



July 2004

## Top Stories

- **Message from the Assistant Secretary: Medicare Modernization Education and Outreach**
- **Executive Order on Emergency Preparedness for People with Disabilities**
- **HHS Announces Revised Medicare Obesity Coverage Policy**
- **White House Conference on Aging to be held October 23-26, 2005**

---

### Message from the Assistant Secretary: Medicare Modernization Education and Outreach

---

The Medicare-approved Discount Drug Card and Transitional Assistance Credit Program was enacted into law on December 8, 2003, as part of the Medicare Prescription Drug, Improvement, and Modernization Act of 2003. Medicare beneficiaries, except for those who have Medicaid drug coverage, now have the opportunity to enroll in a Medicare-approved discount drug card program which can help to lower their prescription drug costs. The Aging Network is in the forefront in educating older persons, their families and persons with disabilities about benefits and services available to them through this program. That is why I am pleased to announce a joint CMS/AoA nationwide outreach and education campaign to help Medicare beneficiaries learn about and enroll in the new Medicare-approved discount drug card and transitional assistance credit program. As part of this effort, the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services and the Administration on Aging are making funds available to community-based organizations to support outreach, education and enrollment activities targeted specifically at low-income beneficiaries. To learn more about this initiative, go to [www.aoa.gov](http://www.aoa.gov).

I strongly encourage all eligible organizations to apply for funds under this program. Each of us in the network has an important role to play in educating seniors and providing information to them to enroll in the program. Seniors and persons with disabilities need to take advantage of the real savings and assistance that is available to them now.

Josefina G. Carbonell

---

### Executive Order on Emergency Preparedness for People with Disabilities

---

## **Executive Order on Emergency Preparedness for People with Disabilities**

In honor of the upcoming fourteenth anniversary of the signing of the Americans with Disabilities Act, which is Monday, July 26, 2004, the President signed an executive order regarding emergency preparedness for people with disabilities. The President realizes that individuals with disabilities may require special plans during times of emergency and this Executive Order emphasizes the importance of implementing emergency preparedness plans that accommodate individuals with disabilities. The Executive Order also establishes the Interagency Coordinating Council on Emergency Preparedness and Individuals with Disabilities that will help agencies and private individuals and organizations take into account the unique needs of individuals with disabilities in their emergency preparedness planning. In February 2001, the President announced his New Freedom Initiative - a comprehensive program to promote the full participation of people with disabilities in all areas of society by increasing access to assistive and universally designed technologies, expanding educational and employment opportunities, and promoting increased access into daily community life. For more information on the New Freedom Initiative and a 2004 New Freedom Initiative progress report, go to <http://www.whitehouse.gov/infocus/newfreedom/>

---

## **HHS Announces Revised Medicare Obesity Coverage Policy**

On July 15 HHS Secretary Tommy G. Thompson announced a new Medicare coverage policy that would remove barriers to covering anti-obesity interventions if scientific and medical evidence demonstrate their effectiveness in improving Medicare beneficiaries' health outcomes. The new policy from HHS' Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services removes language in the Medicare Coverage Issues Manual stating that obesity is not an illness. This step allows members of the public to request that Medicare review medical evidence to determine whether specific treatments related to obesity would be covered by Medicare. For more information go to: <http://www.dhhs.gov/news/press/2004pres/20040715.html>

---

## **White House Conference on Aging to be held October 23-26, 2005**

On July 14, the Policy Committee for the 2005 Conference White House Conference on Aging chose the date and location for the first White House Conference on Aging of the 21<sup>st</sup> Century. The White House Conference on Aging will be held October 23 – 26, 2005 in Washington, DC. The Policy Committee Chair Dorcas R. Hardy urged the Committee to look at aging in terms of today and tomorrow. The Policy Committee, required by the Older Americans Act Amendments of 2000, which authorized the 2005 White House Conference on Aging, is responsible for the planning and implementation of the 2005 Conference. The Committee will meet regularly to make decisions on theme, delegate selection, pre-conference events, topic areas and the general direction of the Conference. For a list of Policy Committee members

appointed for the 2005 White House Conference on Aging, please visit:  
[http://www.aoa.gov/press/news/2004/06\\_Jun/WHCOA\\_policy\\_members.pdf](http://www.aoa.gov/press/news/2004/06_Jun/WHCOA_policy_members.pdf)

