



PUBLICATION OF EAST CENTRAL KANSAS AREA AGENCY ON AGING

SERVING ANDERSON, COFFEY, FRANKLIN, LINN, MIAMI, & OSAGE COUNTIES

Nutrition Site Grand Reopening

by Tracy Crosley, Editor

June 22nd was the grand reopening of the Ottawa Nutrition Site. The in-person lunch service was suspended with Covid in March of 2020. After two long years, we were more than ready to have people back in our facility. Upon entering, you wouldn't recognize the place. It's amazing what a fresh coat of paint and some new carpet can do. Brenda, with Aunt B's Blossoms, made the transition complete by surprising us with fresh flowers for each table. It was such a sweet surprise! Upon entering, we were greeted by the lovely nutrition staff. Those ladies work so hard to prepare the meals and serve each person who walks through the door. We celebrated with a special treat of roast beef, mashed potatoes, carrots, and freshly baked rolls. Cherry crisp made with fresh cherries was, well, the cherry on top.

We know that Covid changed the way many of us interact with each other. Covid forced us to adapt to more solitude. During that time, on at least some level, most of us missed out on human interaction. Over the last two years, we have learned a lot about

precautions and how to interact in a safer manner. Our staff is ready, and it's time to get out and about again. It's time to greet one another and enjoy a meal together. Also, be on the lookout for some fun lunchtime activities in the near future. We look forward to seeing you soon!



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New Staff at ECKAAA



Deanna White

We welcome Deanna “Dee” to our nutrition staff as a Kitchen Assistant at our Ottawa location. Dee Grew up in the Williamsburg/Centropolis area, where she currently resides. Dee was a toll collector for the turnpike for 23 years. In her free time, she likes to ride motorcycles with her husband and watch NASCAR and NHRA racing. Dee loves her fellow staff and looks forward to driving on routes.



Kinlee Schulz

Kinlee is joining our nutrition staff as a baking assistant. She grew up in Princeton, KS and graduated from Pittsburg High school. Before coming to ECKAAA, she worked at COF. Kinlee enjoys baking and crocheting. She loves being able to help people while doing something that makes her happy.



Tracy Crosley

My name is Tracy, and I am the new Marketing and Outreach Coordinator. I have a bachelor’s degree in Speech, Language, and Hearing from the University of Kansas. Most recently, I spent 10 years with the Ottawa School District. I grew up in Shawnee, KS, where I also spent most of my adult life. Ten years ago, my husband and I decided to pack up our three children and moved to a little farm in Pomona, KS. In my free time, I enjoy coffee shop dates with friends, thrift store shopping, and traveling. I am passionate about helping people and building relationships. I’m grateful for the opportunity to be part of the ECKAAA team!



Wendy Charboneau

Wendy is joining our staff as the Lebo Site Manager. Wendy was born in Washington State. She and her husband both have retired from the Navy. After retirement, they moved to her husband’s hometown of Lebo. They have six children and two grandchildren. In her free time, Wendy enjoys being outside in nature, doing puzzles, reading, and being with her grandbabies. She is enjoying getting to know and serving the seniors in her area.



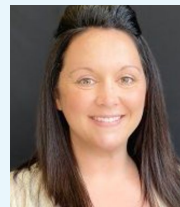
Misty Snyder

My name is Misty. I am 46 years old. I live in Lawrence, KS. I have been married for 25 years and have 2 boys and 2 grandbabies. I worked in the hospitality industry for 15 years before making a great change to work for ECKAAA. Leslea Rockers is a great boss and makes sure our community has helping hands.



**In Remembrance:
Kenneth Goudreau**

Kenneth was with us for a short time as the Nutrition Site Manager in Williamsburg. He was a long-time resident of the community and loved to make a difference. We greatly appreciated his hard work in getting more people to the Williamsburg site. He stated he loved getting to know the seniors and hearing the stories they told and the history they passed down. Kenneth will be missed by ECKAAA.



**Staff Person of the Quarter
Faith Sage**

Faith is the Nutrition Coordinator who oversees all twenty-four of the senior lunch sites and manages the central kitchen. She has a huge job and does it well! She is quick to step up and take on new projects that need to be done for the program while overseeing food orders, delivery trucks, kitchen and driver staff and meal routes. She is a busy woman every day! Faith has a passion for the program and those we serve and works hard to make sure that the 700+ meals served every day get where they need to go on time so that every person eating at a congregate site or at home has a nutritious meal. We could not run the nutrition program without her organizational skills and her work ethic. We appreciate everything you do, Faith!

