

CLARK COUNTY OFFICE OF AGING/NUTRITION

JANUARY/FEBRUARY 2016 NEWSLETTER



The Dangers of Hypothermia

The cold weather is upon us in Wisconsin! While some people enjoy the snow and cold and others can't wait for summer to return, none can deny that winter can produce some dangers, especially for older people. Not only are there slippery sidewalks to contend with, but also the possibility of hypothermia.

Hypothermia is a drop in body temperature that is caused by staying in a cool place for too long. This may bring to mind images of someone who is lost outside in a blizzard, but hypothermia can strike a person in their own home where the heat is turned down too low. A body temperature below 96 degrees can cause an irregular heartbeat leading to heart problems and even death, if not treated promptly. Hypothermia is especially dangerous because it happens gradually and affects your thinking. You may not even realize you need help!

As caregivers, it is important to be aware of the symptoms and risks of hypothermia as people with advanced age are especially vulnerable. When checking in on your relatives, friends or neighbors, be especially aware of the symptoms of hypothermia.

- Confusion or sleepiness
- Slowed, slurred speech or shallow breathing
- Weak pulse or low blood pressure
- Cold, pale skin
- A lot of shivering or stiffness in the arms or legs
- Chilly rooms or other signs that they have been in a cold place
- Poor control over body movements or slow reactions

If you think someone may have hypothermia, take his/her temperature and if it doesn't rise above 96 degrees, call 9-1-1. Then keep the person warm and dry by moving them to a warmer place, wrapping the person in blankets or coats or using your own body warmth by lying close to them. Do not rub their arms or legs as this can result in skin tears. Once at the emergency room, the doctor will verify the diagnosis and then warm the person's body from the inside out. It is very important that a person with hypothermia is treated by a physician.

Sometimes people are tempted to turn their thermostats down too low as a way of saving money on their energy bill, but this can result in a dangerous situation. It is essential for people keep their home warm, especially on those days and weeks where the temperatures stay near zero. To be safe, your thermostat should be set for at least 68 degrees. Even temperatures between 60 and 65 can lead to illness.

There are some things you can do to keep yourself warm and cut down on heating costs. First, you can get ideas on reducing your heating bill by calling your power or gas company for information on weatherizing your home. Ideas such as closing vents and doors to rooms you are not using can cut your energy usage. Also, wearing several layers of loose clothing will keep you warmer while tight clothing can keep your blood from flowing freely. And lastly, eating enough food to keep up your body weight can also keep you warmer. If paying for heat is a problem due to a limited income, you may qualify for help through the Energy Assistance Program. Call the Aging Office at 1-866-743-5144 for more information. May you have a happy and safe winter!

Jane Mahoney
Older American's Act Consultant
Greater Wisconsin Agency on Aging Resources



Local Businesses Become Dementia-Friendly

Janet Evans, Aging Programs Specialist

Interesting things are happening in Neillsville...two local businesses, Sniteman Pharmacy and Hansen's IGA are the first two businesses in Clark County to participate in the Dementia Friendly Communities project.

What is a Dementia-Friendly Community? It's a community where people with dementia feel safe, welcome, and included – where they can continue to do their banking, shopping, eat at the café, and attend social activities - with the respectful support of others in the community who are dementia-aware.

The original concept began in the United Kingdom around 2012, since then the idea has spread to other countries around the world including the United States. It is, in essence, a community where people with dementia are able to participate in life as fully as they can, make choices, and keep their independence as long as possible.

SOCIAL SECURITY & FINANCIAL INSTITUTION 1099's

Social Security 1099's for 2015 are set to be mailed out by January 31, 2016 to all persons who received Social Security benefits in the year 2015. Banks and other financial institutions will also be sending out their 1099's for 2015 in the month of January. These statements will show the amount of interest or dividends that were earned on bank accounts, investments or retirement accounts. These institutions have until January 31, 2016 to mail these statements.

It is very important that people have all of their 1099's before applying for Homestead Credit, Energy Assistance, Income Tax or other benefit programs.

Please put all 1099's in a safe place when you receive them. Also, be sure to bring them with you any time you are applying for a program/assistance.

PAYER CORRECTED (if checked) For assistance, call the IRS at 1-800-829-1040

New Jersey Division of Pensions and Benefits PO Box 295 Trenton, NJ 08625-0295	1 Gross distribution 00,000.00	2015 Form 1099-R	Distributions From Pensions, Annuities, Retirement or Profit-Sharing Plans, IRAs, Insurance Contracts, Etc.
	2a Taxable amount 00,000.00		
PAYER'S Federal identification number XX-XXXXXXX	2b Taxable amount not determined <input type="checkbox"/>	3 Capital gain (included in box 2a)	
Recipient's identification number XXX-XX-XXXX	Total distribution <input type="checkbox"/>		
4 Federal income tax withheld 000.00	5 Employee contributions or insurance premiums 000.00	7 Distribution code X	COPY C For Recipient's Records
9a Your percentage of total distribution	9b Total employee contributions 0,000.00	10 State tax withheld 000.00	This information is being furnished to the Internal Revenue Service
Recipient's name, address, and ZIP code A. RETIREE 123 FIRST STREET ANYTOWN, NJ 07000		11 State/Payer's state number	KEEP THIS COPY FOR YOUR RECORDS
		Account number (optional)	

←
EXAMPLE 1099



INCOME TAX ASSISTANCE

The Clark County Aging Office is working with AARP representatives to set up dates to provide free income tax assistance for residents of Clark County age 60+.

