



Pennsylvania Behavioral Health and Aging Coalition
Opening Doors for Older Pennsylvanians

News You Can Use...

February 2016

February is Heart Month

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention and MillionHearts have partnered for this year's Heart Month initiative. This year's theme is Make Control Your Goal, a plan for individuals to know their blood pressure and, if it is high, to make control their goal. High blood pressure is the leading cause of heart disease and stroke, and it affects more than 67 million Americans. Individuals with high blood pressure are 4 times more likely to die from a stroke and 3 times more likely to die from heart disease than those with normal blood pressure. Tips to control blood pressure include asking your doctor what your blood pressure should be, taking all prescribed medications as directed, to quit smoking (or not to start), and reducing sodium intake. For additional information, resources, and tips, please visit <http://www.cdc.gov/features/heartmonth/>.

All U.S. Adults Should Be Screened for Depression, Panel Recommends

The U.S. Preventive Services Task Force (USPSTF) has released a recommendation that all adults 18 and older undergo a depression screening during doctor's visits. Karina Davidson explains, "The task force has determined that there is enough good-quality evidence to be confident that the benefits of screening for depression outweigh the harms for the general adult population, including pregnant and postpartum women.... This is because we found evidence that screening for depression in the primary care setting is accurate, that treatment for depression is effective for people detected through screening and the likelihood of harms from screening or treatments are small." USPSTF had previously made a similar recommendation in 2009, but that did not include pregnant and postpartum women due to lack of evidence. The task force admits that they are currently unsure of the optimal time for screening or how often individuals should undergo screening. For the full article, click here:

<http://www.scientificamerican.com/article/all-u-s-adults-should-be-screened-for-depression-panel-recommends/>.



Save the Date: Best Practices Forums

In 2006, the Pennsylvania Department of Aging and Department of Public Welfare's Office of Mental Health and Substance Abuse Services required Memorandums of Understanding to encourage counties to pool resources and better serve older individuals across the county and state systems. The 2016 Aging and Behavioral Health Forums, in keeping with the voice of the Memorandums of Understanding, will emphasize a multidisciplinary approach to providing services to older adults and the need for cross-system collaboration. Counties offering Mental Health and Aging Best Practice programs will be highlighted. Information on a variety of services and evidenced-based practices for older adults will be discussed.

This program is for individuals working with older adults who are at risk for developing behavioral health problems, including social workers, housing coordinators, personal care and assisted living staff, nursing home and home health care providers, County Mental Health and Behavioral Health and Aging systems who assisted in developing their county's Memorandums of Understanding, and those who actively work across systems to serve older adults.

The forums will take place from 9 am to 5 pm on May 25, 2016 in Media, PA, and on June 20, 2016 in Greensburg, PA. A flyer and registration links will be emailed in March.

Penn Starts a Café for Alzheimer's Patients and Caregivers

Genevieve Ilg, a graduate student interning with Penn Memory Center, began a memory café at Penn after reading about similar cafés in Europe and some parts of the US. These cafés are intended for informal, nonmedical gatherings for dementia patients and their caregivers, family, and friends. Dementia patients and their caregivers often find themselves socially isolated as social gatherings become more stressful and confusing for the patient, and because their social circle may be unsure how to act around them. These cafés provide a social outlet where everyone understands each other's circumstances and the behaviors that dementia can cause. Since the first American memory café opened in New Mexico in 2008, the number has grown to 200 across the country. For the full article, please visit http://articles.philly.com/2016-01-14/news/69738768_1_dementia-penn-memory-center-alzheimer#2madGdTOIx5uYgwl.99.

PA State News: DHS-OMHSAS Key Staff Changes

The Department of Human Services' Office of Mental Health and Substance Abuse Services (DHS-OMHSAS) has announced four staff changes. Effective March 7, 2016: **Ellen DiDomenico**, currently OMHSAS' Director of the Bureau of Policy, Planning, and Program Development, will transition to a new role as Special Assistant to the Secretary. **Sherry Peters** has been appointed to fill the position of OMHSAS' Director of the Bureau of Policy, Planning, and Program Development. She most recently served as Senior Policy Associate at the National Technical Assistance Center for Children's Mental Health at Georgetown University.



Shannon Fagan has been appointed to fill the position of OMHSAS Director of the Bureau of Children's Behavioral Health Services. Most recently, Shannon served as the Director of the Youth and Family Training Institute in Monroeville, PA.

Shanna Klucar joined OMHSAS as Executive Assistant to the Deputy Secretary on January 30, 2016. Shanna comes to OMHSAS with over ten years of experience in the non-profit sector, specializing in communications, stakeholder engagement, policy, and development.