**Volunteer of the Quarter
Paola Nutrition Site**

We have chosen all the volunteers who assist at the Paola Nutrition Site as our Volunteer of the Quarter because of their continued dedication to the program over the last seven (7) months. The agency has fell victim to the same struggles that other agencies and programs have faced in filling vacant job positions. The site has been maintaining services through the efforts of volunteers working in coordination with the central kitchen staff to make sure that meals continue to be served. Leanna Stanchfield, Senior Center Director, and Cindy Wilson, site volunteer, have worked tirelessly with ECKAAA staff to arrange routes for home delivery, to call meal counts in and to secure volunteers to deliver meals, and they have done it five (5) days a week. We are so appreciative that we have been able to maintain service all these months with their help.

We are probably missing some names but a huge thank you goes out to the following agencies and individuals for helping to deliver meals; Medical Lodge, Sam Green family, Kathy Peckman, Cindy Dial, Betty Kern, Don Poore, Lisa White of Vintage Park, Marais des Cygne Extension Service, Paola Police Department and Corrine Buchanan. You have been invaluable to our agency!

From The Director - Leslea Rockers



**Advocate for ECKAAA
Nutrition Will Be Missed**

In the winter of 2021, Paris Long sat in my office and offered his help to the nutrition program. It was most welcome! Paris proceeded to design a user-friendly and organized inventory database for the program and began a pull sheet system so that on any given day we would have an accurate count of what was on hand by item and where it was in the warehouse. He then began collaborating with our dietitian to coordinate menu planning with inventory. Our entire goal was to reduce waste and lower raw food costs.

As he sat in my office and I listened to him tell me his personal and professional background, I knew I was talking to a kind and intelligent person who had a passion for economics, cost control, and community service. He was so excited to describe what an efficient inventory could look like and how it could be used. I had told him my priority for the kitchen was an accurate inventory process and he got started!

We hit it off immediately and I trusted him to do what he said he would do and to work in the best interest of the program and those we serve. He always told me that we had to do everything with the client in mind as they were the customer. He was also a stickler for food safety rules and was never afraid to let a staff person know when they were not doing something like they should.

Paris was a joy to talk to and be around. He had health issues that he dealt with every day and more than once he let me know how much joy and purpose he found in being able to work with our program and use his skills. He wanted to help and contribute to something that helped others. He was funny and had a million stories to tell. He never complained and very few people with chronic health issues were probably as upbeat and optimistic about the future as he was. He was a study in good temperament and faith.

After Paris left our program earlier this year we talked on a regular basis. We were fans of the same TV, KU basketball, and political views so we had interesting and entertaining chats. He loved talking about his family and was

so proud of his wife and kids. Shortly before his death we were to have lunch again at my office and I am so heart-sick that we did not have the chance. We all have folks who become friends because of work and shared space and time, and I was lucky enough to have made a friendship with Paris through work. Our program will miss his wisdom and I will miss his friendship.

Save the Date

***Alphapointe Low Vision Support Group**

September 28, in Ottawa, Ks.

ECKAAA Conference room

117 S Main, Ottawa, KS

1:30pm

Call for details 785-242-7200

New to Medicare Seminar

October 12, 2022

117 S Main, Ottawa, KS

10am-Noon

Call for details 785-242-7200

2023 Dates: Jan 11th, April 12th, July 12th, Oct 11th

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= Caregiver's Corner

TOP 10 CAREGIVER TIPS FOR MAINTAINING HEALTH AND WELL-BEING

If you're a caregiver, one of the most important things you can do is carve out time for yourself. Try to make this a conscious effort every day. It can be as simple as spending 10 minutes taking a walk, diving into the latest best-seller or weeding your garden. Caring for yourself is one of the most important things you can do as a caregiver. Its key to maintaining your own health and well-being. When you feel better, you can take better care of your loved one. Keep these simple steps in mind to ensure you find the time and resources to take care of yourself:

1. Get regular physical activity. Regular, moderate-to-vigorous physical activity — even in small increments — can boost your energy level. Exercise reduces stress, helps you maintain a healthy weight, and can help you keep your blood pressure and cholesterol at healthy levels. Walking is a great way to get started, even if you only walk around the yard.
2. Maintain a heart-healthy diet. A healthy diet will give you more energy. Eating well can help prevent other health problems, too. If you have to “eat on the run,” try to choose nutritious snacks.
3. Make time for yourself. Take time every day for an activity you enjoy, such as reading, walking, crafts, cooking or listening to music. Whatever makes you happy and relaxes you can be therapeutic.
4. Keep humor in your life. It's true — laughter is good medicine. Try to find humor in your life every day. Watch a silly TV program or go to a movie that tickles your funny bone. Find things to laugh about with the loved one in your care — that person needs joy, too.
5. Get out and about. At least once a week, break out of your routine and go somewhere enjoyable. Visit the local coffee shop, attend religious events, take a class, visit a friend or just wander around the mall. If your loved one needs constant attention, ask for help. It's likely that someone will be happy to give up an hour or two a week so that you can get out for a breath of fresh air.
6. Watch out for depression. The demands placed on you as a caregiver can be difficult and stressful. If you are experiencing signs of signs of depression, talk to your health care professional. Often, depression can be managed with talk therapy or medication.
7. Take care of business. Keep your finances in check, work when you need to and don't stop planning for the future. If you allow yourself to be totally immersed in your caregiv-

