



Pennsylvania Behavioral Health and Aging Coalition  
Opening Doors for Older Pennsylvanians

## News You Can Use...

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March 2014

### How At Risk For Abuse Are People With Dementia?

Elder abuse is something that can occur to anybody. Elder abuse can occur from doctors, nursing homes, and even caregivers. It does not mean one should be distrustful about accepting help as they age. It is more along the lines of demonstrating caution, and being fully informed of statistics. Older adults with dementia face an added risk of being abused. In a United States study, 47.3% of caregivers were found to be either neglectful or abusive when caring for an older relative with dementia. Abuse can be constituted as verbal, physical, or neglectful in many cases. To download a free fact sheet from the National Center on Elder Abuse, please visit the following link for more information:

[http://www.ncea.aoa.gov/Resources/Publication/docs/NCEA\\_Dementia\\_ResearchBrief\\_2013.pdf](http://www.ncea.aoa.gov/Resources/Publication/docs/NCEA_Dementia_ResearchBrief_2013.pdf)

### New LGBT Aging Resource

A new employment workforce page has been released by the National Resource Center on LGBT Aging. Within the page are links for many resources including articles regarding employment discrimination, and existing LGBT laws to prevent discrimination from occurring. Also, included are links on how to plan for retirement, as well as videos and recent publications. To view the new webpage please visit the following link:

<http://lgbtagingcenter.org/resources/index.cfm?s=6>

### My Medicare Matters

The Medicare webpage has a new look and feel to it to become more user friendly for older adults. New features include a savings calculator which will help you compute costs of prescription drugs plans and help you find the better deal, and a fact sheet to help review current coverage. The webpage was created by the National Council on Aging. For more information please visit <http://us1.campaign-archive2.com/?u=c302ffd53b21842ca615bf496&id=b28ff74f5c&e=bef90cba1e>

To go directly to the webpage, please visit [https://www.mymedicarematters.org/?utm\\_source=NCOAWeek\\_131119&utm\\_medium=newsletter&utm\\_campaign=NCOAWeek](https://www.mymedicarematters.org/?utm_source=NCOAWeek_131119&utm_medium=newsletter&utm_campaign=NCOAWeek)



## UF Researchers Find That 'Peanut Butter Test' Can Help Diagnose Alzheimer's Disease

Smell is one of the most powerful senses that people possess. It is tied to everything from foods we prepare, to soaps that we buy, and so forth. It is also tied to our memories of earlier times. New research is being conducted that uses a person's sense of smell to detect Alzheimer's disease. Now it might seem silly, but there is some scientific research to back this claim up. When a person gets Alzheimer's disease, one of the first parts of the brain to deteriorate is the temporal lobe, which is associated with detecting smells. A peanut butter test can be conducted, which was created by Jennifer Stamps. Peanut butter is used because of its strong smell. Sense of smell is impaired with early Alzheimer's, but more specifically a weakening of the left nostril when compared to the right. This test is only used to confirm an existing diagnosis, but with more research, it might be possible to use this test with people who have cognitive impairment to determine who might be at risk for getting Alzheimer's disease. To read more please visit the following link for more information:

[http://www.adcs.org/research/eNewsLetter/ADIN\\_E-Newsletter\\_November\\_2013.pdf](http://www.adcs.org/research/eNewsLetter/ADIN_E-Newsletter_November_2013.pdf)

## Study Finds Cognitive Deficits Common After Critical Illness

It has been noticed that patients of hospitals who enter Intensive Care Units (ICU's) often leave the hospital with cognitive impairments. What should be noted is in most of these instances; the patients were treated for other medical related issues, and had no signs of cognitive impairments upon entering the hospital. In a study published in the New England Journal of Medicine, patients with various medical issues such as cardiac problems, and respiratory problems were examined. Seventy four percent of these individuals developed a form of delirium similar to early Alzheimer's, either while in the hospital or shortly after their stay, even up to a year after the fact. More research is needed to determine why this occurs, whether it is a result of the medical issue, or a precursor to a more serious cognitive problem. To read more please visit the following link:

[http://www.adcs.org/research/eNewsLetter/ADIN\\_E-Newsletter\\_November\\_2013.pdf](http://www.adcs.org/research/eNewsLetter/ADIN_E-Newsletter_November_2013.pdf)

## Senior Transportation

Transportation for older adults and mobility management continue to be a top need for older adults, particularly for those who want to remain living in their homes and communities. On November 6, the US Senate Special Committee on Aging convened a hearing, [Transportation: A Challenge to Independence for Seniors](#) that examined some solutions as well as transportation challenges confronting older adults especially when they are no longer able to drive. The Government Accountability Office (GAO) issued a new report, [Transportation Disadvantaged Populations: Coordination Efforts Are Underway, but Challenges Continue \(GAO-14-154T\)](#), that addresses one of the challenges, the need for federal guidance for states as to how to share costs across programs. HUD posted an article, [Expanding Transportation Options for an Aging Population](#), which addresses the need to offer transportation to support older adults who want to remain independent.