---

## More Articles:

### AoA News

- **The Assistant Secretary Speaks at LULAC Convention**

### Policy and Program Updates

- **Medicare to Extend Access to Certain Drugs for Beneficiaries with Serious and Chronic Illnesses**
- **Secretary Thompson Announces \$4 Million in Grants for Prevention**
- **N4A July Conference addressed Changing the Way We Do Business**
- **Community Awards Program To Support Healthy People 2010 Vision Objectives**
- **New National Multicultural Diabetes Prevention Campaign Goes on the Road**
- **USDA Calls for Comments on Food Guide Pyramid**

### Of Interest

- ***Older Americans 2004: Key Indicators of Well-Being* coming this Fall**
- **Abstracts Due for National Diabetes Education Program Partnership Meeting**
- **NCOA Highlights Physical Activity Best Practices**
- **Study Shows Providing Care for Another Adult a Second Job for Many**

For the full issue of the July AoA e-news visit: .

### AoA News

#### **The Assistant Secretary Speaks at LULAC Convention**

The Assistant Secretary participated in a panel discussion on Healthy Aging at the 75<sup>th</sup> Annual The League of United Latin American Citizens National Convention Center & Exposition on July 8, 2004 in San Antonio Texas. She spoke about the AoA prevention agenda including several new national initiatives that have been launched to help older people including Latino elders to remain active and healthy. The LULAC National Convention & Exposition, Celebrating Our Legacy: Defining Our Future, was held from July 6 through July 11, 2004. As the premier Hispanic convention, the LULAC National Convention draws over 9,000 people each year including the top leaders from government, business, and the Hispanic community. Founded in 1929, the League of United Latin American Citizens is the nation's oldest and largest Hispanic organization. With thousands of members organized into more than 700 LULAC Councils in virtually every state of the nation and in Puerto Rico, LULAC has tremendous outreach into the Hispanic community. With a rich history of advocacy in civil rights, education, economic development, immigration and equal opportunity, LULAC is uniquely positioned to lead the Hispanic community into the

next millennium. For a copy of the Assistant Secretary's speech visit:  
[http://www.aoa.gov/press/speeches/2004/07\\_Jul/speeches\\_archive\\_07\\_08\\_04.asp](http://www.aoa.gov/press/speeches/2004/07_Jul/speeches_archive_07_08_04.asp).  
For more information go to: [www.LULAC.org](http://www.LULAC.org).

## **Policy and Program Updates**

### **Medicare to Extend Access to Certain Drugs for Beneficiaries with Serious and Chronic Illnesses**

HHS Secretary Tommy G. Thompson announced a new Medicare demonstration program on June 24 that will save seniors and persons with disabilities substantial money on the life-enhancing medicines they take for serious diseases. Drugs for treatment of such diseases as rheumatoid arthritis, multiple sclerosis, pulmonary hypertension, and a variety of cancers will be included in the demonstration. The demonstration program, created as part of the Medicare Modernization Act, will extend Medicare coverage to prescription medicines that can be self-administered rather than administered by a health care provider. The demonstration will help up to 50,000 beneficiaries with serious illnesses who do not have comprehensive prescription drug coverage today. The initiative, known as the Medicare Replacement Drug Demonstration, was mandated under Section 641 of the Medicare Prescription Drug, Improvement, and Modernization Act of 2003 (MMA). As set by Congress, enrollment in the demonstration will be open to 50,000 people and total spending on the covered drugs will be up to \$500 million. Under this initiative, Medicare will pay for certain drugs and biologicals that can be taken by the patient at home and that replace drugs which are currently covered under Medicare Part B when given in a doctor's office. In addition, newer, more effective medications that replace some currently covered oral anti-cancer drugs will be covered. For more information go to: <http://www.dhhs.gov/news/press/2004pres/20040624.html>.

### **Secretary Thompson Announces \$4 Million in Grants for Prevention**

HHS Secretary Tommy G. Thompson announced continuation grants totaling over \$4 million in prevention programs for minority groups and community organizations to support projects targeted at reducing the risk of disease and disability among the elderly on June 2. The announcement was made at the Summit on Obesity gathering in Williamsburg, VA. The summit, sponsored by Time and ABC News, brings together individuals representing diverse fields of expertise and diverse constituencies, including policy-makers, food industry leaders, pediatricians, nutritionists, educators, school administrators, urban planners, geneticists, psychologists, cardiologists, developers, insurers, the media and others who can be part of the solution. The grant announcement enhances the HHS goals in the "Blueprint for Action" to reduce and prevent chronic diseases. The Blueprint outlines steps that individuals, groups, communities and other organizations can take to help improve the overall health of Americans. The Blueprint is available at <http://aspe.hhs.gov/health/blueprint/>. For more information go to: [http://www.aoa.gov/press/pr/2004/04\\_Jun/06\\_02\\_04\\_pf.asp](http://www.aoa.gov/press/pr/2004/04_Jun/06_02_04_pf.asp).