Persons who would like assistance with simple (no farm or business) income tax forms should contact the Aging office at 715.743.5144 to inquire about setting up an appointment.

- Items to bring for tax preparation
- Social Security card and 2015 SSA 1099
 - All 1099s for interest, dividends, retirement payments, stocks, bonds, etc.
 - Amount spent for health insurance premiums
 - Affordable Care Act records – if you were on a Marketplace insurance plan
 - Amount spent on Medical co-pays and prescriptions
 - Amount donated to charities
 - Completed rent certificate or property tax bill
 - Last year's tax forms
 - Checking account routing number or savings account number (not a deposit slip)

HOMESTEAD

Homestead Credit is available to assist people in meeting the rising cost of property taxes and rental payments. The amount of Homestead Credit received by an individual is determined by mathematical computation of taxes or rental costs versus gross income. The gross income limit to qualify for this program is \$24,680. If your income is below \$24,680 and you pay property tax or rent your home, you **may** qualify for the Homestead Tax Credit. The Clark County Aging Office will assist clients 60+ years of age with Homestead Tax Credit applications beginning **February 1, 2016**.

It is very important that applicants have ALL necessary paperwork and verifications if the Aging Office is assisting you with your application.

- ✓ **Completed Rent Certificate (from land lord) OR Property Tax Bill**
- ✓ **Applicants maintaining a life lease or life estate on their residence are required to provide a copy of that document.**
- ✓ **Statements/1099's of any and all 2015 income for applicant/spouse: wages, Social Security Benefits, SSI, interest, dividends, pensions, IRAs, CDs, etc.**
- ✓ **Regular bank statements are not an acceptable form of verification. The only exception is for persons receiving Supplemental Security Income (SSI). If you receive SSI please bring a bank statement from 2015.**

The Aging Office will also review the possibility of adding a Medical deduction to applications. Applicants will be able to deduct their Medicare Part B, Medicare Part D (Not Wisconsin Senior Care) and Medicare supplemental insurance payments from any taxable income they may be received. **Please have verification of insurance payments with you at the time you apply so that a determination can be made if any deduction may be used.**

Application Assistance will begin February 1, 2016. This service will be offered at the Aging Office in Neillsville and nutrition sites during scheduled staff outreach visits. Homebound elders (confined to home) may call the Aging Office to schedule a home visit. The visits will be done when staff is in the area, usually following a nutrition site visit. The site visit schedule is on the following page.

Inclement weather conditions

During winter months, the weather can be unpredictable. If there is a snow storm or icy roads, it is possible that staff will not be able to get to the outreach sites to assist with Homestead Credit applications. If this occurs, an alternate date will be arranged. If schools are closed due to severe weather conditions, all nutrition sites will be closed and Homestead outreach will be cancelled. If weather conditions are questionable, please call the Aging Office to confirm whether or not staff will be able to make to the outreach site that day.

HOMESTEAD CREDIT ASSISTANCE SCHEDULE FOR PERSONS AGE 60+

APPLICATIONS ARE TAKEN ON A FIRST COME, FIRST SERVE BASIS STARTING FEBRUARY 1ST

Abbotsford – Green Vista	February 24	10:30 a.m.
Valley Crest	February 24	10:30 a.m.
Colby	February 23	10:30 a.m.
Dorchester	February 3, March 2	10:30 a.m.
Kennedy Apts	February 3	Approx 1pm
Granton	February 11	11:00 a.m.
Greenwood	February 16	10:30 a.m.
Loyal	February 22	10:30 a.m.
Neillsville	February 9	11:30 a.m.
Neillsville – Aging Office	Monday-Friday	8:30am-4pm
Owen	February 4, March 3	10:30 a.m.
Withee Apts	February 4	Approx 2pm
Thorp	February 2, March 1	10:30 a.m.
Morgan Plaza	February 2	Approx 2pm

ENERGY ASSISTANCE APPLICATIONS

The Aging Office will continue to assist persons age 60+ with energy assistance applications.

Applicants may come to the office at the courthouse in Neillsville (Room 201) Monday-Friday from 8:30am-4pm or to one of the nutrition sites when a staff member is there. Please have all identification, income, and fuel and electric account numbers with you when applying.

GENERAL ENROLLMENT FOR MEDICARE PART B

Persons who did not sign up for benefits under Medicare Part B when they turned age 65, now have the opportunity to do so during the general enrollment period (GEP) from January 1 - March 31, 2016.

You are eligible to sign up during the GEP if you did not sign up for Part B when you turned 65 or had Part B coverage at one time, but for whatever reason, discontinued your enrollment. Persons who sign up during the GEP will have coverage beginning July 1, 2016.

Those interested in enrolling in Part B or getting more information should call the Wausau Social Security Office at 1-855-269-9186 or contact Amy Nigon at 715-743-5146.

