

# Spotlight on Community Living

Wednesday, February 27, 2013 *Serving D.C. residents who are age 18+ with a disability or age 60+ and their caregivers* Vol 1, No 5



## Executive Director's Message

*John M. Thompson, Ph.D., FAAMA*

*D.C. Office on Aging*

This month's edition of the **Spotlight on Community Living**, is in memory and honor of Ms. Aidah Sabir-Jenkins. Ms. Sabir-Jenkins is the 94 year old senior who was fatally struck by a pickup truck while walking in the crosswalk in the 2800 block of Georgia Avenue, NW on February 12, 2013. In this edition, I would like to offer tips that could keep seniors, persons with disabilities, and others safe. I am not just referring to crossing the street safely, but protecting yourself from other threats that could have life altering consequences.

### Fraud

The number of seniors is growing at a rapid rate and they have become the prime target for con artists and thieves. According to the Federal Trade Commission, approximately 25 million Americans are victims of consumer fraud annually. Based on another statistic, it was revealed that fraudulent telemarketers direct anywhere from 56-80% of their calls at older Americans. Although these are alarming statistics, you can protect yourself by using the following tips.

- If the offer is too good to be true, you are probably correct. Ask the caller to send you the information in writing before making any hasty commitments.
- Avoid providing personal information such as your social security number and credit card numbers on the telephone or the Internet unless you initiated the contact or are using a secured Internet website.
- Do not let the pressure of a telemarketer force you to make an uncomfortable decision that you will regret later. Just simply inform the caller that you wish to end the call and hang up.

### Falls

When visiting seniors, see if you identify repeated bruises on their arms and hands as it could be an indication of them falling. In some instances, it could be a sign of physical abuse. In either instance, please contact the Office on Aging so that we can offer options that could restore the safety of the senior. We can assist with locating a falls prevention course, assisting the senior in obtaining a walker, obtaining physical therapy, and making recommendations on the layout of the home furnishings or even contacting Adult Protective Service.

### Pedestrian Safety

Even though various jurisdictions have a law for motorists to yield to pedestrians in the crosswalk, we still hear about pedestrians being struck by motor vehicles. I don't believe that it is because people are intentionally breaking the law, but it is because we have forgotten one of the tenets of safe driving: defensive driving! Our society has become so distracted by cellular phone calls, e-mail messaging, social media texting, and inputting our desired destination into a navigation system that it has challenged our ability to drive safely and obey the law. Because of this phenomenon, I encourage seniors and persons with disabilities to be extra careful when crossing the street. You should never assume that the driver sees you and that they will yield to you in the crosswalk. I would rather you take the extra time to cross safely than putting yourself in harm's way.

### Home Safety

During the recent local nightly news, a reporter was interviewing a senior who mentioned that she will begin locking her house doors in response to a crime in her neighborhood. I

believe that everyone should lock their doors even if they live in the safest or most exclusive neighborhood. You never know when criminals are lurking and you want to be safe at all times. Also, don't forget to annually test the batteries in your smoke and Carbon Monoxide detectors. Yes, it could be an inconvenience to climb a ladder, but get a neighbor or someone else to assist you with this task as it can save your home, valuables, and, more importantly, your life.

### Medication Safety

Some seniors are consuming various medications to manage multiple chronic diseases. Medications must be properly administered, paying special attention to instructions such as "must be taken with food" or "taken prior to a meal." Regardless of how administered, it is very important for seniors to take their medications. It is equally important that seniors do not mismanage their medications as the consequences could be minimal or extreme. People forgetting to take their medications at the prescribed time could have a minimal effect on them. However, combining some medications or overdosing could lead to adverse reactions. I believe that it is an effective approach for seniors to make their primary care physicians and their pharmacists aware of all the medications that have been prescribed to them as some seniors visit multiple physicians that will give them a prescription. Also, journal your pill intake and use a pill organizer as a means to improve medication management.

For seniors who have grandchildren who visit their homes, it is important to protect the children from your prescription drugs. According to Safe Kids USA, up to 20% of child medication poisonings in the US involve a grandparent's medication.

Therefore, it is best to choose child-resistant caps on medication bottles and to safely store medications out of the reach of children.

### Driver Safety

As we age, our body changes and we realize that things that we used to do may not be done in the same manner today or we may not be able to do some of those things safely any longer. This logic can be applied to our physical activities in the gymnasium, swimming pool, and the roadways. We've read the stories in the newspaper or listened to the nightly news broadcasting that a senior has driven a car into a building or hit a pedestrian. Commonalities for some of these collisions are the affects of changes in seniors' reflexes, problems with vision or range of motion, conflicting medications, and hearing loss. Therefore, it is crucial that seniors visit their healthcare providers to get their annual checkups and receive the proper eye glasses and hearing aids. It is important to note that seniors must know their limitations, get sufficient sleep prior to driving, and drive defensively.