### **N4A July Conference addressed Changing the Way We Do Business**

More than 600 people attended the National Association Area Agencies on Aging's 29<sup>th</sup> Annual Conference and Tradeshow in Atlanta, Georgia, July 11-14, 2004 entitled, "changing the way we do business." Medicare prescription drugs, healthy aging, caregiving, housing, transportation, aging in place, health disparities, business

partnerships, data collection and outcomes were among the many topics featured at the conference. The meeting offered motivational and insightful keynote speakers, workshops sessions that addressed cutting edge issues and innovations, new Aging Showcase sessions, and networking opportunities with colleagues and national champions in the aging field. This event brought the Aging Network together to change the way we do business and meet the challenges of the future. The Assistant Secretary discussed this topic during a general session on Monday, July 12, 2004. To review the Assistant Secretary's remarks visit:  
[http://www.aoa.gov/press/speeches/2004/07\\_Jul/speeches\\_archive\\_07\\_12\\_04.asp](http://www.aoa.gov/press/speeches/2004/07_Jul/speeches_archive_07_12_04.asp).

### **Community Awards Program To Support Healthy People 2010 Vision Objectives**

The National Eye Institute (NEI), through its support contractor Social & Health Services, Ltd., (SHS), is pleased to announce the 2005 round of the Healthy Vision Community Awards Program. This program provides funding for the implementation of health education activities that support the Healthy Vision 2010 objectives and the Healthy People 2010 goals to reduce health disparities and improve quality of life. The focus of the 2005 awards are 28-5 Reduce visual impairment due to diabetic retinopathy; 28-6 Reduce visual impairment due to glaucoma, 28-8 Reduce occupational eye injury, 28-9 Increase the use of appropriate personal protective eyewear in recreational activities and hazardous situations around the home; and 28-10 Increase the use of rehabilitation services and adaptive devices by persons with visual impairments. Nonprofit organizations, including but not limited to community-based organizations and groups, minority-based organizations, schools, faith-based organizations, civic and fraternal groups, and State and local health departments and agencies may apply. Universities and university-affiliations, such as medical centers, are precluded from receiving an award directly, but are welcome as collaborators with community-based organizations. Each award is worth up to \$10,000 per year. Applications must be postmarked by Tuesday, August 31, 2004; awards will be announced in December, 2004. Application forms and program information are available at [www.healthyvision2010.org/funding](http://www.healthyvision2010.org/funding) or by contacting SHS staff. If you have questions about the application package (new and renewal) or eligibility requirements, you can call or e-mail your request to: Jan Kelley, [jkelly@shs.net](mailto:jkelly@shs.net), 240-747-4756 or Sandra A. Townsend, [stownsend@shs.net](mailto:stownsend@shs.net), 240-4-747-4757.

### **New National Multicultural Diabetes Prevention Campaign Goes on the Road**

Starting this summer, the National Diabetes Education Program will take its "Small Steps. Big Rewards. Prevent type 2 Diabetes." campaign on the road when they visit team members from each audience who are taking real steps to prevent diabetes. Each road show venue will highlight the team members efforts to prevent diabetes in their community. This campaign is the first national multicultural diabetes prevention campaign. The first session was held at the National Council of La Raza's annual meeting in Phoenix on June 29 to talk about Preve ngamos la diabetes tipo 2. Paso a Paso (Let's prevent type 2 diabetes. Step by Step). Over the next four months, the NDEP plans to launch each campaign in four cities including Philadelphia, PA; Ada, OK; San Diego, CA; and Jacksonville, FL. If you are interested in attending any of these "road shows", please contact TaWanna Berry, Deputy Director of NDEP at NIH, at [TaWanna\\_Berry@nih.gov](mailto:TaWanna_Berry@nih.gov) or 301-451-5988 or fax 301-496-7422. New diabetes prevention materials also are available on the NDEP website at [www.ndep.nih.gov](http://www.ndep.nih.gov).