JANUARY IS NATIONAL SOUP MONTH

WILD RICE MUSHROOM SOUP RECIPE FROM MAYO CLINIC

YIELD: 4 servings

Ingredients

- 1 tablespoon olive oil
- Half a white onion, chopped
- 1/4 cup chopped celery
- 1/4 cup chopped carrots
- 1 1/2 cups sliced fresh white mushrooms
- 1/2 cup white wine, or 1/2 cup low-sodium, fat-free chicken broth
- 2 1/2 cups low-sodium, fat-free chicken broth
- 1 cup fat-free half-and-half
- 2 tablespoons flour
- 1/4 teaspoon dried thyme
- Black pepper
- 1 cup cooked wild rice

Dietitian's tip:

A variety of mushrooms — portabella, shitake, oyster, chanterelle, cremini or porcini — will work in this soup. Each type has its own unique flavor. They all have about the same number of calories.

Directions

Put olive oil in stockpot and bring to medium heat. Add chopped onion, celery and carrots. Cook until tender. Add mushrooms, white wine and chicken broth. Cover and heat through.

In a bowl, blend half-and-half, flour, thyme and pepper. Then stir in cooked wild rice. Pour rice mixture into hot stockpot with vegetables. Cook over medium heat. Stir continually until thickened and bubbly. Serve warm.

Nutritional analysis per serving

Serving size :About 1 1/2 cups

Total carbohydrate 23 g

Dietary fiber 2 g

Sodium 120 mg

Saturated fat 1 g

Total fat 5 g

Cholesterol 3 mg

Protein 8 g

Monounsaturated fat 3 g

Calories 170

Trans fat 0 g

Sugars 0 g



Medicare part B & Veteran's Benefits

by the GWAAR Legal Services Team

Many veterans receive some type of health coverage from the U.S. Department of Veteran's Affairs. Consequently, many veterans believe that they have adequate health coverage, and they do not want to pay a monthly premium to enroll in Medicare Part B. Generally, Medicare Part A provides "hospital insurance," which covers most hospital and skilled nursing care (hospital inpatient deductible and coinsurance may apply). Part B provides "medical insurance" covering most doctor's services, outpatient hospital services, durable medical equipment, and ambulance services (deductible and coinsurance may apply). Enrolling in Part B gives veterans access to non-VA providers. You have the right not to enroll in Medicare Part B; however, the risks associated with that decision may not be worth the short-term cost savings. Even if you save money now, you may be subject to Part B premiums penalties later on. Below are additional issues that you may face if you chose not to enroll in Part B.

1. You will be subject to the General Enrollment Period if you decide to enroll in Medicare Part B in the future. Enrollment in Part B is only allowed during January, February, and March of each year, and Medicare coverage does not begin until July of that same year. For example, if you need Part B in May 2016, you will have to wait until January 2017 (the following year) to enroll in Part B, and your coverage would not be effective until July 2017. In this case, you would have a 14 month gap in coverage. Even in the most ideal circumstance (you need Part B coverage during the General Enrollment Period), you would have a gap in your coverage for 3-6 months.
2. You will be subject to a late enrollment penalty of 10% for every 12 months that you were eligible for Medicare Part B and did not enroll. Even if you have veteran's benefits, this penalty will accrue.
3. Veteran's health benefits are given based on "priority groups." However, there is no guarantee that Congress will continue to appropriate funds to cover each priority group. So, if your group does not receive adequate funding, your benefits could be impacted — this is of special concern to those who are in low priority groups. If your priority group loses funding and you did not enroll in Part B, you would only have Medicare Part A; you would not have Medicare Part B medical insurance.

While the Part B premium is an additional monthly expense, you should very carefully consider the risks of deferring Part B. Veterans who receive VA health coverage and who have questions about how VA coverage works with Medicare should contact the Clark County Veterans Service Office at 715-743-5160 and Amy Nigon, EBS at 715-743-5146 to find out more information.

February 15th



Interfaith Volunteer Caregivers of Clark County

By Judy Morrow



Kindness is more than deeds. It is an attitude, an expression, a look, a touch. It is anything that lifts another person. ~Neil Strait

Having said that, we need to give a big thank you to the Neillsville High School History Club that has taken ten homes to shovel snow for this winter. These young people are definitely living kindness with their good deeds.

On another kind note, Interfaith is in need of volunteers on the Northern end of the county. We are being asked to help our elderly in minor ways but do not have the person power to help out. If you would like to volunteer please call 715-743-2885. When you volunteer, you can decide how often, how much and what you would like to do. All volunteers are respected of their time that is available for them to volunteer.

One need that is seen over and over again - Elderly being taken to the doctor with no one to be with them. How wonderful it would be if we had volunteers who could take or could meet folks at the doctor. Everyone likes to have an advocate when they are at the doctor. These fine folks do not have family that can go with them. If this is something that interests you please call 715-743-2885. You will be appreciated!!!!

Happy Groundhog Day!



Groundhog Fun Fact

According to Scientific American, the term "woodchuck" has nothing to do with chuckin' wood, but rather stems from the Algonquin name for the animal, *wuchak*. In fact, their diets mostly consist of plants, fruits and tree bark.

