



# Chester County Department of Aging Services



"Like branches on a tree we grow in different directions, yet our roots remain as one. Each of our lives will always be a special part of the other." - Anonymous

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## Director's Corner

**Sandy Murphy**

Director, Chester County Department of Aging Services

### Help Wanted!

There are many proven benefits of volunteering to you and your community. Studies have shown that volunteering can increase happiness, self confidence and physical health. Volunteering can also increase job experience and teach new job skills. Last year volunteers working with Chester County residents age 60 and older provided countless hours of service.

These volunteers completed tasks ranging from assisting with clean up following the 2013-14 winter storms to providing a wellness telephone call or visit to someone living alone. Regardless of how intense the job or how much time was spent with an individual, Chester County volunteers had a positive impact on the lives of all they served. There are numerous volunteer opportunities to assist residents age 60 and older throughout Chester County. If you are looking for a volunteer opportunity for yourself or your agency, Chester County Department of Aging Services and/or one of our community partners has a place for you. Please contact Janice Soster at [jsoster@chesco.org](mailto:jsoster@chesco.org) for more information.



**The Aging and Disability Resource Center (ADRC)** is a nationwide effort to take a seamless approach to the way we assist seniors and adults with disabilities. The ADRC in Pennsylvania is known as the Link. The Area Agencies on Aging in Bucks, Chester and Montgomery counties have partnered with the Cerebral Palsy Association of Chester County, Bucks County Center for Independent Living, Bucks, Chester and Montgomery JEVS Human Services and Freedom Valley Disability Center to create the Bucks-Chester-Montgomery Link. Our first project as a partnership will be to educate consumers on successfully transitioning from hospital to home. [PA Link to Aging and Disability Resources - ADRC/LINKs](#)

The **Chester County Department of Aging Services** is funded by the Chester County Commissioners, PA Department of Aging and private contributions.

**Chester County Commissioners**

**Ryan Costello, Kathi Cozzone, Terence Farrell**

## Speech & Hearing Clinic

At West Chester University partnering with Chester County Department of Aging

Speech, language and hearing are fundamental to everyday communication, so it's good to know where to turn when experiencing communication challenges. West Chester University's Speech and Hearing Clinic has been providing services on campus in West Chester since 1923. Recently, the clinic started collaborating with Chester County's Department of Aging (CCDAS) and Department of Mental Health/Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities (MHIDD).

"We're excited about this new partnership," said Jennifer Means, the Clinic Director at West Chester University. "It's a perfect fit." Means, also an Associate Professor in West Chester University's Department of Communicative Disorders, noted that clinicians at their site have had experience working with both adults and children who have other conditions, including autism, traumatic brain injury or stroke.

The Speech and Hearing clinic's services are offered by graduate students under the direct supervision of faculty who maintain professional certification from the American Speech-Language-Hearing Association and licensure from the state of Pennsylvania. Among the disorders treated at the clinic are articulation, developmental disorders or delays, augmentative communication, stuttering, apraxia, dysarthria, cleft lip and palate and dementia/cognitive communication disorders.

This new partnership will benefit those using services from the Departments of Aging and MHIDD in many ways. In addition to the wide array of services and central location, the clinic has a sliding scale and fee waivers based on income and extenuating circumstances.

Sandy Murphy, Director for Department of Aging Services, said everyone involved will benefit from the collaboration. The clinic will extend its reach into the community, and both individuals and families using county services can take advantage high quality, low cost services at the clinic. County offices, like healthcare professionals and other community agencies, can make referrals to the clinic.

For more information on the West Chester University Speech and Hearing Clinic, visit their website at this link: <http://www.wcupa.edu/ACADEMICS/HealthSciences/comndisorder/clinic.asp>, or contact them at 610-436-3402.



## Mysteries of Medicare: Time to Review Your Medicare Coverage

The Chester County Department of Aging, through its **APPRISE** program of trained Medicare counselors, helps Medicare beneficiaries to understand the health care options specific to their health needs and financial resources. This is a continuing series of articles prepared by APPRISE volunteers for current or soon-to-become Medicare beneficiaries.

If you are on Medicare now and you have a Medicare drug or advantage plan, you will have an opportunity to change plans during this year's Annual Enrollment Period, Oct 15<sup>th</sup> to December 7<sup>th</sup>, 2014. Your plan would be effective January 1<sup>st</sup> 2015. If you have a drug plan which is expensive, doesn't cover all of your drugs, or just isn't working for you, you can change plans for next year. If you have a Medicare Advantage plan (Health Maintenance Organization, Preferred Provider Organization, Private Fee for Service), you can check to see if there is a better plan for you.

The Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS) has reviewed insurance company proposals for 2015 and as of Oct 1<sup>st</sup> information will be available to you about these plans approved by CMS. It is important for you to review these changes because it may affect your pocketbook and even your health. APPRISE counselors are available to meet with you at twelve locations throughout Chester County.

You will soon receive your Annual Notice of Change from your current plan. This provides details on premium changes, copay changes and formulary (drug tiers and coverage) changes. It is critical to review any changes to make sure that the medications which you are taking will be covered by your insurance plan.

