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With Laurie

The air is turning a bit colder and the Fall colors are starting to peek through, a sure sign of the return of football and another one of my favorite things - Fall Prevention Awareness Week, September 21-25. Fall prevention awareness activities and events offer opportunities to help older adults make a plan and take action to reduce the risk of falls.

The Rochester Area Foundation (RAF) TOGETHER Fund generously supported the Fall Prevention & Home Safety Tool Kit request submitted by the Rochester/Olmsted County Falls Coalition. The kits include, *Building Better Balance* Workbooks, night lights and several other educational items.

Medicare Open Enrollment (OEP) is less than a month away! SEMAAA Senior Linkage Line® staff will not be setting up in-person meetings due to COVID-19. The same great service and assistance will still be available over the phones however.

SEMAAA’s Executive Committee and full board have approved the release of several Fund Availability Announcements. They include: CARES ACT for Title B & E funds; State Nutrition Funds and Enhanced Home Care Service dollars. In addition, our annual process for Federal Older American Act funds for 2021 have been announced, information is now available on our web site.

The importance of maintaining health & wellness for older adults has never been more important. If you have a relative, neighbor, or friend that could benefit from support services as we continue to navigate during the pandemic, check out: HelpOlderAdults.org. There are numerous supports available in our region for families and older adults offering services such as meal delivery or curbside pick-up, grocery delivery, transportation, chore and telephone reassurance.

SEMAAA’s web site will be getting a face lift over the next month or so and we will be switching to a new web domain: www.semaaa.org. Stay tuned for more updates!

Finding Ways to Engage at Every Age,

*Laurie*

Executive Director

Jerry and Laurie at the Pine Island Farmers Market promoting the good work of SEMAAA and our providers as well as *The Remember Project.*
**The Medicare Open Enrollment period is October 15-December 7.** This is a good time of year to review your Medicare plan options for 2021. Taking time now to do your research can save you money and help you find coverage based on your situation and your healthcare needs. Medicare health and drug plans can make changes every year, the Senior LinkAge Line® recommends that each person review their options for the coming year and open and read every piece of mail received from Medicare, Social Security and their current plan. Annual plan changes can include:

Medicare Part D:
- Medicare Part D Premium
- List of medications covered by your plan (formulary)
- Medication restrictions such as adding prior authorization and quantity limits
- Cost-sharing: deductible, copays and coinsurance
- Pharmacy network

Medicare Advantage and Cost Plans:
- For plans that include Part D the list above will also apply
- Coverage area
- Premium
- Out-of-pocket maximum costs
- Cost-sharing: deductible, copays and coinsurance
- Provider network
- Covered-benefits and restrictions

Use the Medicare Plan Finder tool at [www.medicare.gov](http://www.medicare.gov) to compare your current plan with other plans available in 2021. This will help you plan for the coming year and give you confidence and peace of mind. If you need Medicare help, contact the Senior LinkAge Line, a free statewide service of the Minnesota Board on Aging and the Area Agencies on Aging. The Senior LinkAge Line is Minnesota’s federally designated State Health Insurance Assistance Program (SHIP) and the place to call for non-biased Medicare counseling. Call **1-800-333-2433** Monday through Friday from 8:00 am to 4:30 pm.

The Minnesota Board on Aging’s annual Minnesota-focused Medicare guide, Health Care Choices for Minnesotans on Medicare, is available online at [www.mnhealthcarechoices.com](http://www.mnhealthcarechoices.com).
Neighbors in Action (NIA) began in La Crescent, MN in the summer of 2007 to address needs faced by older people within the community. At that time, all services were provided by volunteers and included transportation, chores, companionship, and assistance with light housekeeping. In 2016, NIA recognized the need for additional services throughout the county and started their Care Partner service to address these gaps.

Care Partners are paid staff that provide an elevated level of service over what volunteers are able to do. One of the goals of the service is to provide respite, or extra help to families who may be overwhelmed because of the level of care needed by their loved one. Care Partners provide homemaking services such as light cleaning, help with meal planning and preparation, medication or bathing reminders, help with errands/rides and especially that extra piece of mind to ensure the loved one is safe. Care Partner services are available throughout Houston County, while volunteer services are limited to the La Crescent and Caledonia areas.