- er responsibilities, it can be harder to re-integrate into life later on. Keep living.
8. Keep medical and dental appointments. Do all you can to maintain your health. If you're sick, you won't be able to care for your loved one. Ask for help when you need it so you can get away for your own medical appointments and take care of your health and well-being.
 9. Think positive. Take time every day to refresh your mind. Recognize your limitations and make peace with them. Let go of guilt. Pat yourself on the back for the job you're doing. If you're feeling guilty or angry, take a break.
 10. Stay connected with the outside world. Don't allow yourself to become isolated. Stay connected with family and friends, even if it's just by phone or online. Talk to friends about something other than your role as a caregiver.

Written by American Heart Association editorial staff and reviewed by science and medicine advisers.

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ANNOUNCEMENT: VOUCHER PROGRAM WRAPS UP

The ECKAAA Nutrition Restaurant Voucher Program will wrap up soon!

The last day to purchase vouchers was July 31, 2022.

All Vouchers were available to individuals ages 60 and over to use at five participating restaurants in Ottawa. A suggested donation of \$4.00 was made for each voucher. Those purchasing vouchers were

allowed 10 per month.

Vouchers must be used by August 31, 2022



**Money
Matter\$**
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**WHAT ARE THE BIGGEST RISKS
TO YOUR RETIREMENT**

You saved for years, made sacrifices and finally achieved your goal of retiring. Nothing can get in the way of your dreams now, right? Hopefully. But life isn't always that simple. Here's how to get ahead of some risks you might face in retirement.

RISK: OUTLIVING YOUR MONEY

Prepare by not taking too much from your investments – We typically recommend an initial annual withdrawal rate of 4%, with a 3% increase each year for inflation. However, the longer you expect to live, the lower that rate should be. Considering annuities with lifetime income benefits – Depending on your spending flexibility and how much you rely on your portfolio for income, you may want to consider annuities that guarantee an income payment for as long as you live.

**RISK: UNEXPECTED HEALTH CARE COSTS OR A
NEED FOR LONG-TERM CARE**

Prepare by considering supplemental coverage – Medicare Supplemental Insurance (Medigap) or Medicare Advantage (Part C) may help fill in the gaps for items that Medicare doesn't cover. Budgeting for long-term care costs – Even if you don't anticipate needing nursing home care, you should still consider planning for some type of assisted living or home health care costs. Protecting against long-term care expenses – Several options are available to help pay for long-term health care costs, including traditional long-term care insurance or combining life insurance with a long-term care benefits rider. Putting your wishes in writing – Powers of attorney, health care directives and living wills can help you outline your wishes for future care. Work with

your tax and legal professionals to create these legal documents.

RISK: MARKET DECLINES AND INFLATION

Prepare by staying diversified – No one can predict the financial markets, but knowing how much risk you are willing – and able – to take as well as having a properly constructed portfolio can help you prepare. This includes: Diversifying your investments among stocks (which can help combat inflation), bonds and cash so success isn't tied to one company or one type of investment. Sticking with quality investments with proven track records and rebalancing as appropriate. Keeping your focus on your long-term goals, not on short-term fluctuations. Assessing your risk tolerance – Determine how much risk you are willing and able to take, so you can be better prepared to stay on track during the inevitable short-term declines. Being flexible with your spending – You should regularly review your spending strategy and withdrawal rate – especially during years when the market doesn't perform well. Considering a CD/short-term fixed-income ladder – Laddering involves owning a variety of quality fixed-income investments with staggered maturity dates. By doing this, you don't have to try to guess how interest rates will act in the future. Owning a variety of quality fixed-income investments with maturities 5 years and less can help you navigate a down market.

RISK: PERSONAL LIABILITY

Prepare with umbrella liability insurance – This protection is designed to kick in when coverage on other policies, such as home or auto, has been exhausted. Asset ownership structures – Specific ownership structures designed to hold certain assets, such as a small business or rental property, could potentially reduce your personal liability in the case of an accident or lawsuit. How we can help There are other risks to consider when it comes to your retirement. But your financial advisor can walk through different scenarios with you to stress-test your strategy and make sure you stay on track – even if one of these risks becomes a reality.

NEWS
from ECKAAA Nutrition Program




Wow! Halfway through the year already! It seems like we just started 2022 but, here we are, and still having to be mindful of COVID. Our priority is to keep you safe, and we are doing our part in wearing masks while cooking, serving, and delivering food. While COVID numbers are lower than they were a year ago, we still understand the importance of safe practices.

