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Top Stories

President Obama Nominates Kathy Greenlee for Assistant Secretary for Aging, U.S. Department of Health and Human Services

On May 4, 2009 President Obama nominated Kathy Greenlee as Assistant Secretary for Aging. Ms. Greenlee currently serves as Secretary of Aging for the state of Kansas, a position she has held since January 2006. As the Secretary for Aging, she has led a cabinet-level agency with 192 full-time staff members and a total budget of \$495 million. Her department oversees the state's Older Americans Act programs, the distribution of Medicaid long-term care payments and regulation of nursing home licensure and survey processes.

From 2004-2006, Greenlee served as State Long-Term Care Ombudsman in Kansas, and prior to that, was the state's Assistant Secretary of Aging. From 1999-2002, Greenlee served as general counsel at the Kansas Insurance Department. During her tenure there, she led the team of regulators who evaluated the proposed sale of Blue Cross/Blue Shield of Kansas, and oversaw the Senior Health Insurance Counseling for Kansas program. Greenlee also served as Chief of Staff and Chief of Operations for Governor Kathleen Sebelius. She is a graduate of the University of Kansas with degrees in business administration and law.

Prior to Ms. Greenlee taking over her responsibilities as Assistant Secretary for Aging, she must be confirmed by the U.S. Senate, which we hope will occur very soon!

HHS Release \$30 million to Assist in Outreach to Medicare Beneficiaries

On June 1, HHS Secretary Kathleen G. Sebelius released \$25 million in grants to help older people, individuals with disabilities and their caregivers apply for special assistance through Medicare, and an additional \$5 million for a national resource center to support these important efforts.

These grants, made possible by the Medicare Improvements for Patients and Providers Act (MIPPA) of 2008, will provide valuable support at the state and community levels for organizations involved in reaching and providing assistance to people likely to be eligible for the Low-Income Subsidy program (LIS), Medicare Savings Program (MSP), the Medicare Part D Prescription Drug Program and in helping beneficiaries to apply for benefits. This initiative also includes special targeting efforts to rural areas of the country and to Native American elders.

This MIPPA funding, which is jointly administered by HHS' Administration on Aging (AoA) and the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS), is being awarded to State Health Insurance Assistance Programs (SHIPs), State Agencies on Aging (SUAs), Area Agencies on Aging (AAAs), Aging and Disability Resource Centers (ADRCs), Native Americans Tribal Organizations and local communities to help seniors, caregivers and those with disabilities on Medicare. These organizations are important members of HHS' national network of state, tribal and community-based organizations who assist seniors, caregivers and those with disabilities with health benefits information and information on other services, and enable them to remain independent and living in their communities as long as possible. For more information about these grants, please visit:

http://www.aoa.gov/AoARoot/AoA_Programs/Special_Projects/Medicare_Outreach/index.aspx

HHS Secretary Sebelius and Attorney General Holder Team Up to Combat Medicare and Medicaid Fraud

HHS Secretary Kathleen Sebelius and Attorney General Eric Holder are taking the fight against Medicare and Medicaid fraud to a new level. They have committed senior officials from the Department of Health and Human Services and the Department of Justice to work together on the *Health Care Fraud Prevention and Enforcement Action Team* (HEAT). The HEAT Team will expand efforts to stop fraud and prevent it from happening in the first place.

To learn more about HEAT visit <http://www.hhs.gov/stopmedicarefraud/>.

AoA's SMP (Senior Medicare Patrol) Program Saves Taxpayers Millions

The goals of the newly created HEAT program are in line with one of the Administration on Aging's (AoA) most successful programs. The SMP Program was launched in 1997 to aid in preventing the annual loss of billions of federal dollars due to health care fraud, error and abuse. In the past decade, SMP has saved the Federal government over \$105.65 million in Medicare and Medicaid funds recovered and in beneficiary and other savings.

To learn more about SMPs, visit

http://www.aoa.gov/AoARoot/AoA_Programs/Elder_Rights/SMP/index.aspx.

HHS Secretary Sebelius Outlines Steps to Improve Quality and Attractiveness of Caregiver Jobs

In a May 18 Letter to the Editor in the *Washington Post*, Secretary Sebelius noted the important role caregivers, whether paid workers or unpaid family members, have in our nation's long term care system. She reaffirmed the Department's concern about the needs of long-term care workers and

maintaining an adequate and high-quality workforce that will ultimately result in improvements in the quality of life and care of disabled and older Americans.