## **USDA Calls for Comments on Food Guide Pyramid**

The Food Guide Pyramid is the U.S. Department of Agriculture's current food guide and an educational tool that interprets the Dietary Guidelines for Americans. USDA has initiated a review and update of the Pyramid in consultation with HHS. A Federal Register notice of July 13, 2004 announced a proposed food guidance system for the food guide's graphic presentation and education materials. Written and oral comments are being solicited including ideas for a new food guide graphic. A public meeting will be held on August 19, 2004 for public input. Written comments on this topic also are welcome. For a copy of the federal register notice go to:

[http://frwebgate4.access.gpo.gov/cgi-bin/waisgate.cgi?WAI\\_SdocID=44896212339+1+0+0&WAI\\_Saction=retrieve](http://frwebgate4.access.gpo.gov/cgi-bin/waisgate.cgi?WAI_SdocID=44896212339+1+0+0&WAI_Saction=retrieve).

## **Of Interest**

### ***Older Americans 2004: Key Indicators of Well-Being* coming this Fall**

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention will release an updated and expanded report on the key indicators of well-being for older adults this fall. It provides data on several important areas in the lives of older people—population, economics, health status, health risks, and behaviors, and health care. Sign up to receive a copy of *Older Americans 2004: Key Indicators of Well-Being* by visiting Federal Interagency Forum on Aging-Related Statistics' Web site, [www.agingstats.gov](http://www.agingstats.gov). For more information about Older Americans 2004 or the Forum, contact Kristen Robinson by e-mail at [kgr4@cdc.gov](mailto:kgr4@cdc.gov) or by phone at (301) 458-4460.

### **Abstracts Due for National Diabetes Education Program Partnership Meeting**

The NDEP 2004 Partnership Network is now accepting abstracts for presentation at the NDEP 2004 Partnership Network Meeting to be held December 7-8, 2004 at the Sheraton Colony Square Midtown Hotel in Atlanta, Georgia. The theme of the meeting is "Linking Hands Linking Partnerships, LINKS: Learn to Implement NDEP's Knowledge and Successes." Abstract Submission Deadline: Friday, August 27, 2004. Please e-mail your abstract to Roberto Noriega at [rnoriega@air.org](mailto:rnoriega@air.org). If you need assistance in writing your abstract, please contact Roberto at 301-592-2139.

### **NCOA Highlights Physical Activity Best Practices**

The National Council on the Aging has published a brochure, *Best Practices in Physical Activity* that highlights 10 best practices in physical activity for older adults. This brochure is designed for professionals and provides information about developing, implementing, and sustaining successful community-based programs. To access this publication go to: <http://www.ncoa.org/attachments/HABrch%2Epdf>.

### **Study Shows Providing Care for Another Adult a Second Job for Many**

There are far more Americans holding "second jobs" as family caregivers than either employers, or the federal government are aware of – and this "second job" could pose long-term problems for both. A survey conducted for the National Alliance for Caregiving and AARP, funded by MetLife Foundation, estimates there are 44.4 million

caregivers who provide unpaid care to another adult. Almost six in ten (59%) of these caregivers either work or have worked while providing care. And 62 percent have had to make some adjustments to their work life, from reporting late to work to giving up work entirely. And, it's not just women, as some people might think. Almost four in ten (39%) caregivers are men, and 60% of them are working full-time. Our study shows a significant proportion of male caregivers. This is just not just an issue for women, but for everyone. The study entitled "Caregiving in the U.S." was conducted to update and expand our knowledge about the activities caregivers say they perform, the perceived impact of caregiving on their daily lives, and the unmet needs of this population. Caregivers are people age 18 and older who help another person age 18 and older with at least one of thirteen tasks that caregivers commonly do on an unpaid basis. These activities range from helping another manage finances, shop for groceries, or do housework to helping another get in and out of beds or chairs, get dressed, get to and from the toilet, bathe or shower, or eat. For more information visit: [www.caregiving.org](http://www.caregiving.org).

### **AoA e-news information**

Archives can be accessed via the AoA web site at:

[http://www.aoa.gov/press/enewsletter/archive/enewsletter\\_archive.asp](http://www.aoa.gov/press/enewsletter/archive/enewsletter_archive.asp)

To unsubscribe, reply to this e-mail and insert the word "unsubscribe" in the text box. You can now subscribe online at [www.aoa.gov](http://www.aoa.gov).

### **About AoA**

AoA works with a nationwide network of organizations and service providers to make support services and resources available to older persons and their caregivers. For more information about AoA, please contact us by mail at U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Administration on Aging, Washington, DC 20201; by phone at (202) 619-0724; by e-mail at [aoainfo@aoa.gov](mailto:aoainfo@aoa.gov); or visit us on the Web at [www.aoa.gov](http://www.aoa.gov).

Please share this e-newsletter with others on your staff.