We are thankful that we have been able to have our sites open and active! If you have not visited a site recently, we invite you to come back and try it out. Meals on Wheels has been trying new menu items including omelets, biscuits and sausage gravy, country fried steaks, hoagie sandwiches, and just this year we have started a quarterly celebration where we serve roast beef! New menu items are not the only thing we have going on though, recently, the Ottawa site received a facelift. We are excited about the updates and are looking forward to having that site up and running again. As a site that used to host many people before COVID hit, we are hopeful that we will be able to get back to serving the community. Our grand re-opening is scheduled for June 22nd, and will be open Monday – Friday and serving lunch at 11:30am. If you would like to join us, please call 785-521-5170 to reserve your meal for the next day.


Finally, the East Central Kansas Area Agency on Aging Nutrition Program serves six counties and an average of 700 meals per day. Our focus is to reach those who are over sixty and homebound (not able to drive or leave home without assistance) and provide them with a nutritionally balanced meal as well as those who are over 60 and can drive to one of our sites. Here you can enjoy our meals as well as socialize with others. If you are under 60, you are welcome at any of our sites, but you are required to

pay full price for the meal (\$7.00). For a full listing of sites please visit eckaaa.org.

If you know someone or are someone who may need home-delivered meals, please call our agency and we will help you get set up. 785-242-7200



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most adorable
volunteers.**



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MEDICARE

A DOUBLE BENEFITS FOR YOU AND OUR COMMUNITIES

by: W. Kay Voorhees (ECKAAA, SHICK Counselor),

When we became eligible for Medicare, my hubby was still working and planning to do so “indefinitely”. With good corporate insurance plans, we didn’t sign-up for Medicare. But I knew that the day was approaching when we would need to do so and suspicioned that he’d surprise me one day with “I retired today” – triggering a panic attack. So, I started to investigate our choices - including whether we should consider Medicare even if we were covered by his employer plan. Having spent most of my working life in the financial services industry, running my own consulting company and our household, I naively thought that figuring out the pros and cons of Medicare would be a piece of cake – after all, it was just insurance, right?

So, I dove into research - reading, reading, and reading again the Medicare and You Handbook, blogs, and advertisements. You name it, I read it. The more I read, the more confused I got! I could not then (and still can’t to this day) believe how complicated the health care program for older adults and the disabled is. I needed help. Shortly after that “decision,” I came across an advertisement seeking volunteers to better educate Kansans about Medicare. Volunteers could not be active in the insurance industry nor offer paid services to those seeking assistance but if they qualified and agreed to volunteer for a year, training was free. I thought, “I can do that.”

I soon learned that the Federal government created the State Health Insurance Assistance Program (SHIP) in 1990 funding it through ACL grants directed to states. A SHIP program was set up in every state to provide free counseling and assistance via telephone and face-to-face interactive sessions, public education presentations, and media activities to Medicare beneficiaries, their families, and caregivers to help them make informed decisions about their care and benefits. SHIP services support all eligible people including those with limited incomes, those under the age of 65 with disabilities, and individuals who are dually eligible for Medicare and Medicaid. In Kansas, the program, called Senior Health Insurance Counseling for Kansas (SHICK), was established in 1992 and is coordinated by the Kansas Department for Aging & Disability Services through local Aging and Disability offices and many KSU Extension Offices. When I took my first class, trainers were quick to point out that the SHIP mission is to empower, educate, and assist Medicare-eligible individuals through objective outreach, counseling, and training and that the SHIP vision is to be the known and trusted community resource for Medicare information AND that volunteer conflicts of interest are taken seriously. We are reminded of that annually.

Training helped with the mechanics and details but like everything I’ve ever done, it was the application that was most beneficial. Working with individuals is incredibly eye-opening, educational, and rewarding.

In my first counseling event, I shadowed a more experienced volunteer. By the afternoon she decided that I was ready to solo assigning my first “solo” client - a small sweet looking elderly widow. Even before sitting down, the client began softly sharing her reasons for coming to the clinic- indicating that when she signed up for Medicare (some 10-15 years earlier), she had become “angry” upon learning that Medicare didn’t cover “everything” and had refused to purchase a drug plan because she “was healthy, didn’t take any drugs and didn’t need it”. With her voice, tone, and irritation increasing she revealed that later she’d needed specialized drugs and had enrolled in a drug plan. With her voice rising higher and fists clenched she said they had charged her a penalty for not having enrolled in a plan BUT she had solved that because “Well I just dropped the plan as soon as I didn’t need the drugs anymore. I need a drug plan again.” My heart almost stopped. I remember wondering to myself why anyone, once they learned there were penalties assessed for not having had a drug plan when first available, would then drop the plan. I found myself in the unenviable position of advising her that now she was about to incur additional penalties due to her decision to drop the plan. To say she was unhappy would be an understatement. She made it clear that I was supposed to fix it “without penalty or cost” and find her a plan. After what seemed like an excruciating time, she left with a new drug plan, albeit with penalties, and threats to call her congressperson... I wondered if all my meetings were going to be as tiring and stressful as this one. Fortunately, they were not.

