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With Laurie

In the Loop with Laurie

It is that time of year again and that can only mean one thing – Medicare Open Enrollment (OEP). The Medicare OEP period is October 15 - December 7, 2019. Medicare plans change each year, making it extremely important that individuals review their plan options and carefully read all information that is received from Medicare, Social Security and your current plan representative.

The new Medicare Plan Finder tool can be found at www.medicare.gov. This site will let you compare your current plan to those available in 2020. If you need assistance understanding the Medicare plans for the coming year, please contact the Senior LinKAge Line® at 1-800-333-2433 Monday through Friday from 8:00am to 4:30 pm.

Census 2020 is fast approaching and approximately 329 million individuals is a lot of people to account for. The purpose of the census is to track how many people presently live in the nation. It is important that census officials get an accurate count as this number impacts funding to non-profit agencies and assures that we have appropriate government representation. April 1, 2020 is known as Census Day, which means that by this date, every home will receive an invite to be a part of the 2020 Census. Individuals are able to respond by phone, online or by the mail. For more information about the 2020 U.S. Census, visit 2020census.gov.

On October 28, 2019, the Dignity in Aging Act was passed by a unanimous vote in the U.S. House of Representatives. This bill would reauthorize the Older Americans Act (OAA) through 2024, allowing for the continuation of critical home and community based services to millions of older adults and caregivers each year. Now it is the Senate’s turn to initiate action to continue OAA programs and services to help older adults age with dignity, health and independence.

SEMAAA is currently active in planning Aging Mastery Program (AMP) classes. If individuals don’t have time for a multi-session class, they can receive a starter kit that lets them go at their own pace. Courses focus on a number of areas such as nutrition, exercise, sleep, healthy relationships and financial well-being. Stay tuned for more information about dates and locations. If you are interested in learning more about the AMP or looking for a class near you, contact Chersten Keillor at 507-288-6944.

SEMAAA hosted an Assisted Living Community Conversation on November 4, 2019 to provide information about the 2019 MN legislative reform regarding consumer protection within assisted living. Over 40 community professionals attended this event sponsored by the MN Leadership Council on Aging. On December 5, 2019 from 9:00AM-Noon, SEMAAA is hosting a Community Conversation about Stopping Rx Greed (cutting drug prices) in collaboration with AARP Minnesota. You can register on-line here to attend or contact the SEMAAA office for more information.

One more tidbit to share…on October 30, 2019, SEMAAA board members and management team participated in a strategic planning event at People’s Energy Cooperative in Oronoco (See picture on page 3). A big thank you to Dave Vandergon for assisting with this process and we look forward to continual development of SEMAAA’s strategic plan.

Finding Ways to Engage at Every Age,

Laurie Brownell
Help Shape Minnesota’s Assisted Living Report Card

Assisted living facilities offer a wide range of services and can be individual apartments or rooms that a resident has alone or shares with another person. Minnesota has begun work to develop an assisted living report card, which will help people looking for an assisted living compare their options and decide what best works for them.

One of the first steps Minnesota will take to build its assisted living report card is to gather feedback from stakeholders. You can by providing your input on a survey offered by the University of Minnesota School of Public Health, in partnership with the Minnesota Department of Human Services and the Minnesota Board on Aging. It will help weigh the importance of resident quality of life, safety, health outcomes, staff quality and other aspects of assisted living.

To learn more about Minnesota’s assisted living report card, visit the Assisted Living Report Card Project webpage, where you can also subscribe to a stakeholder email list to stay-up to-date.

SEMAAA Board Members

Board members engaged in a strategic planning session on October 30th. We want to thank the board and staff who were involved in providing input and leadership to help shape SEMAAA’s area plan and future focus areas.
The Theme for National Family Caregivers Month November 2019 is

#BeCareCurious

Family caregivers want their loved ones to have the best care possible – at the doctor’s office, at the hospital, and at home. We encourage family caregivers across the country to ask questions, explore options and share in the care decisions that affect the health and well-being of their loved ones.

#BeCareCurious About

Your Loved One’s Goals

You know your loved one better, and spend more time with them, than anyone else does. Talk to them about what their goals are for treatment and their care in general. It can be hard to talk about goals when facing a disease. But these talks help make sure your loved ones are getting the care they want.

Treatment Options

Is your loved one responding well to treatment? If not, ask your doctor if there are other options. New treatments are available every day. Whether it’s a different dose, a new medication, or a new procedure, speak up and ask your doctor if there are options you and your loved one should consider.

Research

The internet is a great research tool, but it can also be full of conflicting, and even dangerous, advice – so don’t stop there! Be curious about that article you just read. Is it from a reliable source? Talk to friends, family and doctors to ask as many questions as possible to learn about your loved one’s condition.

The Care Plan

If your loved one is in the hospital, be sure to ask what happens next. Will they need home care after being discharged? Are there new medications or procedures you will need to manage at home? Will you be trained on what to do and how to do it? A lot of care happens at home and you need to be prepared to provide that care.

Coverage

Don’t be shy about asking questions about insurance coverage. Is your parents’ Medicare plan the best option or should you change plans during open enrollment? Was a medication switched for a medical reason, or because your insurance no longer covered it? If coverage was denied, what can you do to change their minds?