To read the entire article, go to <http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/content/article/2009/05/17/AR2009051701794.html>.

Secretary Sebelius Releases New Report on Health Care for Women

Joining Tina Tchen, Director of the White House Office of Public Engagement and Executive Director of the White House Council on Women and Girls at a recent roundtable discussion on the urgent need for health care reform of women small business owners, HHS Secretary Kathleen G. Sebelius released a new report, *Roadblocks to Health Care: Why the Current Health Care System Does Not Work For Women*. The report shows how our current system is leaving millions of women without the affordable, quality care they need. The report also details the difficulties small businesses face when attempting to provide health benefits to their employees.

The entire report can be accessed at <http://www.HealthReform.gov>.

AoA News

AoA to Testify before House Committee on Veterans Affairs on Family Caregiving

Edwin L. Walker, Acting Assistant Secretary for Aging, will testify before the House Committee on Veterans Affairs Subcommittee on Health on Thursday, June 4, 2009. The topic of the hearing is "Meeting the Needs of Family Caregivers." This is the first time that the Administration on Aging has been asked to testify before this Committee, and Mr. Walker will be highlighting the programs and services provided by AoA and the VA in the community to assist older persons, veterans and their families. AoA and the VA have been working together since 2008 on a partnership involving AoA's national network of community-based aging organizations and VA health centers and services that will serve older persons in the community as well as veterans of all ages. At the hearing, Mr. Walker will announce the availability of funding for AoA's Community Living Program and the second year of its collaboration with the VA. Mr. Walker's testimony will be posted on the AoA website (<http://www.aoa.gov>) on June 4 and an archived version of the webcast of the hearing will be posted on the Committee's website later that day as well. <http://veterans.house.gov/hearings/>

AoA's National Center on Elder Abuse is Reaching Millions about Elder Abuse Awareness in Movie Theaters across the Country

AoA's National Center on Elder Abuse (NCEA) will continue its run of a 15-second elder abuse information piece on approximately 700 movie screens in 27 major metropolitan areas throughout the United States. The Public Service Announcement (PSA), which began running on May 22 through June 18, is the first time that one unified message regarding elder mistreatment will be echoed simultaneously throughout the country.

The brief video appears before movie trailers and previews, and features actor William Mapother of the television show "Lost" asking viewers to "Join Us in the Fight Against Elder Abuse." NCEA created the "Join Us" campaign as part of the first-ever national effort to raise awareness of elder abuse, neglect, and exploitation. To learn about the location of the theaters where the elder abuse informational piece will run, visit:

http://www.ncea.aoa.gov/Ncearoot/Main_Site/pdf/publication/NCEA_movie_theater_info_piece_list.pdf

For more information about the NCEA "Join Us" campaign, visit:

http://www.ncea.aoa.gov/NCEAroot/Main_Site/About/Initiatives/Join_Us_Campaign.aspx. You may also contact the NCEA by e-mail (ncea-info@aoa.hhs.gov) or by phone (302-831-3525) to learn more about other public awareness activities.

In addition, Monday, June 15, 2009 is Elder Abuse World Awareness Day, a day when communities worldwide will hold events to recognize the problem of elder abuse, neglect, and exploitation. The day is in support of the United Nations International Plan of Action which recognizes the significance of elder abuse as a public health and human rights issue. To learn more, and to download a free copy of the Community Guide World Day Tool Kit, visit the International Network for the Prevention for Elder Abuse (INPEA) website at <http://www.inpea.net>.

Other HHS News

Father's Day and Men's Health Week: Reminder to Men to Stay Healthy

AoA would like to extend our appreciation to all the grandfathers, dads and soon to be dads in the United States!

Sunday, June 21 is Father's Day, and a good day to remind the fathers and grandfathers in our lives of the practical steps men should take to stay healthy. June 15-21 has been set aside as Men's Health Week, a time to raise awareness about preventable health problems and encourage early detection and treatment of disease among men and boys.

The HHS Agency for Healthcare Research and Quality (AHRQ) recommends the following for all men:

- Get recommended screening tests,
- Be tobacco free,
- Be physically active,
- Eat a healthy diet,
- Stay at a healthy weight, and
- Take preventive medicines if you need them.

To download a copy of the AHRQ fact sheet, Men: Stay Healthy at Any Age - Your Checklist for Health, go to <http://www.ahrq.gov/ppip/healthymen.pdf>.

