

A Publication of the Georgia Department of Human Services Division of Aging Services

Georgia Interfaith Aging Action

Division of Aging Services | 1-866-552-4464 | www.aging.ga.gov



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Welcome to **Georgia Interfaith Aging Action**, a monthly e-newsletter for faith communities, featuring aging program news, current volunteer opportunities, training and resources, and inspiring best practices from the field. Together, we'll explore topics such as how to identify aging needs in your congregation, ways for your faith community to fight senior hunger, how your members can get the most from Medicare, how to start or expand a nursing home visitation program, and much more.



Georgia Interfaith Aging Action is an outgrowth of the Department of Human Services' [Faith and Community Alliance](#). This rapidly growing statewide initiative gives faith-based organizations tools and information for serving congregations and surrounding communities in areas such as aging services, children and vulnerable families, parental responsibility, fatherhood and child support, mental health, and community reentry.

Aging Program News

Looking for newsletter and bulletin content, program ideas, and discussion topics for groups? Plan ahead for these October and November dates:

- National Long-Term Care Residents' Rights Month (October) – www.theconsumervoice.org ▪ www.georgiaombudsman.org
- Domestic Violence Awareness Month (October) – www.nnedv.org
- Medicare Open Enrollment Begins (Oct. 7) – www.Medicare.gov ▪ www.MyGeorgiaCares.org
- National Mental Illness Awareness Week (Oct. 4-10) – www.nami.org
- National Aging in Place Week (Oct. 13-19) – www.ageinplace.org
- Make a Difference Day (Oct. 24) – www.makeadifferenceday.com

- National Family Caregivers Month (November) - www.nfcares.org
- National Alzheimer's Disease Awareness Month (November) – www.alz.org
- American Diabetes Month (November) - www.diabetes.org

Highlighted Volunteer Opportunities

Fight senior hunger and isolation.



Mobilize. Adopt a “Meals on Wheels” route. It’s easy to get started. First, contact your Area Agency on Aging to find the Meals on Wheels provider that serves your community. Then, recruit 4-5 people to alternate duties and share one weekly route. All team members will undergo background checks, receive training, and get supplies plus support from the provider. As your faith community’s coordinator, you will make sure that your team’s slot is filled with one to two volunteers each week. Are you ready to

share a hot meal and a smile with neighbors? Call 1-866-552-4464 or visit www.aging.ga.gov to find the Area on Aging nearest you.

Connect older adults with mental health support.

Train: Provide Mental Health First Aid (MHFA) training to your pastoral care team, bereavement volunteers, support group leaders, and others who help community members cope. Class participants learn to recognize common signs of mental illnesses and addictions, assess and diffuse difficult situations, and locate immediate help. MHFA host organizations such as yours provide space, and certified trainers lead the eight-hour community class. Some hosts purchase the required workbook for participants, while others charge a nominal fee per person. For more information, visit <http://www.mentalhealthfirstaid.org/cs/>.

Educate: To learn about behavioral health crisis services, long-term help, and community education for older adults and caregivers, visit <http://aging.dhs.georgia.gov/mental-health-resources>, and share the link with your congregation.

Training & Resources

Medicare Open Enrollment

Now is the time to make Medicare changes. Prepare your congregation by adding these announcements to your printed materials and sharing them online:

Medicare Message One: As the days get shorter and the nights get cooler, you can expect to hear more about Medicare. That’s because October 15 – December 7 is Medicare Open Enrollment. It’s your chance to review your health care coverage and see if you need to make any changes. GeorgiaCares provides free, unbiased advice to Medicare beneficiaries about their plan options. Call GeorgiaCares at 1-866-552-4464 (option 4) to schedule a one-on-one counseling session to discuss your options with one of our trained counselors. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=RGCyPzZBF9s>



Medicare Message Two: Medicare Open Enrollment runs from October 15 to December 7, 2015. This is the time to review your current plan to see if it is still right for you. GeorgiaCares can show you plans in your area that may cost less, cover your drugs, and let you go to the providers you want, like your doctor or pharmacy. Call GeorgiaCares at 1-866-552-4464 (option 4) to schedule a one-on-one counseling session to review your current coverage and discuss your options.

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=9G8K_VVEPJg

Athens Hosts Faith and Aging Summit

The Faith and Community Alliance will hold a free Faith and Aging Summit on October 15, 9:00 a.m. – 12:00 p.m., at Trinity Lutheran Church (2535 Jefferson Rd., Athens). Faith communities, send representatives to learn about regional resources, find volunteer opportunities, discuss Alzheimer's and related forms of dementia, and explore other aging-related topics. Parking is free, and refreshments will be available. To register, click here: <http://bit.ly/1We7dsp>. Call 706-546-1280 for more information. The Faith and Aging Summit is presented by the Northeast Georgia Area Agency on Aging, Athens Community Council on Aging, and Trinity Lutheran Church.

Inspiration from the Field

Readers, please share your success stories with us! In each issue, Georgia Interfaith Aging Action will feature faith-based communities making a difference in the lives of older Georgians. Let's hear from you! Contact us at CynthiaHaley.Dunn@dhs.ga.gov or 404-657-1515.