Later, when my husband’s decision to retire did occur in much the fashion I had feared, coming home from work one day and saying, “I’m retiring on August 23”. With that statement, I was the one who wasn’t happy since I knew that the company plan would end on the last day the month, and I had scheduled surgery early the next month. But I knew that I could expedite enrollment since I’d already reviewed and considered our options and that a short delay in surgery would avoid dealing with multiple insurance companies. Thanks to my training and volunteer work, I was able to move through the process quickly, smoothly, and with only a little stress. However, I still never advocate anyone delay their retirement decisions until the last minute, but I can empathize with those who do.

Most of my volunteer efforts involve New to Medicare issues, annual open enrollment reviews/changes, extra help questions, occasionally, disability or special needs and some Federal, State, or corporate Medicare coordination issues. I continue to be amazed when I meet with individuals transitioning to Medicare for the first time who think that once they join Medicare it will pay all their medical expenses (not true) and I often wonder where they got that idea. I’m amazed by those who think that they can make these decisions a week before or after they retire and not have regrets. I love the look on the faces of individuals who sit through a New to

Medicare session and leave having some idea of their options and their next steps and the look on the face of someone who realizes for the first time that changing drug plans can result in significant savings. I know that SHICK volunteers make a difference.

I began this journey in 2012 and have no idea how many people I’ve counseled. But, since 2022 open enrollment began on October 15, 2021, I have personally met with 78 individuals for a total of 73.5 hours. Sometimes the individual we work with is cranky or rude but usually they are confused, worried, and generally thrilled to have someone help them figure out where they are, what their options are and which of the TV ads, mailings, and phone calls they see/receive are from Medicare or an advertiser.

We are nearing the time when 2023 Medicare changes are announced. Medicare Open Enrollment for 2023 begins October 15 and ends December 7, 2022. There are sure to be changes in both Advantage and drug plans. We could use more volunteers – so come to training and join the volunteer ranks learn for yourself and help our communities. OR, at least, remember SHICK is there for you, your family, and your friends- use this free resource to ask your questions by calling ECKAAA at 785-242-7200.

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DEAR DIRECT SUPPORT PROFESSIONAL

by Kristin Densmore: CDDO Quality Assurance Liaison



Dear Direct Support Professional, Thank you! You are doing an amazing job! You work long hours, in a physically demanding job, providing dedicated, compassionate care for others while away from your family. Employee retention in this industry is a reality which shows that you are not doing this for economic gain, but for the satisfaction of caring for others. There are a variety of professions that pay a higher salary you could have chosen and yet, you chose to provide for others. As DSP's you are the unsung heroes who consistently rise to the occasion. All of you deserve thanks for the work that you do. Being a DSP is more than a job. It is about establishing reliable relationships with the individuals and caring for them as if they are a part of your own family. Because of you, individuals with disabilities have more independence to live their preferred lifestyles. Because of you, they can achieve the highest quality of life, be involved in the community, work, and attend doctor appointments. Because of you, care is taken in the most personal aspects of life that most people take for granted including personal care, feeding, bathing, etc. Because of you, they have someone who is interested and supports them in their hobbies, collections, and interests. Because of you individuals with disabilities are given dignity, respect, uplifted and are an inspiration to others. They are included and respected in our communities. We see you all around our community, in homes, schools, rehabilitation facilities, hospitals, and group homes. What you do matters, more than you realize. We see you not just doing your job but having fun and playing and brightening the lives of others. The care you provide is impossible to define by mere words. You are an integral part of life in the lives of our individuals with disabilities. Your tireless around the clock commitment ensures they are receiving the care they need with dignity. You know those in your care. You are there for the heartache and the joy. Your hard work makes a profound impact, not only on the individuals, but on their family members and the important people in their lives. Each of you meets the physical, mental, spiritual, and emotional needs of those to whom you provide care for, giving support to all who may need it. Please know that what you do is truly appreciated. You

are respected. You are valued. We are truly grateful for what you do. You are a trusted and valued member of this community. Thank you!



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Consumers Beware! Avoiding Identity Theft & Scam

Submitted by Janae McNally

According to the FTC (Federal Trade Commission) in 2020, there were 1.4 million reports of Identity Theft-doubling the number from 2019 amounting to 15.1 billion dollars in monetary losses.

Today, there are a wide variety of large businesses that have been developed to lurk on people who have assets. Technology has opened avenues for people with bad intentions to steal your identity or coax you into a scam simply by gathering your personal information from an email or financial transaction.

It knows no stranger, youth included. A lot of it stems around technology and new approaches that scammers, especially, grab on to in order to prey on individuals.

Common warning signs of scams or other illegal activity include emails or phone calls that request such personal information as social security number, bank account number or credit cards.