Recognizing and Avoiding Elder Financial Abuse by Strangers

by the GWAAR Legal Services Team

Every year many elders fall victim to financial scams by strangers resulting in the loss of billions of dollars — life savings, personal investments, property, and more. These scams come in many forms from the phone call stating that a loved one is in distress to the multimillion dollar grand prize that only requires an advanced fee payment. Regardless of the mechanism used to target elders, the scammers' end goal is the same — gain trust and extract as much money as possible. Scams like these are considered a form of elder financial abuse, which encompasses a broad range of conduct such as taking money or property, forging signatures, or using property or possessions without permission. Here's one example:

“Mary” received a call stating that her grandson had been involved in criminal activity abroad. She unwittingly provided the caller with more information when another man got on the phone and, thinking it was her grandson, she asked, “Mark is that you?” The callers now knew her grandson’s name and said Mark hit a pedestrian while driving. One man claiming to be Mark’s attorney stated that he needed money to cover Mark’s legal fees or Mark would go to jail. They told Mary not to tell anyone or Mark would be in more trouble. Over the course of two weeks, Mary followed the explicit directions she received by phone eventually sending over \$60,000 via her bank account and green dot cards. She depleted her entire savings account and tried to apply for a loan against her paid-off house. A bank manager felt something was awry and spoke to Mary. She eventually explained to the manager what happened, and he told her she was being scammed. The manager called her son to confirm that her grandson Mark was okay. Unfortunately, authorities were not able to recover Mary’s money, but the perpetrator was later caught scamming other elders and is awaiting trial.

Anyone can fall victim to a scam like this, but seniors are particularly vulnerable for a number of reasons. For example, seniors may generally be more trusting, may have cognitive impairments, may be isolated, or may have other pressures like the loss of a relative. There is an entire network of criminals who purposely prey on elders and their vulnerabilities to extract money over a prolonged period. Therefore, it is important to be alert and help the seniors in your life be vigilant when it comes to money, accounts, and personal information.

What to look for in a scam?

Although there are some patterns in scams, scams come in a variety of forms. Overall, it is important that you do more research or talk to a relative or friend if you receive a phone call or mail requesting money or personal information or you

are approached by a stranger offering services. Here are some common scenarios:

A caller you have never spoken to and do not know. This person will say s/he is affiliated with what seems to be a legitimate company or organization and will wait for cues from you. The caller will wait for you to mention personal details and copy things you say to make you feel s/he is trustworthy or knows details about you. In our example, Mary mentioned her grandson's name, Mark, making it easy for the scammer to sound like he personally knew Mark.

When you receive a phone call from a stranger, get as many details from the caller as possible and check — or have someone else check — into the caller's credentials. The caller might threaten you and say you will lose the offer if you hang up, but, if the deal is not legit, you could lose a lot more.

Caller asks you to wire money, buy green dot cards (or equivalents), or deposit checks. You should never wire or send money to a stranger. It does not matter what the caller is offering or what the caller says. If the caller says you have a relative in peril, call other family members first. It is unlikely that a complete stranger will call you with news about your family without other family members being aware of the same news. In the story above, if Mark were truly in trouble, his parents would likely have known.

Mass mailing. Mass mailings sometimes have a personalized product or service offer. However, if the mail-in form seeks personal information and/or asks for a credit card or small fee, don't do it. Never send your personal information through the mail. If the mail seems like it came from a legitimate source, call, or have someone call, to verify that the company is real and if they requested your personal information.

A person who offers some type of service at what seems to be a good price. If anyone approaches you offering a service such as fixing people will scam elders by pretending they are offering a deal, but in actuality they are hiking up their prices or trying to gain access to personal information. Examples of services - a new roof, paving a driveway, or doing your taxes. Do not accept services or sign a contract for services until you are able to research the person and determine what similar professionals charge for the service.

Pay attention to signs from the elders in your life.

Secrecy: Suddenly, the elder becomes very secretive. This sign is very important because often scammers explicitly direct elders not to tell anyone else about what is going on. These directions to remain quiet can be simple threats ("If you tell anyone, you will lose the grand prize.") to something perceived way more seriously ("Your grandson will go to jail if you do not wire the money by

tomorrow.”). In our example, Mary kept quiet because she legitimately believed Mark was in trouble and would be in more trouble if she told anyone.

Withdrawals and transfers: You recognize the elder suddenly, frequently withdrawing small or large sums of money or making transfers between accounts.

Waiting for the phone: The elder is suddenly waiting for the phone to ring all of the time. Many times, scammers are extracting money over a prolonged period. To continue to extract money, scammers will generally have to make repeated calls to elders with more instructions on where to send money, like they did with Mary.

New friends: New “close friends” arrive suddenly and no one in the family knows them. In particular friends that are made on Facebook or other social media websites.

How can you prevent scams?

Speak out. Many seniors do not report incidents of financial exploitation because they may feel embarrassed or may not even know they have been scammed. If you or an elder you know has been the victim of a financial abuse, it is important to share the story to alert other seniors and to encourage them not to feel embarrassed by the experience. Speaking out about personal experiences also helps other seniors know what signs to look for if they receive a phone call or something in the mail looking for money or personal information.

Talk to someone else. Although some stories may seem incredulous in hindsight, the stories are very believable at the time due to any of the aforementioned reasons. Therefore, it is important to talk to family or friends if you, or someone you know, is approached by a stranger or receive a phone call from a stranger instructing you to send money, especially if the caller says not to tell anyone. That way, if it is a legitimate transaction, the caller can be properly vetted by relatives or friends. If it is a scam, you, relatives, or friends will be able to help alert authorities and help alert other seniors.