Family caregiving is stressful, but the more you know, the more confident and capable you will be when providing care. Remember – knowledge is power!

So this November, during National Family Caregivers Month, take time to

#BeCareCurious about your loved one’s care!

CaregiverAction.org
Caregiver Resources in SE MN

As a caregiver it can be challenging to take time for yourself for many reasons but there are a number of organizations in our region offering programs and supports that make it possible to do so. From in-home respite to chore services or transportation there are volunteers and staff poised to help you meet your own needs and stay well. Check our website to learn more about caregiver supports available near you.

http://semaaarochestermn.org/resources/ or call to learn more about services offered near you.

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Faith in Action</th>
<th>Dodge County, 507-634-3654</th>
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<tr>
<td>SEMCAC-SE MN</td>
<td>507-864-8225</td>
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<td>Pine Island Area Home Services</td>
<td>Goodhue County, 507-356-2999</td>
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<tr>
<td>Three Rivers CAP</td>
<td>Goodhue, Olmsted, Rice &amp; Wabasha, 800-277-8418</td>
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<td>Neighbors in Action</td>
<td>Houston County, 507-895-8123</td>
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<td>Mower County Seniors</td>
<td>Mower County, 507-433-3462</td>
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<td>Healthy Seniors of Steele County</td>
<td>507-774-7648</td>
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<td>Senior Resources of Freeborn County</td>
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<td>Red Wing Faith in Action</td>
<td>651-327-2400</td>
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<td>Family Service Rochester</td>
<td>507-287-2010</td>
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<td>Catholic Charities of Southern MN</td>
<td>507-287-2047</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>WellConnect</td>
<td>Evidence-Based Programs for caregivers, 507-251-3835</td>
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Highlights from the Fall Prevention Awareness Day Campaign

- 11 Fall Prevention Awareness Day (FPAD) Presentations given in Olmsted County to 250 individuals
- 28 balance screenings conducted
- 1 Mayoral Proclamation for FPAD held in Olmsted County
- Attended 3 health fairs handing out information and resources about fall prevention to 100+ individuals
- 400 placemats handed out at congregate dining sites and Meals on Wheels locations with helpful fall prevention information and resources featured
- Over 10 organizations partnered to bring this content and education to the community
April Sutor volunteered to help with a Fire Department lift assist demo at a Fall Prevention Awareness Day event in Rochester.

Dan Conway and Chersten Keillor attended the MN Coalition for the Homeless Conference in September.

SEM AAA staff Emily Krowiorz, Annie Avery, Tambi Eversman & Camille Bruns (not pictured) are the winners of the summer wellness program!

Community leaders, SEM AAA board member Marie Hlava and volunteers joined us for a REST Companion training in October.
2019 SEMAAA BOARD

- Marti Riley, Chair, Olmsted
- Rita Fox, Vice-Chair, Wabasha
- Brad Lohrbach, Treasurer, Dodge
- Jim Hanesworth, Secretary, Houston
- Lloyd Swalve, Fillmore
- Jake Gillen, Rice
- Dave Vandergon, Steele
- Jean Eaton, Freeborn
- Jenelle Cummings, Mower
- Emma Onawa, Goodhue
- Karen Hanson, Winona
- Mike Hancock, Member at Large
- Marie Hlava, Member at Large
- Dr. Dwight Jennings, Member at Large
- Margaret Cook, Member at Large

2019 SEMAAA STAFF

- Laurie Brownell – Executive Director
- Karen Toussel – Administrative Assistant
- Kim Voth – Grant Manager/Financial Officer
- Phil Haskins – Grants Administrator
- Patti Schad – Finance Assistant
- Annie Avery – Senior LinkAge Line® Coordinator
- Jerry Roberts – Senior LinkAge Line® Specialist
- Starla Inman – Senior LinkAge Line® Specialist
- Chad Wojchik – Senior LinkAge Line® Specialist
- Jone Trapp – Senior LinkAge Line® Specialist
- Tambi Eversman – Senior LinkAge Line® Specialist
- Laurie Magnus – Senior Linkage Line® Specialist
- Dan Conway – Lead Eldercare Development Program Dev.
- Chersten Keillor – Eldercare Development Program Dev.
- Lori Wacek – Community Living Coordinator
- Jen McLaughlin – Community Living Case Aide
- Emily Krowiorz – Community Living Specialist
- Sarah Benson – Community Living Specialist
- Jay Hall – Community Living Specialist
- Chris Johnson – Community Living Specialist
- Camille Bruns – Preadmission Screening Specialist
- Pam Speltz – Preadmission Screening Specialist
- Katie Shimek – Preadmission Screening Specialist
- Nicole Cummings – Preadmission Screening Specialist

Read SEMAAA’s 2018 Annual Report

Follow this link to SEMAAA’s Facebook Page-https://www.facebook.com/Southeastern-Minnesota-Area-Agency-on-Aging-Inc-263688490502719/

SEMAAA Welcomes New Staff

Hi, I’m Nicole Cummings, Preadmission Screening Specialist. I joined the SEMAAA in September. Over the past five years, I worked at Olmsted Medical Center. I am married with two daughters ages 13 and 10. Our family loves to travel and explore state/national parks. Outside of working, I enjoy exercising, cooking and reading. I am excited be to part of the SEMAAA team.