



The Aging Advocate

A Publication of the INCOG Area Agency on Aging

**SPRING 2012
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never too old
to play

May 2012 is Older Americans Month

In 1963, President John F. Kennedy began a tradition of honoring the contributions older Americans make in our society. Now, every May we get the opportunity to honor our older Americans by celebrating Older American's Month. It is an excellent opportunity for us to celebrate the contributions older Americans have made to their families and surrounding community. This year's theme, "Never Too Old to Play" encourages older adults to stay active, involved and engaged in the lives of others by sharing their past experiences and knowledge with others.

As the age of our population increases the demand for more meaningful activities and opportunities also increases. The baby-boomers are more active, technology savvy and ready to engage life in a way that we have never seen before. Older

Americans Month is a time to celebrate the achievements of our older Americans and helps them discover how to stay physically, socially and mentally active. Older Americans over 60 account for a growing percentage of participants in community service positions, faith-based organizations, and online social networking. By remaining active, older Americans are gaining health benefits such as increased mobility and cognitive abilities.



2012
Metro Tulsa
**SENIOR
SPELLING BEE**

Thursday, April 26, 2012

2:00 pm

Martin Regional Library
2601 S. Garnett Road
Tulsa, OK

*For more information, contact
Tammy Harvey at 918.579.9486*

Supporting Senior Citizen Independence, Dignity, and Health
in Creek, Osage, and Tulsa Counties

10 Ways to Protect Yourself from Healthcare Fraud

1. Always read your Medicare summary notice from CMS or other healthcare billing statement. It will say "This is not a bill"
2. If you suspect an error, fraud or abuse gather the facts and report it
3. Remember that Medicare does not sell anything
4. Treat your Medicare and Social Security cards like credit cards. If someone offers to buy your Medicare or Social Security number DO NOT DO IT!
5. Follow your instincts. If it seems too good to be true it usually is!
6. Only visit your personal doctor, hospital or clinic for medical help. They are the only ones who should make referrals for special equipment, services or medicine.
7. If someone calls and tries to pressure you into buying something or giving out personal information HANG UP THE PHONE!
8. If a person comes to your door stating they are from Medicare or another health company SHUT THE DOOR AND LOCK IT!
9. Don't keep mail in your mailbox for more than one day. People steal personal information from mailboxes.
10. Rip up or shred your Medicare or other health care related papers/documents before throwing them away.

**Report fraud to the
Oklahoma Insurance Department
1.888.967.9100**

MedCheck Program Launched

A new evidence-based program, called MedCheck, is endorsed by Administration on Aging (AoA) and addresses important safety and quality-of-life issues for seniors.

Medication-related problems and errors endanger the lives and well-being of a high percentage of seniors, leaving them with poorly controlled cardiac symptoms or at risk for falls, dizziness, confusion, or other side effects.



A computerized risk assessment screening and alert process enables a consultant pharmacist to verify the accuracy and appropriateness of the client's current medication list, identify problems that warrant re-evaluation by the physician, and follow through with the client and physician to resolve identified problems. To participate, please bring a list of medications along with your current dosage of each one.

The MedCheck program will be held initially at three locations and then expanded to an additional five locations. The first three sessions will be held from 9:00 am until 11:00am.

**Tuesday, April 10, 2012
Central Center at Centennial Park
1028 E. Sixth Street • Tulsa, OK**

**Thursday April 12, 2012
Lacy Park Recreation Center
2134 N. Madison Place • Tulsa, OK**

**Wednesday, April 25, 2012
Sand Springs Senior Center
205 N. McKinley • Sand Springs, OK**



Senior Companion Program



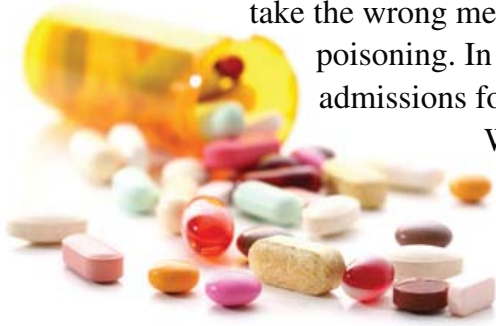
The Senior Companion Program allows individuals 55 and up to show compassion and friendship to other seniors in their community. This is achieved by performing activities such as running errands, helping with basic chores, visiting or offering respite to caregivers. The goal of the program is to provide friendship to seniors and assist them so they can remain as independent as possible while living at home.