Don't Judge. Be supportive if someone you know falls victim to a financial scam. He or she is likely already embarrassed or humiliated, so don't compound those feelings. Scams can happen to anyone.

Don't think it can't happen to you. When you don't feel something like this can happen to you, you let your guard down and do not properly research or vet people, which in turn makes you more vulnerable. The key is to keep your guard up. If an offer is legitimate, it will withstand the vetting process.

Local Scam Alert

Clark County residents have continued to receive calls from persons or an automated system claiming to be the IRS (Internal Revenue Service). The caller often states that the person they're calling owes money to the IRS and will be arrested if money is not paid out. Do not give your personal or financial information out to these callers. Hang up the phone! If the IRS needs to contact you, they will do so by sending you written correspondence though the mail.

Valentine's Day Word Search

Find the hidden words associated with St. Valentine's Day.

K O C X X D L E C N H F F R I M T E
G D B A I V A U W S V A M O U R J W
W G W O P U P P A R R P U P V R B K
K F I S P I Y A D E S O C G U U B G
S U L F D X D S A W D D M B W O L X
S D F W T S C S R O R S F E G M B T
S O E B A S S I L L A N F L O A E W
W M W A S P K O I F C U W O T R J Q
E X M G R B P N N N E N F V Z A I N
E L S Y S E Z E G F I G I E F P C O
T I X G T G S Q Q C J K A D F C U W
H Q A W V S U T Z T U P C R S N U F
E P H P T L E N G A P M A H C V R R
A Q S R U E Z V E O E C F K J L K P
R P A N E B J B O P T C I U C X Y I
T E U O A D J W N R V J N A H O C V
H C C H O C O L A T E M N A X B V W
F V A L E N T I N E A D C A M T B O
V E V O L B Z J A N Y T K F R O Q F
P X I T N R F E V O L E U R T H R E
H C N O W S M E O P Y X E K W D J O

AMOUR
BEAU
BELOVED
CANDY
CARDS
CHAMPAGNE
CHOCOLATE
CUPID
DARLING
DEAREST
FLOWERS
GIFTS
HEARTS
LOVE
PARAMOUR
PASSION
POEMS
ROMANCE
ROMEO
SWEETHEART
TRUELOVE
VALENTINE

What Hospice is Not

Although many people are beginning to understand more about hospice, there are still many misunderstandings – let's review what hospice is *not*:

- **Hospice is *not* a place.** Hospice *is* a way of providing care wherever the patient lives – at their own private home, nursing home or other residential setting. The team helps people live their remaining time with as much comfort and dignity as possible.
- **Hospice is *not* a death bed service for people in the last 48 hours of life.** Hospice *is* a comprehensive care program for patients and families which emphasizes quality of life and is most effective when a patient begins receiving services early after learning there are no more viable curative treatments.

Hospice is *not* for everyone. Some people choose hospice because it helps them meet their own goals and is consistent with their values and needs. Hospice provides care to people of all ages, wherever they live – if they choose.

- **Hospice is *not* just for cancer patients.** Hospice *is* available to people of any age, race, sex or religion who have been told their condition is terminal (that they have 6 months or less to live), regardless of what that illness or condition is.
- **Hospice is *not* a resignation to hopelessness and helplessness.** Hospice *is* a way to deal realistically and humanely with one of the great challenges of human life. The hospice team offers a new perspective on hope.
- **Hospice is *not* a substitute for the family.** Hospice helps families care for their loved one where they live. Through education and support, the family is empowered to provide the care their loved one needs at home, and can provide backup as needed.
- **Hospice is *not* expensive.** Hospice emphasizes cost savings by keeping the patient at home, cared for by the family. Medicare, Medicaid and most private insurance companies provide funding for hospice care, and Ministry will not turn anyone away based on inability to pay.

**If you or your loved one is in need of holistic, compassionate end-of-life care, please call
Ministry Home Care at 800.397.4216.**

Our compassionate staff are available to discuss options for care with you.

Thorp area

Free Blood Pressure Checks Offered

Ministry Home Care is providing free blood pressure checks at Morgan Plaza in **Thorp** on the third Tuesday of every other month. The next BP Check will be held Tuesday, February 16, 11:30 a.m. - 12:30 p.m. No appointment is necessary, and there is no cost. For more information, call Ministry Home Care at 800.397.0270.

"Tell me more about LOW VISION"



Your eyesight is a complex sense. Vision is made up of your ability to see contrasts and sharpness of detail, and to evaluate the location of objects in the environment. Changes in vision are usually corrected by glasses or contact lenses. If you have been told by your eye care professional that your vision cannot be fully corrected by ordinary prescription lenses, medical treatment, or surgery, and you still have some usable vision, you may have what is called "low vision."

What causes low vision?

Low vision can result from natural aging or specific eye conditions, such as cataracts, macular degeneration, glaucoma, and diabetic retinopathy, or from a stroke.

If you have low vision, you may experience one or more of the symptoms below.

- overall blurred vision
- loss of central or center vision
- loss of peripheral or side vision

You should also be aware of the signs that can signal vision loss. Listed below are some items, that even with your regular glasses, you may find difficulty doing.