To visit CDC's website on men's health <http://www.cdc.gov/men/> and to send an e-card to a father or man in your life, visit: <http://www2a.cdc.gov/eCards/browse.asp?act=brs&chkcategory=Men&submit1=GO>

HHS to Award \$1.79 Billion to Help People Living with HIV/AIDS

HHS recently announced it would release \$1.79 billion to ensure that people of all ages living with HIV/AIDS continue to have access to life-saving health care and medications. The grants were funded through the Ryan White HIV/AIDS Program, which helps more than 529,000 individuals every year obtain the care and services they need to live longer, healthier lives.

For more information about this funding availability, visit <http://www.hhs.gov/news/press/2009pres/05/20090514a.html>

For information from about HIV/AIDS prevention, testing, treatment, research, and use of new media in response to HIV/AIDS visit <http://www.AIDS.gov>.

NIH Offers New Online Tool for Caregivers

In response to the increasing number of older Americans turning to the Internet for health information, the National Institutes of Health (NIH) recently added *Medicare Basics for Caregivers* to its list of resources available on line at its website NIHSeniorHealth.gov. *Medicare Basics for Caregivers* is a brief, yet comprehensive introduction to Medicare, and gives caregivers the basics and helps them find answers to their questions. The site was developed with the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS) and the information provided is taken from the CMS booklet, *Medicare Basics: A Guide for Families and Friends of People with Medicare*.

Caregivers and others needing a general introduction to Medicare can visit <http://nihseniorhealth.gov/medicare/toc.html> to find out about medical and hospital benefits, enrollment, billing, prescription drug costs, home health care and much more.

Federal Funding Opportunities

AoA to Award \$5 Million for Community Aging in Place Programs

The Administration on Aging (AoA) will use up to \$4.5 million to fund up to 15 new Community Innovations for Aging in Place (CIAIP) grants. These new projects will promote aging in place for older individuals by developing and implementing innovative, cost effective, comprehensive and coordinated health and social services including evidence-based disease prevention and health promotion services that allow them to continue to live in their communities among their families and friends. AoA will also award one grant of up to \$500,000 for a technical assistance cooperative agreement that will support the CIAIP grantees. **The closing date for CIAIP and cooperative agreement applications under this announcement is Wednesday, July 15, 2009.**

To learn more about this grant opportunity, please visit <http://www.aoa.gov/AoARoot/Grants/Funding/index.aspx>.

For more information about the CIAIP program, please contact Deborah Burns at Deborahburns.Kuhn@aoa.hhs.gov.

AoA to Award \$10 Million for Alzheimer's Disease Supportive Services Projects

The Administration on Aging (AoA) Alzheimer's Disease Supportive Services Program (ADSSP) Projects will award \$10 million in grants through its Evidence-Based Cooperative Agreements to Better Serve People with Alzheimer's Disease and Related Disorders and Innovation Cooperative Agreements to Better Serve People with Alzheimer's Disease and Related Disorders to provide the opportunity for AoA's national network of community-based aging organizations and its partners to strengthen their approach to helping individuals with Alzheimer's Disease and Related Disorders (ADRD) and their caregivers. **The deadline for submission of a letter of intent is Friday, June 5, 2009.**

The closing date for applications for both announcements is Monday, July 6, 2009.

The Program Announcements and Frequently Asked Questions may be viewed at: <http://www.aoa.gov/AoARoot/Grants/Funding/index.aspx>.

AoA to Award Grants for Model Approaches to Statewide Legal Assistance Systems

With this grant opportunity, the Administration on Aging (AoA) maintains support for state leadership efforts to develop integrated, coordinated state legal services delivery systems that incorporate senior legal help-lines and other low-cost delivery mechanisms with Older Americans Act supportive legal services and other available legal resources. The goal of the grant opportunity is to provide maximum benefit and minimum overlap or duplication of effort from the combined legal resources for elders in the state.

Through this program announcement, AoA will award up to eleven (11) cooperative agreements to support eligible states in developing approaches that will maximize the use of federal, state, and other funds by incorporating the utilization of senior legal help-lines and other low-cost legal services mechanisms into the state legal services planning and development process. The awards will be cooperative agreements as AoA will be substantially involved in the development and execution of the activities of the projects.

The deadline date for submission of applications is 11:59 p.m., ET on June 30, 2009.