Another red flag for scams is if someone contacts you without you making the initial contact, and tells you that something needs to be done immediately, or someone calls from Social Security needing your personal information or the IRS with

threats of arrest if outstanding taxes aren't paid. Remember, the IRS will only contact you with a notice through the mail. Someone on the outside really doesn't know what's going on in your life or your home. For them to come along and say something is wrong or urgent, that's one of those things you need to step back and think about, or just hang up."

Professional scammers often seek opportunities when people feel unsettled – such as during the recent pandemic, after a natural disaster, or after the passing of a loved one – and "prey on those vulnerabilities."

It's important for you to have a great relationship with aging family members, so that you trust each other, Check in with them; be aware of what's going on in their lives, and know what information they're giving to others. If something does go wrong, support them.

A good rule of thumb is to make a policy that you do not make money decisions over the telephone or through an initial email, give yourself time to step back, do some research and ask friends about what you're considering.

And always remember that if it sounds too good to be true, then it probably is.

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KANSAS LEGAL SERVICES, INC.,

THE LONG-TERM CARE OMBUDSMAN AND THE KANCARE OMBUDSMAN

By: By Tom Lasley, Attorney



As you may already know, Kansas Legal Services, Inc. (KLS) is a Kansas not-for-profit law firm with the primary mission of providing free or reduced fee legal services to the most vulnerable people in our communities, assisting them in overcoming their legal obstacles, and thus, better enabling them to meet their basic human, safety and financial needs.

KLS has 11 offices throughout the state of Kansas. Our Kansas City, Kansas office, located at 400 State Avenue, KCK, services the East Central Kansas Area Agency on Aging (ECKAAA) in Ottawa. The ECKAAA services the counties of Franklin, Anderson, Coffey, Linn, Miami and Osage. We meet with residents of those counties at the ECKAAA offices in Ottawa at 117 S. Main on the first Tuesday of each month, by appointment only. In order to qualify for free legal services under our Area Agency on Aging (AAA) grants, you have to be at least 60 years of age, a resident of Kansas, and a citizen of the United States or a lawful permanent resident. If you would like to meet with our KLS AAA attorney for some free legal services, all you need to do is call the ECKAAA offices at 785-242-7200 to schedule an appointment during one of our site visits.

KLS handles a wide array of legal matters for our applicants, particularly drafting Wills, Powers of Attorney, Living Wills and Transfer on Death Deeds. However, lately, we have been receiving an influx of inquiries about Medicaid, such as:

- (1) Question: What is the spend-down qualification for Medicaid?
Answer: In order to qualify for Medicaid the applicant must have spent down his or her non-exempt assets to \$2,000.00 or less. The house and one automobile are exempt assets.
- (2) Question: What is the “lookback” period on making legal transfers in order to qualify for Medicaid?
Answer: In order to spend down one’s non-exempt assets to \$2,000.00 in order to qualify for Medicaid, an applicant cannot make gifts or transfers of their property to anyone for less than fair market value less than 60 months to applying for Medicaid. If the gift or transfer was made more than 60 months prior to applying for Medicaid, then that transfer is valid and will not be a disqualifying act for Medicaid

- purposes.
- (3) Question: What is the Medicaid Recovery Lien and how does that affect an applicant’s family’s ability to keep the house after having entered a long-term care facility or after having passed away?
Answer: The Recovery Lien is the lien that Medicaid is allowed to file against the applicant’s house in order to help Medicaid recoup whatever it has paid out for the applicant while the applicant was receiving Medicaid. However, that Medicaid Recovery lien will not be executed on until both the applicant and the applicant’s spouse have died or both are no longer living in the house.
- (4) Question: Who do I contact if I am having problems at my long-term care facility?
Answer: (Long-Term Care Ombudsman Office. See detailed discussion below)

The Long-Term Care Ombudsman Office acts as an advocate for residents of long-term nursing facilities.

The Mission of the Long-Term Care Ombudsman is: “to act as an advocate for the well-being, safety, and the rights of long-term care residents by assisting them in attaining the highest quality of life.” One of the principal functions of this ombudsman program is to investigate and resolve complaints made by long-term care residents or made by others on behalf of the residents. It helps the residents achieve equitable solutions in their facilities. In short, the Long-Term Care Ombudsman is a problem solver for long-term care residents, and it is a negotiator to help solve the resident’s problems. The Ombudsman regularly visits long-term care facilities to monitor the level of care and conditions, and to make itself readily available to the residents in order to better address their complaints and concerns.

The Long-Term Care Ombudsman Office is located in Topeka, and its toll free phone number is: 877-662-8362. The current Regional Long-Term Care Ombudsman for Region 7, which covers the above counties, is Gina Elliott who can be reached at 620-778-1035 and at Gina.Elliott@ks.gov. For more detailed information on how to file long-term care complaints with the Long-Term Care Ombudsman, you should go to its website at: www.kansasombudsman.ks.gov.

- (5) Question: Who do I contact if I am having administrative problems with Medicaid, such as qualifying for, enrolling in, or continuing to receive various Medicaid assistance programs?