## Can Schizophrenia Be Stopped?

Can serious mental health issues such as schizophrenia be prevented? Serious mental health issues make it nearly impossible for an individual to function without proper intervention and long term treatments. The National Institute Of Mental Health (NIMH) is completing a four year project working on interventions for serious mental health and behavioral health related issues for adults. The project is to intervene when symptoms first present themselves, so to allow an individual to receive treatment sooner. This in turn will help the individual function with some level of normalcy within life. To read more please visit the following link for more information:

<http://www.theatlantic.com/health/archive/2013/12/can-schizophrenia-be-stopped/282083/>

## Good News for Elderly: Happiness Keeps Growing

Several studies on aging and mental health conclude that as we age, our mental health generally improves. The studies assessed mental health at various stages in life and concluded that, unless the person is under chronic stress or suffering from dementia, happiness gradually increased due in part to avoiding negative situations or managing them in healthier ways. Social relationships also have an impact on the happiness of individuals. One study shows that those with more social interactions retain more cognitive abilities in general than those who are less social. The article concludes with suggestions on how to maximize happiness as one ages.

<http://health.usnews.com/health-news/family-health/brain-and-behavior/articles/2009/08/13/good-news-for-elderly-happiness-keeps-growing>

## Social Media and Older Adults

A study by Dr. Anja Leist shows that social media can help older adults stay healthier. Several factors contribute to this, including medical information available to help older adults educate themselves about medical conditions and communicate with healthcare professionals; access to support groups across the globe; and increased social contact with family, friends, and those with similar interests. Future studies are expected which will further review the impact of internet use and social media, both positive and negative, on the older adult population.

<http://www.sciencedaily.com/releases/2013/04/130415204824.htm>

A study by Pew Internet has found a marked increase in adults aged 65 and older utilizing social networking sites, from 13% of older adults in 2009 to 43% in 2013. These numbers are even higher among adults aged 50-64. Sites such as Pinterest allow older adults to browse for and share articles on retirement and nursing homes, healthy recipes that fit dietary restrictions, and information on Alzheimer's disease. Click the link for more information: <http://www.prweb.com/releases/2013/9/prweb11058412.htm>



# Coalition News

## Upcoming In-Person Trainings from the Coalition

Be on the lookout for the following upcoming in-person trainings, to be scheduled regionally throughout PA during 2014.

- [Understanding the Behaviors of Depression, Anxiety and Dementia – Registration Now Open](#)
- Cross System Collaborative Approaches: Working with Individuals with Hoarding Behaviors – [Registration Now Open](#)
- Mental Health First Aid – Targeted to individuals working with older adults
  - [March 25, Lackawanna County](#)
  - [April 22, Westmoreland County](#)

Coalition Webinars on the Horizon

- [Gambling Addiction](#)
- [Mental Health Advance Directives](#)

New on our website: [Click here](#) to access a list of events from other organizations throughout the state. Please note the Coalition does not endorse any of these organizations or events, and the list is intended as a resource only.

## Did You Know??? Customized Behavioral Health and Aging Training is Available

Below is a link to the training topics we currently offer through the Coalition. We can come to your site and offer the trainings, or we also have regular training opportunities available that you will receive notice about as a member of the Coalition.

<http://www.olderpa.org/Default.aspx?pageId=1080869>

## Sponsorship Available

The Coalition provides training opportunities to more than 1000 participants each year. We now offer the opportunity to sponsor Coalition trainings, providing your organization access to individuals in the behavioral health and aging fields. Contact Rebecca May-Cole ([Rebecca@olderpa.org](mailto:Rebecca@olderpa.org)) or 717-541-4219 ext. 106 for more information.

## Donate Now!

Help support the work of the Coalition! Join us in improving the behavioral health of older Pennsylvanians by [donating](#) to PBHAC. Your [tax deductible donation](#) will help us meet our mission to promote wellness, enjoyment and engagement in life, including care, services and community support, that respect the behavioral health needs and values of older Pennsylvanians and their caregivers.

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Previous copies of PBHAC's News You Can Use are available on the website at [www.olderPA.org/newsletter](http://www.olderPA.org/newsletter)

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