Click here for the full text of this program announcement

http://www.aoa.gov/AoARoot/Grants/Funding/docs/2009/FY09_Model_Approaches_Program_Announcement_April_15.doc

AoA to Award Grants for National Minority Aging Organizations Technical Assistance Centers

The Administration on Aging (AoA) plans to make awards under the National Minority Aging Organizations Technical Assistance Centers (NMAOs) Program for the development of culturally competent and linguistically appropriate front-line health promotion and disease prevention strategies for racial and ethnic minority older individuals. Projects will develop practical, nontraditional, community-based interventions for reaching older individuals who experience barriers to accessing home and community-based services due to language and low literacy as well as other barriers directly related to cultural diversity.

Through this competition, AoA plans to make approximately four (4) awards in the form of cooperative agreements for new projects, for a first year total of up to approximately \$911,832. Each project should focus on one of the following four (4) major racial and ethnic minority groups: African American (1 project @ up to \$217,226); American Indian and Alaska Native (1 project @ up to \$125,098); persons of Hispanic origin (1 project @ up to \$217,226); and Asian American and Pacific Islanders (API) (1 project @ up to \$352,273). Projects will

be funded for a three (3) year period, contingent upon the availability of federal funds. Applicants are required to cover at least 25% of the total program costs from non-federal cash or in-kind resources.

The deadline date for submission of applications is 11:59 P.M. EST on June 15, 2009.

Click here for the full text of this program announcement

http://www.aoa.gov/AoARoot/Grants/Funding/docs/2009/2009_NMAO_PA--FINAL_4-30.doc.

Administration for Children and Families to Add \$50 Million to Strengthening Communities Fund

The Strengthening Communities Fund will make \$50 million in Recovery Act funding available to help communities severely affected by the current economic downturn. Partnering with private and public organizations, HHS will provide one-time, two year grants. The focus of this program is to build the capacity of nonprofit organizations, whether secular or faith-based, to address the broad economic recovery issues present in their communities, including helping low-income individuals secure and retain employment, earn higher wages, obtain better-quality jobs, and gain greater access to state and Federal benefits and tax credits, including Recovery Act benefits. Non-Profits, Faith-Based, States, Cities, Counties and Tribal organizations may apply for grants through two components of the Fund, Non-Profit Capacity-Building Program and State, Local, and Tribal Government Capacity-Building Program.

The Administration for Children and Families and its Office for Community Services administers this program. To learn about this grant opportunity and to find resources for prospective grantees, potential applicant organizations interested in applying for funds should visit:

<http://www.acf.hhs.gov/programs/ocs/scf/index.html>.

More Aging News

VA Secretary Shinseki Outlines Obama Administration's Efforts to Reduce Homelessness among Veterans

Speaking at the National Coalition for Homeless Veterans (NCHV) National Conference last month, Secretary of the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) Eric K. Shinseki made it clear that "homelessness among veterans is unacceptable to President Obama." Secretary Shinseki added "We have a moral duty to prevent and eliminate homelessness among Veterans."

To read more about the Secretary's speech, visit <http://www1.va.gov/opa/pressrel/pressrelease.cfm?id=1679>.

OWL – Elder Abuse Mother's Day Report

Each year on Mother's Day, OWL (The Voice of Midlife and Older Women) releases a national report focusing on an issue of critical importance to older women. The topic for Mother's Day 2009 was elder abuse. In the report, OWL discusses how difficult elder abuse is to talk about, and frequently, a part of too many women's lives. To learn more about OWL and read the 2009 OWL Mother's Day Report on Elder Abuse, visit <http://www.owl-national.org/Welcome.html>

Medicare Interactive, a One-Stop, Online Resource

The Medicare Rights Center, a national non-profit organization that works towards ensuring older adults and people with disabilities receive affordable quality health care across America, offers a free service called Medicare Interactive, a one-stop, user-friendly online resource where consumers, caregivers and professionals can find accurate, up-to-date information on Medicare. This one-of-a-kind tool explains complex issues such as the Medicare prescription drug benefit, enrolling in Medicare, long-term care, Medicare-covered treatments and much more.

Learn more about Medicare Interactive at <http://www.MedicareInteractive.org>.

For more information on the Medicare Rights Center visit their website at <http://www.medicarerights.org/>.