As many senior service providers have experienced, 2020 has been a particularly challenging year for NIA due to the risks of COVID-19. In response to Governor Walz Executive Stay at Home order, services were temporarily halted from March 23rd - May 3rd. They took this time to learn more about the disease and how it is spread and to develop safety protocols to protect clients, staff and volunteers. When several clients’ health and living environments began to decline without help, they quickly recognized that services are essential and resumed care.

While services have grown and changed over the years, Neighbors in Action remains committed to their mission of helping older and disabled neighbors remain independent in their own homes for as long as possible. Partnering with SEMAAA has been a huge part of their success and they look forward to continuing work together long into the future. For more information about Neighbors in Action or services please call Sandy at 507-895-8123 or email sandy@neighborsinaction.net.

The Rochester/Olmsted County Falls Prevention Coalition in partnership with the National Council on Aging and multiple local partners have been working hard to create educational opportunities for Fall Prevention Awareness Week, which is September 21-25th this year. The coalition received a Rochester Area Foundation Together grant, which will be used to provide a fall prevention toolkit for seniors who are at risk of falling or who have fallen. Targeted seniors will receive books titled, “Building Better Balance,” and will be paired with Mayo Clinic DPT students who will mentor them through the book over a 10-week period. For more information about this or if you know of a senior who might be interested please contact April at Family Service Rochester: asutor@familyservicerochester.org or call 507-287-2010.

In addition to the toolkits the coalition has prepared educational content which will be passed on to facilities to share with residents along with relevant fall prevention information from our partners. We have also partnered with SEMCAC to distribute educational content to seniors enrolled in the congregate dining programs. This will reach approximately 2000 individuals in SE MN. Even though we cannot hold events in person this year we will be able to reach more people than usual with the support of the funding and creative partnerships that we’ve leveraged!
Fighting Fraud

Fraud and financial scams happen to millions of people every year, resulting in billions of dollars lost. Medicare fraud results in higher taxes and healthcare costs for everyone. Scams are a type of fraud that can be perpetrated through the mail, email, in-person and over the phone. Advances in technology have increased both the types and occurrences of scams. It is important to know how to recognize fraud and financial scams and how to protect yourself.

Medicare Fraud & Abuse
Medicare fraud is when someone intentionally commits or attempts to commit a scheme to obtain money or property from the Medicare program. Abuse describes practices that may result in unnecessary costs to the Medicare Program. Examples include:
• Billing for services and supplies you did not receive or need
• Offering or accepting kickbacks and bribes
• Allowing someone else to use your Medicare number
• Double billing or overcharging for services and supplies
• Misusing billing codes on a claim

How to Fight Medicare Fraud and Abuse
• Protect your Medicare, Medical Assistance and Social Security numbers.
  o Medicare and Social Security won’t call or visit to sell you anything.
• Document doctor visits, tests and procedures.
• Review for errors and save Medicare Summary Notices and Explanation of Benefits statements.
• When disposing of documents, shred anything with personal information.
• Be wary of calls, emails and advertising that promise Medicare will pay for certain services or devices.

What to Do if You Suspect Medicare Fraud, Errors or Abuse

☐ If you’re confused about a charge, call the provider.
  • This may help you better understand the charge, or they may realize a billing error was made.
☐ If Medicare is billed for an item or supply you didn’t receive, or you don’t know the supplier on the claim, call 1-800-Medicare (800-633-4227).
☐ Call the Senior LinkAge Line at 1-800-333-2433 and get help.

Consumer Scams
Examples include:
• Identity theft
• Fake cashier’s check or money order as payment
• Phony emails, texts or corrupt websites
• Impersonations
  o Someone you know is in distress and needs money
  o IRS or other government agency
• Soliciting donations for fake charities
• Fraudulent investment options
• Fake prize winnings and lotteries
Funds Awarded to Area Providers For Coronavirus Relief

SEMAAA received $100,000 from the MN Council on Foundations in June to grant out to area providers who have had to adjust programming and services due to the Coronavirus. These organizations and many others are working creatively to continue to meet the needs of seniors and individuals with disabilities in our region. We want to thank the MN Council on Foundations for the opportunity to support providers in our region who are doing the critical, frontline work of caring for older adults and keeping them connected to programs and resources that enhance their lives. We were able to fund 16 applicants for projects that aligned with our focus areas of nutrition, education and access to technology, virtual programs and volunteer stipends. Check out the recipients of this grant and the unique projects that have been made possible by the MN Council on Foundations funding.