I believe that the aforementioned information and tips can keep us all safe. I trust that you will use them and share them with your loved ones. For further information, please contact the Office on Aging at 202-724-5622. ~



Aidah Sabir-Jenkins

## MARCH IS NATIONAL NUTRITION MONTH: EAT RIGHT, YOUR WAY, EVERY DAY

Below are some of the tips that help consumers improve their eating habits

- Enjoy your food but eat less
- Avoid oversized portions
- Make half your plate fruits and vegetables
- Switch to fat free or low fat milk (1%)
- Compare sodium in food like soup, bread and frozen meals – choose the foods with lower numbers
- Drink water instead of sugary drinks

The Office on Aging has programs in each ward of the city where you can enjoy a nutritious mid-day meal, receive nutrition education or find out about our homebound meal program and the commodity supplemental food program.

For more information on nutrition programs through the D.C. Office on Aging call 202-724-5626. ~

**THE OFFICE ON AGING (DCOA) IS SOLICITING APPLICATIONS** from qualified entities to operate the Washington Elderly Handicapped Transportation Service (WEHTS). The Request for Application (RFA) will seek an organization to operate the WEHTS program, currently located at 2601 18th Street, NW, Washington, DC. The deadline for submission is April 19 at 4:45 PM and no late applications will be accepted. A Pre-Application Conference will be held on March 6 at 10:30 am at 500 K Street, NE. The RFA is available on the DCOA website at [www.dcoa.dc.gov](http://www.dcoa.dc.gov) and on the Office of Partnership and Grant Services website at [www.opgd.dc.gov](http://www.opgd.dc.gov). For more information, contact Aurora Delespin-Jones, Program Analyst or Brenda L. Turner, Program and Grants Manager at (202) 724-8821.



### DC LONG-TERM CARE OMBUDSMAN PROGRAM (DCLTCOP) — HOME AND COMMUNITY-BASED SERVICES PROGRAM EFFECTIVE OCTOBER 1, 2012

Legal Counsel for the Elderly District of Columbia Long-Term Care Ombudsman Program operates the District of Columbia Long-Term Care Ombudsman Program in conjunction with the District of Columbia Office on Aging Senior Service Network.

On October 1, 2012, the DCLTCOP expanded its advocacy services to include residents living in their homes in the community receiving long-term care services through the DC Medicaid Elderly and Persons with Physical Disabilities (EPD) Waiver Program.

The Home and Community-Based Services Ombudsmen serve as advocates for residents living in their homes in the community, protecting residents' rights and promoting the highest possible quality of life and quality of care.

Home and community-based ombudsmen advocate for elderly individuals and persons with physical disabilities, 18 years of age and older receiving community-based services through the EPD waiver.

Home and community-based ombudsmen advocate for residents living in the community understand their rights, voice their concerns, find solutions to problems, and obtain legal services.

**The ombudsmen are responsible for:**

- Visiting residents to monitor the quality of life and quality of care
- Investigating and resolving complaints for or on behalf of residents
- Resolving issues with home health care providers
- Ensuring that residents' rights are protected
- Reporting violations of federal and District of Columbia law specific to home health care and related services to appropriate agencies
- Educating residents, their families, and significant others; and
- Monitoring and making recommendations on District of Columbia laws, rules, regulations, and policies that affect DC Medicaid beneficiaries living in the community receiving long-term care services through the Elderly and Persons with Physical Disabilities Waiver.

To date, we have received thirty-four (34) complaints for investigation. We have found multiple issues regarding Durable Medical Equipment (DME). Our safety concern regarding durable medical equipment thus has far been to ensure that residents have equipment that has been deemed medically necessary as well as equipment that is appropriate in size, in good repair and is safe for resident use.

**For ombudsman assistance contact the DCLTCOP Home and Community-Based Services Program Hotline at (202) 434-2160.**



### DCOA Ambassador Program

*Keeping District Seniors and Caregivers In Touch with Services*

The **D.C. Office on Aging (DCOA) Ambassador Program** is a FREE, interactive, member-based program designed to reach out to older adults and their caregivers to help them learn about the services and resources available to them through DCOA. If you are interested in expanding your network and educating older adults about the services and resources available to them, join us for our next **Ambassador Training Workshop** to learn about all of the programs and services that **DCOA** offers to the community and how you can become an Ambassador.



**Upcoming Ambassador Training Workshops:**

- Thursday, February 28, 2013** 10:00 a.m. – 12 p.m.
- Thursday, March 28, 2013** 10:00 a.m. – 12 p.m.
- Wednesday, April 17, 2013** 10:00 a.m. – 12 p.m.

All workshops are held at DCOA Headquarters and include: an overview of Office on Aging programs and services, information on how to access resources, and guidance on your role as an advocate. To register and for more information, call (202) 724-5622.