Uncertain Economic Times Have Negative Impact on Working Caregivers

A recent study by the National Alliance for Caregiving and Evercare, one of the nation's largest care coordination programs for people who have long-term or advance illness, are older or have disabilities, show that six in ten caregivers are workers and during this current economic downturn 50% of them are less comfortable with taking time off from work to care for a family member or friend. A similar percentage (51%) also says the economic downturn has increased the amount of stress they feel about being able to care for their relative or friend. The telephone survey was conducted from February 25 to March 19, 2009 and only involved respondents who had been a caregiver for an adult in the past 12 months.

To read the entire survey report, *The Evercare Survey of the Economic Downturn and its Impact on Family Caregiving* go to http://www.caregiving.org/data/EVC_Caregivers_Economy_Report%20FINAL4-28-09.pdf.

FHA Issues Primer on Evacuating Populations with Special Needs

Evacuating Populations with Special Needs – Routes to Effective Evacuation Planning is a recent addition to the Federal Highway Administration's Routes to Effective Evacuation Primer Series.

This primer will aid in developing an evacuation plan that includes the coordination of transportation resources to meet the requirements of people with special needs. It provides local and state emergency managers, government officials, transportation agencies, and other organizations involved in disaster response with best practices and tools to accommodate people with special needs in an evacuation.

To access the publication go to

<http://www.ops.fhwa.dot.gov/publications/fhwahop09022/index.htm>.

To learn more about the primer series visit the FHA's publications web page at http://www.ops.fhwa.dot.gov/eto_tim_pse/publications/index.htm.

Submit a Story!

Have you submitted your story yet? This story was submitted during Older Americans Month through AoA's website.

A History of Celebration at the Veteran Affairs Hospital

I am an employee at the Department of Veteran Affairs Hospital in Washington, DC. For the past six years the Geriatric Department has sponsored a program during Older Americans Month allowing the senior veterans and family members to showcase their many talents. This program brings tears of joy to the participants and the audience. It is amazing to see a centenarian perform magic tricks learned when he was only seven years old, or tell jokes without missing a beat. They dance; they sing and play musical instruments. Their voices are strong and the dances range from ballroom, tango, tap, to electric slide. We even have senior belly dancers. The program has grown over the years and everyone involved is excited to be a part of the show and look forward to this yearly event.

Submitted by Benetta Pitts, Department of Veteran Affairs Hospital, Washington, DC.

Click on the link below to share your story with us, and it may appear on our website or in this newsletter!

<http://www.aoa.gov/AoARoot/Press Room/For The Press/medadv/Share Story.aspx>

Medicare Diabetes Screening Project to Fund Ten Grassroots Programs

The Medicare Diabetes Screening Project (MDSP) will award up to \$2500 each to ten local organizations that can demonstrate how they will implement grassroots programs to promote the free diabetes screening benefit in Medicare.

MDSP is a coalition of more than 20 national partners, co-chaired by the American Diabetes Association, Healthcare Leadership Council and Novo Nordisk. These organizations have joined together to create awareness and utilization of the free screening benefit for diabetes and pre-diabetes available under Medicare. Its mission is to improve the health and well being of America's seniors, ages 65 and older, through encouraging use of the free preventative diabetes screening benefits that exist in Medicare.

For an application visit the MDSP website at <http://www.screenfordiabetes.org/>. **The application deadline is July 10 and decisions will be made by Friday, July 17, 2009.** For more information contact Rachel Bright, Program Coordinator, RLBR@novonordisk.com.

Clinical Practice Guidelines for Quality Palliative Care Offers New Insights into Palliative Care

In the first update since its 2004 publication, the second edition of *Clinical Practice Guidelines for Quality Palliative Care (Guidelines)* provides an update of the core principles and structures of clinical palliative care programs. The *Guidelines* are available for download at <http://www.nationalconsensusproject.org>

The *Guidelines* is published by the National Consensus Project for Quality Palliative Care (NCP). They welcome your feedback on the new *Guidelines*. Comments should be directed to NCP at info@nationalconsensusproject.org.

NCP is a consortium of organizations that focus on hospice and palliative care. To learn more about each of the four member groups please visit their websites:

American Academy of Hospice and Palliative Medicine:
<http://www.aahpm.org/>

Center to Advance Palliative Care: <http://www.capc.org/>

Hospice and Palliative Nurses Association: <http://www.hpna.org/>

National Hospice and Palliative Care Organization:
<http://www.nhpco.org/templates/1/homepage.cfm>

Conferences

Stay up to date with the latest aging meetings and conferences by visiting the AoA events calendar at:

http://www.aoa.gov/AoARoot/Press_Room/events/events_List_Day.aspx#title.

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