New Plan to Treat Schizophrenia Is Worth Added Cost, Study Says

A study published in Schizophrenia Bulletin found that a new method of treating early schizophrenia improves quality of life for patients. "In contrast to traditional outpatient care, which generally provides only services covered by insurance, like drugs and some psychotherapy, the new program offers other forms of support, such as help with jobs and school, as well as family counseling. The program also tries to include the patients... as equals in decisions about care, including drug dosage." However, the study did not show evidence of cost savings or decreased hospitalizations, two metrics which are weighed by policymakers when making decisions about mental health guidelines. To further the use of this program, researchers will need to prove it works outside of a research setting and that the benefits outweigh the added cost. To read more, click here: http://www.nytimes.com/2016/02/01/health/new-plan-to-treat-schizophrenia-is-worth-added-cost-study-says.html?_r=1.

Computerized Approach Detects Alzheimer's with 82% Accuracy

An article published in the Journal of Alzheimer's Disease states researchers have found a way to diagnose Alzheimer's Disease through speech impairments. In addition, they have developed automated technology which increases accuracy to 82%. Four dimensions of speech impairment – semantic, acoustic, syntactic, and informational – were analyzed between a control group and those who had received a diagnosis of possible or probable Alzheimer's. Automated technology has an advantage over human testing as humans can be fooled by subconscious bias or differences in perception. In addition, automated testing is more cost-effective for patients. Further testing is needed before this technology becomes available. For the full article, please visit <http://www.mcknightsseniorliving.com/technology-developments/computerized-approach-detects-alzheimers-with-82-accuracy/article/465007/>.

Coming Soon!

PBHAC will be uploading recordings of past webinars for purchase. Stay tuned for more information on this exciting new resource!



PBHAC Releases New Cancellation Policy

The Pennsylvania Behavioral Health and Aging Coalition (PBHAC) Cancellation Policy:

- The Pennsylvania Behavioral Health and Aging Coalition (PBHAC) reserves the right to cancel an event due to low enrollment or other circumstances which would make the event non-viable.
- If PBHAC cancels an event, registrants will be offered a full refund.

Postponement: Should circumstances arise that result in the postponement of an event, registrants will have the option to either receive a full refund or transfer registration to the same event at the new, future date.

Substitutions and Cancellations: We understand that circumstances may occur to prevent you from attending the conference. If you find that you are unable to attend one of PBHAC's Conferences or Workshops, you have several options:

- Send a substitute: Substitutions can be made at any time - even onsite at the conference. (Please have the substitute bring your letter of confirmation to the registration desk)
- Refund of monies: Requests for refunds must be made in writing and received by the conference refund deadline stated on the conference registration form. (See below for cancellation policy).

Registration Cancellation by Participant:

- Unless specifically stated on registration materials, the deadline to request a refund for your registration is 5 business days before the event.
- Registration cancellations requested prior to the deadline will be eligible to receive a refund less a 10% administration fee.
- Cancellations received after the stated deadline will not be eligible for a refund.
- Refunds will not be available for registrants who choose not to attend an event.
- Cancellations will be accepted via e-mail to sarah@olderpa.org and bonnie@p4a.org, and must be received by the stated cancellation deadline.
- All refund requests must be made by the attendee/payee.
- Refund requests must include the name of the attendee and payment method.
- Registrants who cancel will not receive seminar materials
- All refunds will be processed after the conference.

These above policies apply to all PBHAC Events unless otherwise noted in the corresponding event materials. Please read all individual event information thoroughly. The Cancellation Policy can be accessed here: <http://olderpa.org/Cancellation-Policy>.



Coalition News

Upcoming In-Person Trainings from the Coalition

- Trauma Informed Care
 - [Lancaster County 3/2/16](#)
 - [Centre County 5/18/16](#)
- A Simulation of Hearing Distressing Voices
 - [Jefferson County 3/16/16](#)
 - [Cumberland County 4/27/16](#)
- Question, Persuade, Refer: Suicide Prevention
 - [Lancaster County 3/2/16](#)
 - [Westmoreland County 3/9/16](#)
 - [Jefferson County 3/16/16](#)
 - [Cumberland County 4/27/16](#)
 - [Centre County 5/18/16](#)
- Understanding Hoarding Behaviors: Assessment and Intervention
 - [Lackawanna County 4/6/16](#)
 - [Lancaster County 5/11/16](#)
 - [Clarion County 6/29/16](#)
 - [Dauphin County 9/28/16](#)
 - [Centre County 10/17/16](#)
 - [Westmoreland County 11/9/16](#)
- Issues of Substance Use and Medication Misuse in Older Adults
 - [Wayne County 3/9/16](#)
 - [Franklin County 3/23/16](#)
 - [Jefferson County 4/13/16](#)
 - [Somerset County 5/4/16](#)
 - [Montgomery County 6/1/16](#)
- ASIST Suicide Prevention Training
 - [Dauphin County 5/24-5/25/16](#)
 - [Monroe County 6/22-6/23/16](#)
- Free Webinars
 - [LGBT Older Adults: Unique Issues and Healthcare Needs 2/29/16](#)
 - [Trauma Informed Care 4/11/16](#)
- Technical Assistance Calls (Formerly GEC Calls)
 - [Click here for more information](#)



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 Deborah Allen (Deborah@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

