



**South Madison Coalition of the Elderly**  
128 E. Olin Avenue Suite 110 Madison, WI 53713

## **Volunteer News**

Summer 2010

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### **Volunteer Guardian & Representative Payee Meeting**

*Our next volunteer meeting will be held on Wednesday, August 11 at 6 pm in the Family Services Building.*

*We will review a variety of resource information as well as discuss various situations volunteers have experienced and how they were handled. It will be a round table discussion and we will enjoy our talk with wine and cheese along with other beverages.*

*Please mark your calendar and expect an evening of helpful information and discussion. Hope you will be able to join the group.*

### **COORDINATOR'S NOTES....**

*Greetings! We hope you are enjoying your summer and able to take advantage of the beautiful weather and the many activities offered in and around the Madison area this time of year.*

*We are happy to welcome Sharon Rook as our newest volunteer guardian. She has gone through the training process and is currently being matched with an older adult. We are excited to have her join our program and look forward to working with her.*

*As always, I am on the lookout for volunteer guardians and representative payees. If you know someone who might be interested, please share our information. Also, if you would like to consider taking on a new "case", please call Katie to discuss your options. As a volunteer you always have the ability to decide which volunteer situation works best for you to ensure your satisfaction with this opportunity.*

*Our next meeting will include various issues volunteers have run into and how they were solved. If you have experienced something you would like to discuss or get feedback from other volunteers, please call Katie to discuss and see that we can include it in the meeting.*

### **Medicare D Donut Hole Rebate**

The Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS) will issue a \$250 rebate check to Part D beneficiaries who have already entered their "donut hole" this year beginning June 15, 2010.

CMS will continue to send checks every six weeks to people who reach their donut hole. Each beneficiary will only receive one check after entering the donut hole and will be automatically identified by

CMS. There are no forms to fill out and no personal information to provide. If anyone calls about the rebate check, CMS advises to hang up. Low income Part D (Medicaid) recipients will not be eligible for the rebate check because these individuals do not enter a donut hole.

Additional changes to Medicare D plans and the donut hole will continue in 2011, please watch for updates.

### **RESOURCE UPDATE**

Eye Care America offers referrals for free eye exams provided by volunteer optometrists for adults 65 years and older.

To learn more or make a referral call 800-222-3937 or email [ww.eyecareamerica.org](http://ww.eyecareamerica.org).

This may be an affordable way for your ward/beneficiary to get their eyes examined.



## Arthritis and Diet

Arthritis is the most common chronic condition in the United States and affects nearly 40 million people, mostly older adults. You may work with a ward or beneficiary who suffers from arthritis and see first hand the limits it can create for that older adult. Arthritis is a general term used to describe more than 100 medical conditions with a common theme: They all affect the areas of the body where two or more bones meet known as the joints. Growing older along with excessive weight often puts someone at greater risk of developing some forms of arthritis but there appear to be a large variety of factors that determine a person's risk of getting the disease.

However, food is thought to affect the severity of arthritic pain but that connection can be complex.

It is believed that some foods do work as an allergen which can trigger arthritic flares. Some foods viewed as offenders are:

- Caffeine
- Dairy products
- Sugar
- Fatty foods.

Keeping the intake of these foods to a minimum

may help alleviate some of the arthritic pain.

In addition to limiting some foods, it is recommended to include certain foods that might be beneficial in decreasing arthritic pain. These foods include:

- fruits/vegetables
- Whole grains
- Salmon or other oily fish

Although volunteers are not able to closely monitor the food intake of the older adult they serve, there are a few things that you might be able to do to help.

- Guardians can work with the primary physician and verify the type of arthritis the ward has and learn alternate ways to help reduce the pain which can increase quality of life.
- Volunteers can also talk to the caretaking staff to find out if there are dietary changes/that may be helpful.

Keeping open communication with the ward/beneficiary, caretaking staff and primary doctor if possible is important and may help improve the health and well-being of the older adult you work with as well as their quality of life.

## Hospital Visits and Medicare Coverage

Has your ward or beneficiary ever had to go to the emergency room, or have an elective procedure done at the hospital? When a patient comes into the hospital either through the ER or for an elective procedure, the hospital identifies the status of each patient either as "inpatient," "outpatient" or "under observation." The status determines whether Medicare A or B will be billed

for services such as doctor services, labs and medications and thus how much an individual is responsible to pay out of pocket. It can also affect the ability to be admitted to a nursing home with Medicare coverage, since there has to be a three day "inpatient" qualifying stay at the hospital.

If you are uncertain how the hospital is identifying your ward/beneficiary and what

costs they may incur, Medicare Services suggests to:

- Ask how your ward/beneficiary is identified;
- Find out what will be covered (i.e. deductibles, co-pays, etc),
- ask how medications dispensed will be billed.

If you would like more information please visit [www.medicare.gov](http://www.medicare.gov) or call 800-633-4227.