



## News You Can Use...

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October 2014

### October is National Bullying Prevention Month

Did you know bullying occurs at any age? Bullying is not only a problem in schools, but also in the workplace, retirement communities, and adult day centers. 10-20% of older adults have experienced bullying, and it can occur between peers or involve staff. Bullying is not only distressing for the victim, but can cause stress for witnesses as well. For a list of bullying resources, including resources targeted towards older adults and senior housing, please visit <http://www.nccdp.org/resource-bullying.htm>.

Visit [www.olderpa.org](http://www.olderpa.org) to see a list of Senior Bullying Seminar training dates and locations.

### Pennsylvania Homecare Association 2014 Gubernatorial and State Senate Voter Guide

The Pennsylvania Homecare Association (PHA) asked each candidate for Senate, "Given Pennsylvania's growing elderly population, what changes would you suggest in the way the Commonwealth cares for its seniors?" Candidates for governor received four questions related to aging issues in Pennsylvania. The received responses are unedited and available in a pdf at [http://www.pahomecare.org/files/live/2014\\_Voter\\_Guide.pdf](http://www.pahomecare.org/files/live/2014_Voter_Guide.pdf). This resource is intended to assist voters in becoming better informed. Election Day is November 4, 2014, absentee ballots are due by October 31, 2014.

### Department of Public Welfare renamed Department of Human Services

On September 24, Governor Corbett signed into law Act 132 of 2014, changing the name of the Department of Public Welfare to the Department of Human Services. The Act also establishes a toll-free DHS fraud tip line and includes a transition period to limit costs of the change. The Act will take effect 60 days from signing. The full document can be viewed at



<http://www.legis.state.pa.us/cfdocs/billinfo/billinfo.cfm?sYear=2013&sInd=0&body=H&type=B&bn=0993>.

## **Malnutrition Among Elders Undetected in ER**

Dr. Timothy Platts-Mills found that over half of emergency room patients aged 65 and older were malnourished or approaching malnourishment. Although the routine screening given to emergency room patients includes malnourishment, none of the patients that Platts-Mills identified had screened positive by the routine test. Older adult malnutrition can be caused by several factors, including depression, lack of access to food, and illnesses and medications which reduce appetite or make eating uncomfortable. Programs such as Meals On Wheels, which deliver food to homes, can help some individuals, but can be hindered by those who prefer not to have visitors or who don't want to receive aid. Other solutions to older adult malnutrition are still being explored. The full article can be read here:

<http://www.bostonglobe.com/lifestyle/health-wellness/2014/09/21/malnourishment-among-elders-undetected/hXOXkITPgFWbfPK64NDDrK/story.html>.

## **In Older Adults, Poor Sense of Smell Could Signal Sooner Death**

Using data from the National Social Life, Health, and Aging Project (NSHAP), a research team has found that a decreased sense of smell may be an indicator of earlier death. Five years after the NSHAP survey, a team evaluated the participants again. They found "39 percent of participants who scored low on the smelling test ended up dying before the second round of the survey. By contrast, only 19 percent of those with moderate smell loss and only 10 percent of those with a healthy sense of smell had passed away." Although the relationship between sense of smell and sooner death is clear, the study was unable to establish a concrete cause. Still, researchers hope that knowing of this relationship will serve as warning signs for doctors that the patient should be tested for fatal medical conditions. To read the full article, please visit

<http://blogs.discovermagazine.com/d-brief/2014/10/01/sense-smell-predict-mortality/#.VDwU3vldWSo>.

## **Department of Justice Elder Justice Initiative Website**

The United States Department of Justice recently launched the Elder Justice Initiative website, "a resource for victims of elder abuse and financial exploitation and their families; practitioners who serve them; law enforcement agencies and prosecutors; and researchers seeking to understand and address this silent epidemic plaguing our nation's elders." The website includes a Support Locator, where individuals can enter a zip code and find assistance near the given location, and an interactive map of resources by state. This resource can be accessed at <http://www.justice.gov/elderjustice/>.



## Harvard Report: Guns and Suicide: The Hidden Toll

The Harvard School of Public Health has released a report on the role of firearms in suicides. In 2010, over half of completed suicides in the United States involved firearms. The same year, 19,392 people completed suicide with a gun, versus 11,078 homicides by gun. Matthew Miller, associate director of the Harvard Injury Control Research Center, states, "The public health message is neither anti-gun nor pro-gun. It's pro-data." The report includes a profile of The Gun Shop Project, a collaboration aimed at educating retailers on signs of suicide and promoting prevention. To view the full report, please visit <http://www.hsph.harvard.edu/wp-content/uploads/sites/21/2013/05/HPHSPRING2013gunviolence.pdf>.

## Screening for Alcohol and Substance Use for Older People in Geriatric Hospital and Community Health Settings

A study published in International Psychogeriatrics examines the prevalence of alcohol and substance use among older adults in geriatric hospitals and community health settings, and evaluated the performance of their screening methods. Five screening methods were used, which indicated substance use, mood, and quality of life. Those who tested positive for substance use were further evaluated. The study found that 19.5% of those evaluated screened positive for alcohol or substance use. These individuals do not have significant demographic differences from those who were not using substances. To view the full study, please click here:

<http://journals.cambridge.org/action/displayAbstract?fromPage=online&aid=9359198&fileId=S1041610214002014>.

## Report: Dying in America: Improving Quality and Honoring Individual Preferences Near the End of Life

Those who work in or with health care, "have a responsibility to ensure that end-of-life care is compassionate, affordable, sustainable, and of the best quality possible." However, determining what is best for end-of-life care can be difficult. A new report from the Institute of Medicine (IOM) examines how to improve end-of-life care, including introducing patients to palliative care in a timely manner and limiting repeated hospitalizations or facility transfers. The recommendations also include advance care planning so the patient's wishes are outlined before they become unable to make decisions, and ensuring their wishes are followed. To view a brief, findings and recommendations, and an infographic, please visit <http://www.iom.edu/Reports/2014/Dying-In-America-Improving-Quality-and-Honoring-Individual-Preferences-Near-the-End-of-Life.aspx>.



# Coalition News

## Upcoming In-Person Trainings from the Coalition

- Understanding the Psychiatric Issues of Dementia
  - [11/17/14 Centre County](#)
- Senior Bullying Seminar
  - [11/14/14 Warren County](#)
  - [12/2/14 Montgomery County](#)
  - [3/18/15 Centre County](#)
  - [4/29/15 Allegheny County](#)
  - [5/20/15 Crawford County](#)
  - [6/2/15 Lackawanna County](#)
- Mental Health First Aid
  - [11/21/14 Montgomery County](#)
  - [4/28/15 Centre County](#)
- A Simulation of Hearing Distressing Voices
  - [11/7/14 Bradford County](#)
  - [12/4/14 Somerset County](#)
  - [3/4/15 Montgomery County](#)
  - [3/26/15 Warren County](#)
  - [5/6/15 Blair County](#)
- Medicare/Medicaid Basics for Mental Health Professionals
  - [11/7/14 Bradford County](#)
  - [12/4/14 Somerset County](#)
  - [3/4/15 Montgomery County](#)
  - [3/26/15 Warren County](#)
  - [5/6/15 Blair County](#)
- Alzheimer's Disease Training
  - [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](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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