- recognizing objects at a distance (street signs or bus signs)
- differentiating colors (particularly in the green-blue-violet range)
- seeing well up close (reading or cooking)

Having "low vision" is not the same as being "blind." For example, your doctor may tell you that you have a blind or blank spot in the center of your vision that limits your ability to read or see people's faces; nevertheless, you can still get around using your side (or peripheral) vision. This is one reason a regular dilated eye exam should be part of your routine health care.

Is There Treatment For Low Vision?

There are rehabilitation programs, low vision aids and technology available to help those diagnosed with low vision. There are also agencies and groups within our communities that provide assistance and information on low vision to people, families and caregivers. For more information on Low Vision, or community programs that aid people with Low Vision, contact your eye health provider.

Dr. Andy Baldus is an optometrist with HealthView Eye Care Center-Colby. 715.223.4003.

Mental Health in Clark County

In September, a group of University of Wisconsin-Eau Claire nursing students partnered with the Clark County Public Health Department, Clark County Office of Aging and Clark County Community Services in order to complete a mental health project. The Clark County Mental Health Taskforce had previously surveyed the residents of Clark County and found that 25.2% had concern about mental health and 57.1% of county organizations had concern about mental health. Clark County coordinated this project to assess the mental health needs of the senior population of the county. The county wanted to know if individuals were aware of the mental health services available to them, if they are using them, and what new resources may be beneficial.



As some of you know, the nursing students visited the Thorp Senior Center, Dorchester Village Hall, and the Loyal Hometown Village during October and November in order to survey individuals and gain insight. 101 completed surveys were received. Out of those surveys, 48% of individuals who took the survey were between the ages of 80 and 89, 78% were female, and the greatest percentage (36%) were living in an assisted living setting, public housing or elderly communities.

Survey participants were asked what would be considered a mental health need. Depression (69%), Alzheimer's disease (53%), and loneliness (52%) were considered the top mental health needs. This shows that individuals have a good understanding of some mental health needs.

Another questions asked participants they have experienced any of the following symptoms of mental health issues in the past year. 47% reported not having the energy to do what they want, 38% reported that they stay alone a lot of the time, and 35% stated that they have experienced a loss of someone or something they love. It is important to realize these feelings are common and individuals are not alone or abnormal to experience these symptoms.

Individuals were asked if they knew how to contact several different mental health and health care resources including Clark County Community services and satellite clinics and if they had ever contacted them before. 45% of individuals knew how to contact Clark County Community Services and their satellite clinics, but 18% had ever used their services. The telephone number for Clark County Community Services is 715-743-5208. This is a



only

great resource, and there are many other helpful resources listed in the county's new "Mental Health Resource" brochure.

Other questions asked were: "What community services or events do you attend?" and "What kinds of activities or services would you like to see offered in the area?" There



were a lot of different activities that individuals took part in from, bingo and cards, to meals and volunteering. It is great to see that individuals are attending events. Some individuals who responded stated they didn't attend community events because they were unable to or they didn't have necessary transportation.

Suggestions and changes included exercise groups, different classes, and various games, such as bingo and cards. Activity suggestions will also be shared with the Clark County Mental Taskforce.

Transportation was the greatest resource concern. Taxi services and driver opportunities are available throughout Clark County. To make individuals more aware of these services, they have now been added to the new "Mental Health Resource" Brochure. Included below are some of the available resources.



Thank you to everyone who participated in this process! The UWEC nursing students appreciate your time spent completing the surveys to make the study possible. Mental health is a very common issue. Mental health assistance is possible to reach. Please look for the "Mental Health Resources" brochure in the near future!

Transportation Options Available:

Volunteer Transportation Program: 1-866-743-5233—For individuals 60+ or those with disabilities; non-emergent medical transportation

Medical Transportation Management, Inc.: 1-866-907-1493—Free for Medicaid Users

Neillsville Taxi: 1-715-743-4600—for those within a 5-mile radius around Neillsville

Clark County Taxi: 1-715-743-3364 or 1-800-236-8438

Interfaith Caregivers of Clark County: 1-715-743-2885—Individuals 60+; transportation to local appointments, shopping, banking, pharmacy & church services

Office of Aging & Nutrition Transportation: 1-866-743-5144—Transportation to local nutrition centers with notice

*For more information visit <http://www.co.clark.wi.us/>

NEWSLETTER COMMENTS BY MARY

Included in this newsletter is a summary of services provided by the Clark county Aging & Nutrition Program for the period of October 1, 2014 thru September 30, 2015. There are 7,598 folks age 60 and older in Clark County. 11.3% of Clark County's population age 65 and older has incomes below the poverty level. I thought you might be interested in the services provided by our agency. In addition, the Elder Benefit Specialist served 443 clients and had informational contacts with 333 other individuals.

Feel free to contact our office if we can be of assistance. Our local phone number is 715-743-5144 or for long distance calls use our toll free number 1-866-743-5144.

If you are looking for information and assistance for older adults, adults with disabilities (age 18-59), and their caregivers call the Aging & Disability Resource Center of Buffalo, Clark, & Pepin Counties- Clark Satellite Office locally at 715-743-5166 or toll free 1-866-578-2372. In addition to providing information and assistance the staff can evaluate your current needs and help provide options available to meet the needs of your personal situation, and assist with referrals to other agencies based on customers' requests and needs.

