



Pennsylvania Behavioral Health and Aging Coalition
Opening Doors for Older Pennsylvanians

News You Can Use...

September 2014

Falls Prevention Awareness Day

September 23 is Falls Prevention Awareness Day, which aims to educate on how to prevent falls among older adults. "Over 21,700 older Americans die annually from injuries related to unintentional falls," and every 15 seconds an older adult visits an emergency room for a fall-related injury. Falls can be prevented in many ways, from reviewing the home for tripping hazards to evaluating one's medications and fitness level. To access an infographic, webinar, media toolkit, and awareness activities for Falls Prevention Awareness Day, please visit <http://www.ncoa.org/improve-health/center-for-healthy-aging/falls-prevention/falls-prevention-awareness.html>.

National Recovery Month 2014 Toolkit

The Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA) is sponsoring the 25th annual National Recovery Month to increase awareness of behavioral health. This year's theme, *Join the Voices for Recovery: Speak Up, Reach Out*, "aims to foster public understanding and acceptance of the benefits of prevention, treatment and recovery from behavioral health conditions." Click below to find links to outreach, resources, and toolkits, including profiles of individuals in recovery.
<http://www.recoverymonth.gov/Recovery-Month-Kit.aspx>.

Telephone Counseling And Suicidal Older Adults

An Australian research team has evaluated crisis calls from older adults and made recommendations based on their findings. One finding was that counselors may be less effective with older adults, due to misconceptions about older adults having "less to live for" compared to younger callers. Among the suggestions, "educating counselors to understand that older people can have fulfilling lives, and training them in how to help older callers find hope and reasons for living, might enhance their effectiveness with this age group." Read more about the study here: <http://www.sprc.org/news-events/the-weekly-spark/weekly-spark-friday-august-29-2014>.



Alcohol Abuse A Growing Problem Among The Aged

The National Institute on Alcoholism and Alcohol Abuse estimates that 10% of alcoholics in America are over the age of 60. Loneliness and loss of physical ability may be contributing factors to the increased use of alcohol and other substances in older adults, a trend which is also seen in the United Kingdom. The UK's report found that there are more alcohol-related deaths per 100,000 older adults than in previous years. To read more and find a link to the full report, please visit

<http://www.alcoholismrehab.org/alcoholism/alcohol-abuse-a-growing-problem-among-the-aged/>.

Nation Unprepared To House Wave Of Older Adults

A new report from Harvard Joint Center for Housing Studies finds that the United States is, "unprepared to meet the escalating need for affordability, accessibility, social connectivity, and supportive services" needed to house the expanding population of older adults. In addition, many older adults cannot comfortably afford rising housing costs, or their savings will only cover a few years past retirement. To view the full report, an infographic, and an interactive map, click below:

<http://blog.aarp.org/2014/09/02/96997great-places-blog-housing-older-adults-in-america/>.

Older Adults Who Volunteer Are Happier And Healthier

The Rotman Research Institute at Baycrest Health Sciences have found that older adults who volunteer receive psychological, cognitive, and physical benefits. Individuals who benefited the most include those who volunteer over 100 hours per year, and those with chronic health conditions. This may be because volunteering keeps older adults mentally and physical active, and helps them feel needed and appreciated in society. To read more about the study, please visit:

<http://www.scienceworldreport.com/articles/16906/20140830/older-adults-who-volunteer-are-more-happier-and-healthier-study-finds.htm>.

Over 100 Genetic Sites Tied To Schizophrenia

An international research team funded by the National Institute of Mental Health (NIMH) has found 108 genetic regions linked to schizophrenia, 83 of which were newly discovered. The study was the largest genome-wide association study of a psychiatric disorder yet conducted, analyzing 37,000 people with schizophrenia and a control group of 113,000 people. The genes discovered affect a variety of functions, from dopamine receptors to the immune system. Additional studies are needed to understand the correlation between these genes and schizophrenia, and how this information may help in future treatment. To read the full article, click here:

<http://www.nih.gov/researchmatters/august2014/08182014schizophrenia.htm>.



Coping With Older Adult Bullying In Senior Living Communities

AARP reports, "...between 10 and 20 percent of older adults living in senior living communities are mistreated by their peers, and often the behavior goes unreported." Verbal and physical abuse, exclusion, theft, and criticism are all ways in which older adults may bully one another. While some people bully their entire lives, some only begin doing so as they age, possibly as a reaction to feelings of powerlessness or decreased independence. Some ways to limit bullying in retirement communities include educating staff, residents, and family to the possibility and signs of bullying; emphasize expectations of behavior from residents and staff; and implementing a reporting process which is easy to use and encourages residents to step forward. To read more about older adult bullying and how to prevent it, click here:

<http://www.seniorhomes.com/p/bullying-in-senior-living-communities/>.

Article Published On Testing Of AHRQ Tool That Assesses Patient Education Materials

The Agency for Healthcare Research and Quality (AHRQ) has created a the Patient Education Materials Assessment Tool (PEMAT) to help health professionals and others to select educational materials for patients. An article examining the PEMAT's reliability has been published in the September issue of *Patient Education and Counseling*, and is available free of charge until October 15. To access the article, please click here:

<http://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/S073839911400233X>.

The PEMAT and User's Guide are available at <http://www.ahrq.gov/pemat> and are available for use with print or audiovisual material.

Video Games May Treat Depression, Anxiety

A new genre of video game may help those with depression or anxiety process negative information more effectively. Dr. Tracy Dennis, a psychology professor who created one such game, explains, "We can train an anxious person to pay less attention to threat, to pay more attention to positive things in the game and then that eventually transfers to how they look at and pay attention in the real world." These games may be used as a complementary treatment with therapy, or help reach people who are resistant to therapy. While more research is needed before these games become a regular part of treatment, the National Institute of Health has funded a study to determine the effectiveness of one of these games. For more information, please visit:

<http://abc7.com/245657/>.



Coalition News

Upcoming In-Person Trainings from the Coalition

- A Simulation of Hearing Distressing Voices
 - [9/30/14 Crawford County](#)
 - [12/4/14 Somerset County](#)
 - [3/26/15 Warren County](#)
 - More locations to be announced!
- Senior Bullying Seminar
 - [10/8/14 Dauphin County](#)
 - [11/14/14 Warren County](#)
 - [12/2/14 Montgomery County](#)
 - [3/18/15 Centre County](#)
 - [4/29/15 Allegheny County](#)
 - TBD Erie County
 - [6/2/15 Lackawanna County](#)
- Understanding the Psychiatric Issues of Dementia
 - [11/17/14 Centre County](#)
- Alzheimer's Disease Training
 - [10/20/14 Centre County](#)
 - [11/5/14 Dauphin County](#)
 - [12/3/14 Montgomery County](#)

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) 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.

Previous copies of PBHAC's News You Can Use are available on the website at www.olderPA.org/newsletter