**D.C. Office on Aging • 500 K Street, NE • Washington, D.C. 20002**

\*\*\* Government of the District of Columbia  
Vincent C. Gray, Mayor



### CRFS AND NURSING HOMES For complaints of abuse and neglect for persons residing in community residential facilities (CRFs) or nursing homes, call the Long-term Care Ombudsman Hotline at (202) 434-2190



## COMMUNITY EVENTS CALENDAR

### MARCH

**6th • 9:00am**  
THE SEABURY WARD 5 ADVISORY COUNCIL will hold a meeting at 2900 Newton Street, NE. For more information, contact Vivian Grayton (202) 529-8701

**6th • 1:00–3:00pm**  
THE 2013 SENIOR WELLNESS CENTER Financial Fraud Prevention Presentations with panel presentations by DISB, US Attorney's Office-DC and AARP Legal Counsel for the Elderly at Model Cities Senior Wellness Center, 1901 Evarts Street, NE, Washington, DC

2018. For more information, contact Stacie Thweatt at (202) 635-1900.

For more information, contact Vivian Grayton at 202-529-8701.

**7th • 10:30am**  
FAMILY MATTERS OF GREATER WASHINGTON, INC Ward 8 Senior Programs will celebrate National Nutrition Month 2013 with a Nutrition Film Festival at 4301 9th Street, SE. The film will be Soul Food Junkies. For reservations call Evelyn Minor 202-562-6860.

**21st • 10:30am**  
FAMILY MATTERS OF GREATER WASHINGTON, INC Ward 8 Senior Programs will Celebrate National Nutrition Month 2013 with a Nutrition Film Festival at 4301 9th Street, SE. The film will be Food Matters. For reservations call Evelyn Minor 202-562-6860.

### SPOTLIGHT ON COMMUNITY LIVING

*Spotlight on Community Living* is published by the External Affairs and Communications unit of the D.C. Office on Aging. Advertising contained in the Current is not endorsed by the D.C. Office on Aging or by the publisher. The D.C. Office on Aging is responsible for developing and carrying out a comprehensive and coordinated system of health, nutrition, education, employment, training, and social services for the District's elderly population, who are 60 years of age and older. The Office on Aging also administers the Aging and Disability Resource Center, a one-stop shop resource center, designed to assist seniors, persons with disabilities 18 years of age and older and family caregivers navigate the long-term services and supports system.

**500 K Street, NE, Washington, D.C. 20002**  
**202-724-5622 • www.dcoa.dc.gov**  
John M. Thompson, Ph.D., FAAMA  
Executive Director

In accordance with the D.C. Human Rights Act of 1977, as amended, D.C. Official Code Section §§2-1401.01 et seq., (Act), the D.C. Office on Aging does not discriminate on the basis of actual or perceived: race, color, religion, national origin, sex, age, marital status, personal appearance, sexual orientation, gender identity or expression, familial status, family responsibilities, matriculation, political affiliation, genetic information, disability, source of income, or place of residence or business. Sexual harassment is a form of sex discrimination which is prohibited by the Act. In addition, harassment based on any of the above protected categories is prohibited by the Act. Discrimination in violation of the Act will not be tolerated. Violators will be subject to disciplinary action.

**13th • 11:30am**  
SEABURY WARD 5 AGING SERVICES will host "U.S. Attorney Office – An Age for Justice Film" Ft. Lincoln 3 3298 Ft. Lincoln Drive, NE. For more information, call Vivian Grayton (202) 529-8701.

**26th • 11:30am**  
SEABURY WARD 5 AGING SERVICES will host a "Diabetes Seminar" at Ft. Lincoln 1, 3001 Bladensburg Rd, NE. For more information, contact Vivian Grayton at 202-529-8701.

**14th • 10:30am**  
FAMILY MATTERS OF GREATER WASHINGTON, INC Ward 8 Senior Programs will celebrate National Nutrition Month 2013 with a Nutrition Film Festival at 4301 9th Street, SE. The film will be Super Size Me. For reservations call Evelyn Minor 202-562-6860.

**28th • 10:30am**  
FAMILY MATTERS OF GREATER WASHINGTON, INC Ward 8 Senior Programs will Celebrate National Nutrition Month 2013 with a Nutrition Film Festival at 4301 9th Street, SE. The film will be Food Inc. For reservations call Evelyn Minor 202-562-6860.

**20th • 11:30am**  
SEABURY WARD 5 AGING SERVICES will host a "Diabetes Seminar" at Edgewood Terrace Senior Nutrition Site, 635 Edgewood Street, NE.

**28th • 11:30am**  
SEABURY WARD 5 AGING SERVICES will host a "You are Never Too Old...HIV & AIDS Presentation at Ft. Lincoln 1, 3001 Bladensburg Rd, NE. For more information, contact Vivian Grayton at 202-529-8701.