MENTAL HEALTH

101 seniors participated in the Mental health Survey conducted by a group of University of Wisconsin-Eau Claire nursing students this past fall. We are enclosing the final report in this newsletter. Please take the time to read the project survey results. The study showed many of the participants had an awareness of what would be considered a mental health need. The group developed a pamphlet outlining resources available to folks.



HOMESTEAD CREDIT

As Amy mentioned in another part of this newsletter, we will start assisting folks age 60 and over with Homestead Credit applications. Please bring the necessary documentation with you. Our office will start assisting with application February 1st. It is complicated if you forget to bring some documents and have to file an amended return. If you have income that you did not report, you may have to return a portion of your homestead claim. So be sure you have all the documents when we initially complete your application.

CLARK COUNTY AGING DEPARTMENT



Clark County is a rural county whose current population is 34,691 persons of which 22% or 7,598 individuals are age 60 or older. 35.3% of all households in Clark County have 1 or more persons age 60 years or older. 11.3% of persons age 65 or older who live in Clark County live in poverty compared to 7.6% state wide. 23% of our elderly population is age 80 or older (1,728).

Disabled data: According to the 2000 census, there are 2,506 (15%) persons ages 21-64 and 1,938 (38.8%) individuals age 65 and older who have a disability. 15.1% of the disabled age 16-64 live in poverty.

Agency summary report: Clark County services 10/01/14-9/30/15

<u>SERVICE:</u>	<u># CONSUMERS/GROUPS</u>	<u>UNITS OF SERVICE</u>	<u># IN POVERTY</u>
Homemaker	6/0	284	
Chore- regular	4/14	73	
-Seasonal	57/24	197	3
Home delivered meals	478/0	64,165	148 (21,549 meals)
Congregate meals	233/0	11,067	61 (4,007 meals)
Transportation services	5/0	294	
Nutrition Education	32/3,714	3,788	10
Information & Assistance	817/1638	7,434	151
Public Information	0/11,805	10	10 (newsletter)
Temporary respite	3	485	
Respite Care	37	2,523	7
Advocacy/leadership	31	73	10
Insurance benefit programs			
Insurance	8	8	1

Finance Counseling	1	1	1
Homestead Credit	196	207	72
Senior Care	77	78	7
Tax Aide	1	1	(missing #)
Phone discount	4	4	2
Fuel	172	172	45
Total service	362	471	104
Health Promotion programs	12	57	2
Assisted devices (loan closet)	53	75	9
Living Well w/ chronic conditions	7	34	1
Home Safety/lifeline	6	40	4
Recreation (cards, bingo, etc.)	142	4,796	29
Alzheimer's Support Group	7	7	(not all inc.)
Counseling	8	26	
Farmer's Market Vo.	187	187	69
Informational Services: (meetings, presentations,	0/6,403		
Access Services (I&A)	6/59	59	
TOTAL UNDUPLICATED	1,557/23,338	96,555	356

ELDER BENEFIT SPECIALIST SERVICES: (SEPARATE REPORTING): calendar year 2014

(Most current 12month period available)

443 unduplicated clients

333 contacts which were informational only and not opened for services

Monetary impact: \$835,692.22



Virtual Dementia Tour

Northcentral Technical College and Second Wind Dreams are pleased to present the Virtual Dementia Tour.

The Virtual Dementia Tour is designed to give participants an up-close, hands-on experience that provides critical insight to those caring for dementia and creates an understanding that results in more empathetic care.

When someone is diagnosed with dementia, it affects everyone: the family, friends, long-term care setting, hospitals and surrounding community. The Virtual Dementia Tour helps shed light on some of the seemingly inappropriate and at times difficult behaviors exhibited by those with dementia. It also gives a feel for why a person may get agitated and what can be done to lessen the likelihood of agitation.

Below are the components of the tour, along with the medical issues they represent:

- **Shoe inserts** – Neuropathies (numbness, weakness, feeling of needles) and arthritis
- **Glasses** – Glaucoma, macular degeneration
- **Gloves (both non-sterile and cotton)** – Arthritis and loss of fine motor skills
- **Headphones** – Mind chatter and how noise affects the dementia mind



Virtual Dementia Tour - Community Event

Date: Tuesday, February 2, 2016

Time: 6:30 a.m. - 3:00 p.m..

Location: Clark County Rehab & Living Center
Room #

Virtual Dementia Tour - Community Event

Date: Wednesday, February 3, 2016

Time: 10:00 a.m. - 4:00 p.m.

Location: Clark County Rehab & Living Center
Room #

WHY IS THE VIRTUAL DEMENTIA TOUR IMPORTANT?

An estimated 5.3 million Americans of all ages have Alzheimer's disease as of 2015. When you walk in an elder's shoes, the empathy and patience you feel toward them is immediate.

68 Alzheimer's disease is diagnosed every 68 seconds in the United States alone

7 of **10**

Alzheimer's disease patients live at home where family and friends provide 78 percent of the care

6TH Alzheimer's disease is the 6th leading cause of death in the United States

SECOND WIND DREAMS®



VIRTUAL DEMENTIA TOUR®
YOUR WINDOW INTO THEIR WORLD



TO SCHEDULE A TOUR Contact Kristin Gruna at 715.803.1947 or gruna@ntc.edu

Northcentral Technical College does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex, disability or age in employment, admissions or its programs or activities. The following person has been designated to handle inquiries regarding the College's nondiscrimination policies: Equal Opportunity Officer, Northcentral Technical College, 1000 W. Campus Drive, Wausau, WI 54401. Phone: 715.803.1057

www.ntc.edu

WISCONSIN DO NOT CALL REGISTRY

How do I register for the Wisconsin Do Not Call Registry?