Agencies Receiving Funding:

- **Apple Tree Dental**— Tele-dentistry and mobile dental procedures
- **ARC Minnesota** — Micro-grant stipend program for technology
- **Pine Haven Foundation** – Cambro food warming/holding units
- **Catholic Charities of Southern MN** – Active Aging/Independent for Life classes
- **Winona Friendship Center**—Increase in technology access for programming
- **Family Service Rochester** - Fresh food delivery and technology support
- **Mower County Seniors**—Food delivery to seniors in rural areas
- **Home and Community Options** – Winona Co.— Ipads for individuals with disabilities for remote mental health appointments and virtual classes
- **Faith in Action of Dodge County**— Paid housekeeping and volunteer support
- **Fifty North**— Increase in technology access for programming
- **Van Horn Public Library** – Exterior book return for older adults
- **ExercisAbilities** – Fall prevention clinic using evidence-based programming
- **WellConnect** – Increase in technology access for programming
- **The Landing, Inc.** – Mobile outreach to provide resources to homeless individuals
- **Three Rivers Community Action** – Rural transportation program
- **Heritage Court** – AL (18 units -Houston MN) -Combat social isolation with technology, EB education/coaching/access
The Remember Project Coming Soon

We invite you to the premiere event of The Remember Project featuring the play “Steering Into the Skid”, the first of three plays in the Remember Project Dementia Awareness Tour of Greater Minnesota (RPDAT).

Join us for this two-hour virtual event hosted by SEMAAA and the Pine Island and Winona communities. “Steering Into the Skid” follows Tim and Amanda for a year in their SUV as they find their way forward in their dementia journey. Michigan couple Arnold Johnston and Deborah Ann Percy wrote this play which is included in an anthology entitled “The MemoryCare Plays”, edited by Margaret A. Noel. The play, premiering as a theatrical video, is followed by small group breakout “rooms” and large group facilitated discussion. Audience members may share their feelings and opinions about the play and its portrayal of the dementia journey. Discussion includes identifying available resources, or service gaps, in communities that would help couples like Tim and Amanda to live their best lives. The Remember Project professional theatre artists, supported by the Metropolitan Area Agency on Aging, are dedicated to using the arts to help communities become more dementia-friendly. We encourage all members of the community to participate in an effort to explore what it means to be a Dementia Friendly Community. Watch a short video about the project.

Pine Island’s first event is October 20th, 2020 at 2 PM. To get your invitation or for more information, please email mmhlava@gmail.com or call Marie Hlava at 507-259-0613.

Winona’s event will begin in November. You can watch for details and updates on their Dementia Friendly Community Facebook page at “Winona DFC” or call Lori at 507-454-7369. More information and tour updates may also be found at: https://rememberproject.org/ or www.facebook.com/therememberproject/

As The Remember Project Dementia Awareness Tour (RPDAT) continues, we are also interested in planning events focused on specific audiences such as first responders, business leaders, healthcare professionals, and students. Go to www.rememberproject.org to learn more about this special program. Contact Chersten Keillor at: Chersten@semaaarochestermn.org if your organization would like to participate in a specific audience event.

The Remember Project in Pine Island and Winona is funded in part by a grant from the Minnesota State Arts Board (MNSAB) to support the 2021 tour in Greater Minnesota. The RPDAT is an Arts Tour Minnesota activity made possible by the voters of Minnesota through a grant from the MNSAB thanks to a legislative appropriation from the Arts and Cultural Heritage Fund. Locally in Pine Island, The Remember Project received financial support from SEMAAA, the Pine Island Fire Dept. Relief Assn, Olmsted Medical Center and several community members. The Pine Island Memory Cafe, Pine Haven Foundation, and Van Horn Public Library also are providing support.

Watch for a follow-up email with additional updates and future event dates!
Go to www.yourjuniper.org to see all of the on-line evidence based classes available around the state and in our region. Juniper class leaders continue to offer fall prevention programs like Tai Ji Quan, on-going exercise, Chronic disease management and Diabetes prevention and management classes virtually and anyone can sign up for a class happening anywhere in the state. Once you are registered they will help you get familiar and comfortable with the Zoom platform and spend some time “practicing” before the first session. There are a few classes like Stepping On and Matter of Balance that are not being offered virtually due to fidelity guidelines and safety of participants.

