



Pennsylvania Behavioral Health and Aging Coalition
Opening Doors for Older Pennsylvanians

News You Can Use...

August 2015

National Suicide Prevention Week - September 7-13, 2015

National Suicide Prevention Week is the Monday through Sunday surrounding World Suicide Prevention Day, September 10th. Over 800,000 people die by suicide every year worldwide, although the exact number is unknown due to underreporting and stigma. This year's theme is "Preventing Suicide: Reaching Out and Saving Lives," focusing on the role that offering support plays in preventing suicide. For the official site of World Suicide Prevention Day, please visit <https://www.iasp.info/wspd/>. To access warning signs and risk factors, trainings, and resources, please visit <http://www.suicidology.org/about-aas/national-suicide-prevention-week>.

The National Suicide Prevention Lifeline can be reached at 1-800-273-TALK (8255) or www.suicidepreventionlifeline.org.

Vaccination Rates in Older Adults Fall Short of Targets

While vaccines for influenza, pneumonia, shingles, and tetanus are cost-effective and recommended for older adults, vaccination rates are lower than the targets set by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. "Each year between five and 10 million Americans acquire pneumonia, 35 to 50 million are afflicted with influenza, and one million get shingles.... The death rate from pneumonia and influenza combined is close to 130 times higher in people ages 85 and older as compared to people ages 45 to 54." Strategies to increase vaccination rates among older adults include education, financial assistance, and incorporating vaccination schedules into electronic medical records. For the full article, click here: http://www.eurekalert.org/pub_releases/2015-07/afar-vri072915.php.

To read the full report, click here:

<http://agingresearch.org/backend/app/webroot/files/Pressroom/136/AAR%20Vaccine%20White%20Paper%20FINAL%207%2026.PDF>.



America's Over-100 Crowd is Booming

The fastest-growing segment of older adults is those aged 100 and over. 53,000 people in the United States were centenarians during the 2010 census, and the number is growing. California is home to over one-tenth of American centenarians. While genes and improved medical care extend lifespan, the most important factor is lifestyle. "In every centenarian study I've seen in the past 20 years, the data is consistent. You've got to believe in something beyond yourself. You have to take care of yourself. You've got to exercise in some way. You need to be around people and give back to your community. You have to have a purpose for getting up every day," says Cheryl Osborne, chairman of the California State University, Sacramento. For the full article, click here: <http://www.sacbee.com/news/local/article2591833.html>.

Telephone-Based Cognitive Behavioral Therapy for Anxiety in Rural Older Adults

Generalized Anxiety Disorder is one of the most common anxiety disorders in older adults. Many prefer treating their anxiety with psychotherapy over medications, but those living in rural areas may not have access to mental health services. Gretchen A. Brenes, Ph.D., of the Wake Forest School of Medicine, Winston-Salem, N.C., and coauthors delivered cognitive behavioral therapy (CBT) and nondirective supportive therapy (NST) to older adults with generalized anxiety disorder over a period of four months. While both groups showed improvement, the group experiencing CBT showed greater reduction of symptoms. These findings show technology can be an effective tool in providing underserved populations with mental health treatment. To read the full article, please visit <http://medicalxpress.com/news/2015-08-telephone-based-cognitive-behavioral-therapy-anxiety.html>.

Tiny Homes Offer Independent Living Option for Older Adults

Startup company NextDoor Homes sells or rents "tiny homes," dwellings that measure 30 feet by 8 feet and are fully wheelchair accessible, to provide affordable housing for aging or disabled adults. Each home is mobile, able to be towed with a pickup truck, and can be hooked up to standard water and electric connections. Founders John Louiselle and Jessi Lammi were inspired to develop the company after watching their grandparents make difficult choices about living arrangements. "Our goal with NextDoor Housing is to change the story for as many aging adults as possible. We want them to have options to stay in their communities and near their families. That's the bottom line for us." The houses generally sell for around \$58,000 and rent for \$1,500 a month, pricing that is comparable and sometimes cheaper than assisted-living facilities or nursing homes. For the full article, click here: <http://www.startribune.com/tiny-homes-offer-independent-living-option-for-older-adults/318874401/>.



Suicidal Ideation Higher for Cancer Survivors

In a survey of 9,000 cancer survivors, researchers found suicidal ideation was more common in cancer survivors than in the control group, even 10 to 15 years after diagnosis. Nearly 40% of those reporting suicidal thoughts were not showing other depressive symptoms, showing that depression checklists are not always effective in identifying individuals with suicidal thoughts. Among these survivors, those in poor health or with chronic pain resulting from their cancer were more likely to experience suicidal thoughts. Dr. Don Rosenstein recommends a suicide screening questionnaire and more research with survivors of suicide to determine best practices for preventing suicide in cancer survivors. To read the full article, please visit

http://www.medpagetoday.com/Psychiatry/GeneralPsychiatry/52929?xid=nl_mpt_DHE_2015-08-05&eun=g711081d0r.

Expanding Access to Palliative Care Services: The Tide is Turning

The Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS) released two announcements regarding advance care planning. The first announcement, released July 8, is a proposal to establish separate payment for advance care planning services. The second announcement, "announced the hospices selected to be a part of the Medicare Care Choices Model, a program that will expand access to home-based palliative care services to as many as 150,000 eligible Medicare beneficiaries." Previously, the Medicare hospice treatment required that patients cease curative therapies if they wanted hospice care. The new rule will allow patients to access palliative care, which is aimed at improving quality of life regardless of prognosis and can be received with curative treatments. To learn more, please visit <http://healthaffairs.org/blog/2015/08/06/expanding-access-to-palliative-care-services-the-tide-is-turning/>.

Study Links Loneliness with Cognitive Decline in Older Adults

A new study shows that loneliness is linked to cognitive decline, independent of depression. The study examined 8,300 older adults over the span of 12 years. Participants reported their demographics, social network, and levels of depression and completed a memory test every two years. The study showed that people who reported feeling lonely often experienced cognitive decline 20 times faster than their peers. Future studies will examine if the link is causal or if loneliness and cognitive decline are co-occurring symptoms of psychosocial stress. To learn more, please visit:

<http://www.healthline.com/health-news/study-links-loneliness-with-cognitive-decline-in-older-adults-072015>.



Coalition News

Upcoming In-Person Trainings from the Coalition

- Aging, Mental Health, and Chronic Illness
 - [9/30/15 Dauphin County](#)
 - [10/28/15 Centre County](#)
 - [11/4/15 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

