Medicare Supplement Insurance (Medigap)
- Plan Comparison
- Medicaid
- Screening and applying for financial assistance programs
- Medicare Appeals
- Long-Term Care Insurance

Call today to get connected to the APPRISE Program in your area.

Lehigh County
(610) 782-3200
Northampton County
(610) 559-3270

APPRISE is a free service provided by the PA Department of Aging, and is funded in whole or part by a grant through the Administration for Community Living.





What PA Link has been up to in Lehigh and Northampton County lately...

Pennsylvania Link to Aging and Disability Resources, commonly referred to as PA Link, is a cross-age system network of partner agencies who collaborate to service individuals who need long term care services and supports. The “no wrong door” approach attempts to minimize duplication of efforts by both consumer and provider.

To become a PA Link partner, contact PA Link Coordinator Kim Melusky at kimberlymelusky@lehighcounty.org.

Additional information, meeting notes and upcoming events are available on the PA Link website at www.lehighnorthamptonlink.org.

Please look through this newsletter for upcoming events or visit www.lehighnorthamptonlink.org.

The next PA Link meeting will be May 10, 2017 and training will be an overview of PA Link by Valorie Hinkle, NE Region Coordinator. Kim Melusky will show folks the PA Link website.

PA Link held a **Networking Meeting** in March with more than 70 individuals having an opportunity to meet and share information with other organizations in their community.

PA Link is partnering with the Lehigh Valley Homeless Veterans Task Force and Lehigh Valley Health Network on May 3, 2017 to present “**Who Ya Gonna Call...?, A peer-to-peer workshop and networking opportunity** for social workers and providers to learn about resources and referral outlets for homeless Veterans, Veterans in need and individuals in crisis in the Lehigh Valley.

PA Link is supporting Northampton County’s **Outstanding Seniors Awards** on April 27, 2017 for Older Americans Month.

PA Link is supporting Lehigh County’s **Unsung Hero Event** on May 17, 2017 for Older Americans Month.

Pa Link is supporting **Spring into Employment** on June 2, 2017 for a free one-day conference exploring employment for individuals with disabilities.

Empowering Older Adults with Intellectual Disabilities Conference will be on June 7, 2017. Cost is \$45 and deadline to register is May 19, 2017.

Many additional events sponsored by our partners are also listed at www.lehighnorthamptonlink.org under upcoming events. Check often!

To join our network, or for additional information on one of the upcoming trainings or workshops, contact Kim Melusky at kimberlymelusky@lehighcounty.org.

LEHIGH COUNTY AGING & ADULT SERVICES

Lehigh County Government Center
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Phone: 610-782-3034
Fax: 610-820-2028
E-mail: agingandadult@lehighcounty.org



The Lehigh County Office of Aging and Adult Services is committed to supporting and empowering the well being of all adults of all ages, residing in Lehigh County. The office advocates for Lehigh County residents and provides a wide range of services and information to help adults to be well informed. Information and assistance is provided to enable individuals to remain active, healthy, productive and independent in their community.

For additional information, or to make a referral, please contact the Lehigh County Information and Referral Unit at (610) 782-3200.

We're on the web!

www.lehighcounty.org

Dates to Remember



Mark your calendar!

St. Francis of Assisi Church Hall **Senior Fair** on April 23, 2017 at 801 N. 11th Street in Allentown from 9 AM to 1 PM.

Lehigh Valley Aging in Place Senior Health Fair on May 25, 2017 from 10 AM to 2 PM.

To volunteer as an **Apprise Counselor or Volunteer Ombudsman**, or to receive more information about these volunteer opportunities, please call the agency at (610) 782-3034.

Upcoming senior fairs....

Sen. Lisa Boscola and Rep. Dan McNeill's **Annual Spring Senior Fair** on April 7, 2017 at Westgate Mall from 9 AM to 12 Noon.

Grand Opening!

Whitehall Active Lifestyle Center on April 4, 2017 from 10 AM to 12 Noon at the new center location at the West Catasauqua Community Center, 2301 Pine Street in Whitehall.