[Register online](#) or call from the phone you are registering: 1-888-382-1222 (TTY: 1-866-290-4236).

Residential cell phones, landlines, and VoIP numbers are eligible for registry.

After you register, your phone number will show up on the registry by the next day. Telemarketers covered by the Do Not Call Registry have up to 31 days from the date you register to stop calling you. If you receive a call from a telemarketer after 31 days, file a complaint.

Why do I get calls when I'm on the registry?

The [Do Not Call Registry](#) is a tool to reduce the number and frequency of unwanted calls. Some businesses or organizations are permitted by law to call numbers on the registry, including:

- Organizations with which you have established a business relationship
- Organizations you have given prior consent to contact you
- Tax-exempt nonprofit organizations
- Noncommercial calls such as polls, surveys and political messages
- Calls made to a number listed in the current local business telephone directory
- Calls made by an individual acting on his or her own behalf and not as an employee or agent of any other person

Robocalls

If you answer the phone and hear a recorded message instead of a live person, it's a robocall. You've probably gotten robocalls about candidates running for office, or charities asking for donations. These robocalls are allowed. But if the recording is a sales message and you haven't given your permission to get calls from the company on the other end, the call is illegal. In addition to the phone calls being illegal, their pitch most likely is a scam.

WHY AM I GETTING SO MANY ROBOCALLS?

Technology is the answer. Companies are using auto dialers that can send out thousands of phone calls every minute for an incredibly low cost. The fraudulent companies that use this technology don't bother to screen for numbers on the Do Not Call Registry. If a company doesn't care about obeying the law, you can be sure they're trying to scam you.

What should I do about robocalls?

- Hang up the phone. Don't press 1 to speak to a live operator and don't press any other number to get your number off the list. If you respond by pressing any number, it will probably just lead to more robocalls.
- Consider contacting your phone provider and asking them to block the number, and whether they charge for that service. Remember that telemarketers change Caller ID information easily and often, so it might not be worth paying a fee to block a number that will change.
- Report the violation online or call the Consumer Protection Hotline at 1-800-422-7128.

Do Not Text Me

Wisconsin law protects cell phone users from unwanted texts. If your cell phone number is on the Do Not Call Registry, unsolicited text sales pitches are illegal. The same exceptions apply to texting.

Report Violations

The Bureau of Consumer Protection is committed to ensuring that Wisconsin's Do Not Call law is enforced. If you are on the Do Not Call Registry and you get a call from a telemarketer 31 days after you registered your number, [file a complaint](#) at <https://mydatcp.wi.gov/Complaints/complaint/create/1443c589-da19-e511-af89-0050568c06ae> or call 1-800-422-7128.

Please provide as much information as you can, including the name of the telemarketing company, the location from which they are calling, the name of the person calling, the phone number and the product or service they called to sell.

February Schedule

Senior Citizen Meetings

Abbotsford	February 9
Dorchester	February 11
Granton	February 11
Loyal	February 1
Neillsville	February 23
Thorp	February 1

Alzheimer's Support Group Meeting

February 9, 2016 1:30 p.m.

Neillsville Senior Center, 602 Oak St.

Elder Benefit Specialist Outreach & Homestead Application Dates

Thorp	February 2
Granton	February 11
Abbotsford	February 24

Nutrition Committee Meetings

See Homestead Credit Schedule



Clark County Office of Aging/Nutrition

517 Court St., Rm. 201

Neillsville, WI 54456

Local Call Number 715-743-5144

Toll-Free Call Number 1-866-743-5144

- ❖ Mary Sladich, Director
- ❖ Amy Nigon, Elder Benefit Specialist
- ❖ Lynn Crothers, Admin. Secretary

Aging Office Newsletter Online: <http://www.co.clark.wi.us/index.aspx?nid=99>

THE DANGERS OF HYPOTHERMIA	PAGE 1, 2
1099'S AND INCOME TAX ASSISTANCE	PAGE 3
HOMESTEAD, ENERGY ASSISTANCE, MEDICARE PART B	PAGE 4, 5
WILD RICE MUSHROOM SOUP RECIPE	PAGE 6
MEDICARE PART B & VETERAN'S BENEFITS	PAGE 7
INTERFAITH VOLUNTEER CAREGIVERS OF CLARK COUNTY	PAGE 8
RECOGNIZING AND AVOIDING ELDER FINANCIAL ABUSE	PAGE 9-11
VALENTINE'S DAY WORD SEARCH	PAGE 12
WHAT HOSPICE IS NOT	PAGE 13
TELL ME MORE ABOUT LOW VISION	PAGE 14
MENTAL HEALTH IN CLARK COUNTY	PAGE 15, 16
MARY'S COMMENTS	PAGE 17-19
VIRTUAL DEMENTIA TOUR	PAGE 20
WI DO NOT CALL REGISTRY	PAGE 21