The WellConnect SE MN Partnership continues to focus on being a hub for evidence based programs in SE MN. Like all of us, WellConnect and it’s partnering organizations have had to make some adjustments to the programs during this time period. In an effort to reduce the risk to seniors, classes were paused or cancelled and plans for offering things virtually took shape. While not ideal, there are some positives. Participants can join from any location, you can still see and hear the instructor and may have some level of interaction depending on the delivery format, as well as staying safe at home. At this time the Arthritis Foundation Exercise Program and SAIL, are being offered via a live Facebook stream. Others like CDSMP or Chronic pain have been offered via Zoom. Check the site to find out what is available and keep in mind this site is updated frequently so if you aren’t seeing much now, check back weekly for new options. Go to www.wellconnectsemn.org to learn more and click on “Find a Program Near You” to see what is available.

Look for the Aging Mastery Program on Juniper and WellConnect in the coming months. Participants 55+ will have the options to join a virtual workshop or may participate in a book club using the Aging Mastery Playbook included in the Starter Kit. This program focuses on helping older adults take charge of their health, renew healthy habits and make better choices. Go to the Juniper or WellConnect to see upcoming classes.
As we move into the seventh month of adjusting our lifestyles due to COVID-19 there may be new challenges or needs that arise for you or a loved one. There are numerous supports available in our region for families and older adults offering services such as meal delivery or curbside pick-up, grocery delivery, transportation, chore and telephone reassurance. If you are a senior or a family member looking for services for mom or dad during COVID-19, check out this site for up to date information about local supports near you. This site lists community based services and resources used by older adults and their caregivers in the state of MN. Search by categories like Chore & Homemaker, Grocery & Prescription delivery, Home Care and Health & Wellbeing to find options available near you. Go to HelpOlderAdultsMN.org to search for a service. If you are not able to use the internet or uncomfortable navigating this site please call the Senior LinkAge Line® at 1-800-333-2433 and staff will do their best to help you find the services you need. You can also find services at MNHelp.info.

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<th>2020 SEMAAA BOARD</th>
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<tr>
<td>Marti Riley, Chair, Olmsted</td>
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<td>Jenelle Cummings Vice-Chair, Mower</td>
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<td>Brad Lohrbach, Treasurer, Dodge</td>
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<td>Mike Hancock, Secretary Member at Large</td>
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<td>Lloyd Swalve, Fillmore</td>
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<td>Dave Vandergon, Goodhue</td>
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<td>Jean Eaton, Freeborn</td>
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<td>Karen Hanson, Winona</td>
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<td>Jim Hanesworth, Houston</td>
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<td>Marie Hlava, Member at Large</td>
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<td>Dr. Dwight Jennings, Member at Large</td>
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<td>Margaret Cook, Member at Large</td>
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<td>Rita Fox, Wabasha</td>
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**Get on board!**

SEMAAA is currently accepting applications for new board members for Rice and Steele counties!

Please contact Laurie Brownell for an application:
laurie@semaaarochestermn.org

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<th>2020 SEMAAA STAFF</th>
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<td>Laurie Brownell – Executive Director</td>
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<td>Karen Toussel – Administrative Assistant</td>
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<td>Kim Voth – Grant Manager/Financial Officer</td>
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<td>Annie Avery – Senior LinkAge Line® Coordinator</td>
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<td>Laurie Marreel – Grants Administrator</td>
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<td>Patti Schad – Finance Assistant</td>
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<td>Jerry Roberts – Senior LinkAge Line® Specialist</td>
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<td>Starla Inman – Senior LinkAge Line® Specialist</td>
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<td>Chad Wojchik – Senior LinkAge Line® Specialist</td>
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<td>Jone Trapp – Senior LinkAge Line® Specialist</td>
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<td>Tambi Lokken – Senior LinkAge Line® Specialist</td>
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<td>Laurie Magnus – Senior Linkage Line® Specialist</td>
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<td>Dan Conway – Lead Eldercare Development Program Dev.</td>
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<td>Chersten Keillor – Eldercare Development Program Dev.</td>
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<td>Lori Wacek – Community Living Coordinator</td>
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<td>Jen McLaughlin – Community Living Case Aide</td>
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<td>Emily Krowiorz – Community Living Specialist</td>
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<td>Sarah Benson – Community Living Specialist</td>
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<td>Jay Hall – Community Living Specialist</td>
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