Answer: (KanCare Ombudsman Office. See detailed discussion immediately below)

The KanCare Ombudsman helps individuals navigate through issues they are having with KanCare.

The KanCare Ombudsman office helps educate people on how to qualify for KanCare (Medicaid) and on a limited basis, helps people enroll in KanCare. KanCare is the program through which the State of Kansas has been administering Medicaid (health insurance for low income individuals) since 2013. KanCare provides healthcare services to more than 415,000 needy, disabled and elderly Kansas residents, and it contracts with different healthcare companies to provide healthcare assistance to Kansas Medicaid recipients.

The KanCare Ombudsman assists people who have a wide array of problems with KanCare, especially when they can’t resolve their issues on their own. These are issues such as problems qualifying for, enrolling in, or continuing to receive Medicaid assistance under various programs. The KanCare Ombudsman also helps people who have issues with the Home and Community Based Services (HCBS) waiver program that provides services to Kansans with disabilities, and other long-term, in-home care services.

The KanCare Ombudsman Office is also located in Topeka,

but in different offices than the Long-Term Care Ombudsman offices. Its toll free phone number is 855-643-8180. The current KanCare Ombudsman is Kerrie Bacon. For more detailed information on how to request Medicaid assistance from the KanCare Ombudsman, you should go to its website at: www.kancare.ks.gov/kancare-ombudsman-office.

Kansas Legal Services and the Ombudsman Offices
When Kansas Legal Services (KLS) receives complaints about resident’s problems at long-term care facilities or about KanCare administration problems, one of the first things we may do is contact the appropriate Ombudsman office for additional assistance. We are fortunate to have them.

If you ever have any legal problems dealing with elder issues, always feel free to contact KLS at 1-800-723-6953 and apply for assistance. We will see if we can qualify you for free legal assistance through one of our grants and help you in any way that we can. You can also learn more about KLS and all of other our services by going to our website at: www.kansaslegalservices.org.

(Tom Lasley was in the private practice of law for over 40 years, with a specialty in Estate Planning and Elder Law, prior to joining KLS in 2018 as one of its attorneys.)



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TECHNOLOGY

Technology for Seniors

Technology offers a wide range of benefits to older adults. Below are just a few of our top reasons why embracing new tech can benefit seniors as they age in place!

- Provides access to transportation and food
- Monitors health and wellness
- Keeps seniors safe
- Informs you about the latest news and trends
- Provides entertainment
- Alerts caregivers if something is irregular
- Provides peace of mind
- Connects them with friends, family, and healthcare providers

Seniors Continue to Adopt New Technology

If new technology intimidates you, you’re not alone! But seniors have proven time and time again that they can adjust to the ever-evolving tech landscape as well as any other age group. In 2019, more than half of older adults bought a new tech product, whether it be a smartphone, laptop, or smart home device.¹ Once seniors are connected to the internet, getting online becomes part of their daily routine. In fact, roughly 75 percent of older adults with an internet connection report that they use it daily.² The coronavirus pandemic is a perfect example of how quickly seniors learned the ins and outs of new technologies to stay connected with loved ones by using FacTime, hosting meetings on Zoom, and hopping on telemedicine calls with physicians. We are confident that with a little guidance and practice, you can get the hang of any technology you want to learn. And we are here as a resource for you every step of the way! Let’s take a look at some of our favorite tech services for seniors.

Mobile Apps for Seniors

Mobile applications, or mobile apps, are basically computer programs designed to run specifically on your smartphone or tablet. Smartphones and tablets come preloaded with some mobile apps, just like if you were to purchase a new computer, there would be programs preloaded on it and some you would need to download. Likewise, there are mobile apps you can download for free or purchase through the Apple App Store for Apple devices or Google Play for Android devices. These days, there’s a mobile app for everything! Your favorite stores probably have a mobile app so you can easily shop via your mobile device. There are apps to keep you connected to friends and family, such as FaceTime and Facebook Messenger. And there’s no chance you’ll be left twiddling your thumbs with all the game, video, music, and audiobook apps just a tap away. To get you started, here are the best apps for seniors to keep you safe, connected, and entertained!

Video Chatting Apps and Services

These days, one of the easiest ways to check in on our friends and family is to hop on a video call. Free services like Zoom,

Skype, and FaceTime let you call your loved ones whenever you like and see their smiling faces, even if you live far away from one another. Whether you’re checking in on the grandbabies, having a wine night with your friends, or hosting a book club, video chatting helps you stay connected.

What Are the Best Gadgets for Seniors?

Cell Phones and Smartphones Phones have come a long way since their debut in the 19th century! Our cell phones are with us all the time and many of us can hardly remember life without them. Ninety-one percent of seniors own a cell phone, 53 percent of which own a smartphone. Whether you keep it simple with a flip phone or sport the latest and greatest, seniors can benefit from cell phones by chatting with friends and family, utilizing social networks, and keeping up with the latest news. Don’t forget the ability to snap cute photos of pets and grandbabies!