Seniors who become involved with the program receive comprehensive orientation, monthly in-services, and may qualify for a tax-free, hourly stipend and supplemental accident and liability insurance while on duty.

Since the program began more than 500,000 seniors nationally have been linked to service opportunities. Locally the Senior Companion Program at LIFE Senior Services serves Tulsa, Creek and Eastern Osage Counties. For more information please contact Heather Sunday at 918.664.9000.

Medication Poisoning Risks for Older Adults

Older adults are at risk of accidental medication poisoning. Whether prescribed or over-the-counter, medication errors can be the source of serious problems. Older adults may take a medication twice, take the wrong medication or take an incorrect dose. Any of these can lead to drug poisoning. In fact, medication problems account for more than 30% of hospital admissions for seniors.



While young children are most likely to experience accidental drug poisoning, older adults are more likely to be hospitalized or even die from the effects of drug poisoning because their bodies are much more sensitive to the effect of drugs. The top three causes of poison-related hospitalizations and/or deaths in seniors are:

1. Adverse drug interactions
2. Health professional error
3. Taking multiple medications with the same ingredients

The Poison Control Center data shows that the most severe effects (hospitalization and/or death) occur from medication errors with painkillers, anticoagulants (wafarin, Coumadin), anticonvulsants, asthma therapies, psychotherapeutics (ie. anxiety, depression medications) and cardiac medicines.

Older adults should also be aware of medication poisoning risks for children. Grandparents and other relatives can place children at risk of poisoning if medications are easily accessible. Children may think pills are candy or they may want to emulate their grandparent who they see taking pills. Child resistant bottles do not mean, child proof. Keeping medications out of children's reach is the best way to prevent accidental poisoning.

The Poison Control Center phone number is 800-222-1222. Trained staff are available to assist with a medication error or any other question about potential poisoning risk.



Neville Joins Area Agency on Aging Staff as Intern

Amber Neville has joined the INCOG Area Agency on Aging staff as a volunteer intern. She will be working primarily with the MedCheck program as well as other administrative and support services.

A native Tulsan, having lived in Massachusetts and Arizona but now residing full-time in Tulsa, Amber Neville is a former graduate of Northern Arizona University with a bachelor's in marketing. Neville is a current student at Tulsa Community College studying to be a geriatric nurse/dietician. She has been published in the Greater Tulsa Reporter Newspapers for a column she created highlighting younger professionals in the Tulsa area for their philanthropic and professional endeavors. She recently comes to the INCOG Area Agency on Aging from Home Instead Senior Care Tulsa where she was the Staff Coordinator and the 2011 "Be a Santa to a Senior" project coordinator partnering with the Agency and Tulsa and Creek County Senior Nutrition agencies to collect and distribute hundreds of holiday gifts and donations to seniors in need.

Long-Term Care Ombudsman Program



- Are you concerned about the needs of older people?
- Are you able to work with many types of people?
- Are you willing and able to follow problems through to resolution?

BECOME AN OMBUDSMAN VOLUNTEER

Advocate for people living in Nursing Homes, Assisted Living, or Residential Care Facilities

TRAINING DATES:

9:30 am to 4:00 pm

Greenwood Cultural Center - 322 North Greenwood - Tulsa, OK
(Outside of Tulsa Special Training Sessions Will Be Arranged If Requested)

Tuesday, July 17, 2012 & Tuesday, July 24, 2012
Thursday, October 18, 2012 & Thursday, October 25, 2012

Long-Term Care Ombudsmen Supervisors

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