For Medicare Advantage beneficiaries, that is, those of you who have an HMO, PPO or PFFS, there will be changes for 2015. Even if the premium does not change, you need to look at the amount you will pay for a visit to the doctor or a stay in the hospital. These copays can become expensive. An APPRISE counselor will be able to help you compare costs for all of the plans available in Chester County.

Supplement plans, also known as medigap plans, are not affected by the Annual Enrollment Period. Their premiums depend on approval by the Pennsylvania Insurance Department. If your rate increases, you may or may not be able to change depending on your health. Talk to an APPRISE counselor to find out.

If you have a low income, you may be eligible for help with your drug premiums and costs. A federal program called Extra Help is available depending on your income and resources. In addition, in Pennsylvania, we have the PACE program for those who are 65, or older, with a limited income.

Finally, if you are lucky enough to have retiree health insurance which is affordable, you probably will not make any changes unless your coverage or cost has changed. An APPRISE counselor can help you review and compare your plan to what Medicare can offer.

This is a critical time of the year to take action. Make an appointment at any of the enrollment locations listed on the APPRISE website for a free, confidential, unbiased assessment. In addition, if you are new to Medicare or soon to be on Medicare, you can attend any number of Medicare 101 presentations held throughout the county.

*APPRISE is Pennsylvania's statewide program of free insurance consultation under the auspices of the Chester County Department of Aging Services and the State Health Insurance Assistance Program. Its website is <https://pa-chestercounty.civicplus.com/index.aspx?NID=477>.*

Email: [apprisechesco@outlook.com](mailto:apprisechesco@outlook.com).

*APPRISE counselors can also be reached through the APPRISE help line at 610-344-5004. Leave your name and phone number and your call will be promptly returned.*

This article was authored by Liz D'Angelo, certified APPRISE counselor. ■

### Medicare Open Enrollment – Don't Forget!

Pennsylvania Department of Aging's APPRISE program is running radio ads about Open Enrollment for Medicare and its running dates are October 15 - December 7. Visit the following link for more information on open enrollment and how the Department of Aging can assist those in need.

[www.medicare.gov](http://www.medicare.gov)  
APPRISE

**Upcoming Events, Opportunities,  
Information:**

***Election Day – November 4, 2014***

***Senior Expo and Health Fair***

**10/28/14, 10:30 am - 12:00 pm**

**Jennersville Regional Hospital Senior Circle**

New London Presbyterian Church

125 Saginaw Road

New London, PA 19352

A variety of services and programs will be available including Medicare Insurance Assistance, Health screenings, Nutrition and Wellness, Long Term Care and more.

***Food & Meal Programs:***

[Chester County Food Bank Inc.](#)

[Food Cupboard Brochure](#)

[Hot Meal Programs](#)

***Gas/Electric Assistance Program:***

[PECO Energy Assistance Programs](#)

**SAVE THE DATE!!!**

**The 2015 Senior Games and Senior Picnic** have been scheduled for **Thursday, May 21, 2015** at the Brandywine Picnic Park, 690 South Creek Road, West Chester. The rain date is Thursday, May 28, 2015.

The Day will include: bocce, horseshoes, softball throw, bingo, Frisbee putting, football throw, darts, table tennis and hotshot basketball.

A barbeque chicken lunch will be served.

Check our [website](#) or call 610-344-6733 for details as the games/picnic day approaches.

**KENNETT AREA SENIOR CENTER  
RECEIVES GRANT**

The Kennett Area Senior Center has been awarded a \$64,013 grant to establish a senior volunteerism campaign targeting a younger demographic of older residents.

“This will help us to attract (baby) boomers,” said Anita O’Connor, director of the Kennett Area Senior Center. “We’ve been trying to get boomers interested in senior centers for some time.”

The grant is part of a \$2 million statewide plan to modernize senior centers across the state. The grant program is in its second year and is part of the largest-ever single investment in home-and-community-based services throughout the Pennsylvania Department of Aging.

“This is a significant grant and I am pleased it will be used to improve programs and services for seniors in our area,” said State Rep. Chris Ross, R-158<sup>th</sup> of East Marlborough.

O’Connor said the funds will help to recruit volunteers for the center’s Neighbors in Action outreach program, which helps those who are home-bound and not receiving services from other county providers.

“This money will help us reach out and find volunteers and engage them,” O’Connor said. “We try to handle this ourselves, but we have limited resources. We have found that boomers make great volunteers.”

The grant will provide an opportunity for the Kennett Senior Center to modernize, encourage technology improvements, expand innovative programming and better meet the needs of current and future senior center participants. The enhancements will also allow more efficient program administration to maximize the number of older Pennsylvanians who can benefit from senior center programs.

The grants are being awarded in all of Pennsylvania’s 67 counties and will facilitate program expansion. There are 550 senior community centers in the state.

“This will really benefit the Kennett community,” said O’Connor.

**Got Questions?? Contact Us!!!**

Information and Assistance services are always free of charge and available to all interested persons.

Call: 610-344-6350, Toll-free: 1-800-692-1100, ext. 6350

Send us an e-mail inquiry at [ccaging@chesco.org](mailto:ccaging@chesco.org)  
or visit our website <http://www.chesco.org/aging>