Tablets and E-Readers

Tablets are great for entertainment gurus! Seniors may prefer a tablet’s larger screen for reading, watching videos, playing brain games, and browsing social networks. If you’re a bookworm, an e-reader could become your new best friend! With the ability to store hundreds of your favorite books on a tablet, you’ve got your own mobile library. The large, bold text and backlit screen is easy on your eyes. Plus, tablets are smaller and lighter than most books, so they’re easier to grip, and your wrists won’t ache after a while. Some e-readers are even waterproof – yes, you can read your books on the beach or in the tub. Perfect!

Fitness Trackers

Fitness trackers are wearable devices, great for active seniors who desire health insights and accountability with their commitment to keep moving. Popular trackers such as Fitbits are sleek and double as a wristwatch. Fitbits connect to your smartphone, and most are waterproof. These little devices track your heart rate, steps, calories burned, monitor your sleep, and more. If you enjoy some friendly competition, you can share your progress and compete with friends on the Fitbit app. Game on! Our editor-in-chief, Jeff Hoyt, testing out his Fitbit Sense smartwatch.

Medical Alert Systems

Seniors who desire to age in place should look into medical alert systems, especially if they live alone. Ranging from basic to high-tech, medical alert systems can keep you safe both in your home and on the go. By wearing a pendant around the neck or wrist, you can discreetly have help at your fingertips 24/7. Pushing the help button connects seniors to a call center, where they can speak to a trained operator any time of day. Some medical alert systems have more robust features like fall detection, companion apps, activity monitoring, and caregiver integrations. Most equipment can be bought for a one-time fee, plus an additional monthly service fee.

Adapted from Morgan Redding’s article with the same title on seniorliving.org

RESOURCE CENTER FOR INDEPENDENT LIVING

What does the ADA stand for?

The ADA stands for the Americans with Disabilities Act and it became law on July 26, 1990 signed by President George H. W. Bush. It is a civil rights law that prohibits discrimination against individuals with disabilities in all areas of public life such as jobs, schools, transportation, and all public and private places that are open to the public. The purpose of the law is to make sure that people with disabilities have the same rights and opportunities as everyone else. The ADA is divided into five titles that relate to different areas of public life.

Title 1 – Employment: this title is designed to help people with disabilities access the same employment opportunities and benefits available to people without disabilities. Employers must provide reasonable accommodations to qualified applicants or employees upon request.

Title 2 – State and Local Government: this title prohibits discrimination on the basis of disability by “public entities,” which are programs, services, and activities provided or made available by state and local governments. The public entity must make sure its programs, services, and activities are accessible to individuals with disabilities. For example this might include public bus service, parks, public schools, and universities.

Title 3 – Public Accommodations: this title prohibits private places of public accommodation from discriminating against individuals with disabilities. Examples of public accommodations include hotels, restaurants, retail merchants, doctor’s offices, golf courses, private schools, daycare centers, health

clubs, sports stadiums, and movie theaters.

Title 4 – Telecommunications: this title requires telephone and Internet companies to provide a nationwide system of interstate and intrastate telecommunications relay services that allow individuals with hearing and speech disabilities to communicate over the telephone. This title also requires closed captioning of federally funded public service announcements.

Title 5 – Miscellaneous Provisions: This title contains a variety of provisions relating to the ADA as a whole. Examples are state immunity, attorney’s fees, and its impact on insurance providers and benefits. This title also provides a list of certain conditions that are not to be considered disabilities.

Now you know what the ADA is, take a minute to think about life without the ADA. Do automatic doors, elevators, curb cuts, ramps, accommodations in the workplace and accessible transportation help make communities more accessible and people independent? These are just a few examples of things supported by the ADA that everyone with or without disabilities benefit from every day. During the month of July, RCIL is celebrating the 32nd ADA Anniversary during its RCIL Friends group meetings in El Dorado, Emporia, Eureka, and Osage City. Everyone is welcome to attend and learn more about the ADA! Contact RCIL at 785-528-3105 if you would like to attend or want more information.

FROM THE EDITOR



I feel like I hit the ground running in my first few weeks at ECKAAA. There are so many names to learn and agencies we connect with. It's amazing how all the details of the agency work together. I'm enjoying every minute! This issue of *The Golden Years* might look a little different. It might be missing some of

our regular contributions, though I tried to include all the key components. As I strive to keep *The Golden Years* interesting and informative, I welcome your feedback. I would also love any photos and story ideas you are willing to share. My goal going forward is to start including stories and photos from the different communities we serve. With six unique counties and numerous individual communities, I think our readers will enjoy hearing about some of the positive ways we take care of each other. I look forward to getting out and finding ways to we can work together to make a difference.

The Golden Years

Published by:
East Central Kansas Area Agency on Aging

Leslea Rockers, Executive Director
Tracy Crosley, Editor

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