



TRI-VALLEY Current

Information from Tri-Valley Inc.

Serving people over 60, younger people with disabilities, and caregivers

"Home With You"

Fall 2013

Falls Prevention

Did you know?

Every 15 seconds, an older adult is seen in an emergency room for a fall-related injury and among those 65 and older, falls are the leading cause of injury death.

Some steps to avoid a fall are:

- ◆ Exercise regularly
- ◆ Review medications with doctor or pharmacist
- ◆ Check vision annually
- ◆ Keep your home safe—remove tripping hazards, etc.

(more details page 3)



Take a look at Tri-Valley's new website:

www.trivalleyinc.org

HERE COMES "ONE CARE"

What is the new "One Care" health plan?

Starting October 1st, Massachusetts will offer a new health care plan for people between the ages of 21 and 64 who are on Medicare Parts A & B, and MassHealth Standard or CommonHealth (Medicaid). Someone who joins the plan before turning 65 can stay in the plan beyond the age of 65 - but there are other plans for seniors that should be investigated as well.



The One Care plan will coordinate all your Medicare and MassHealth medical and pharmacy services, plus personal care attendants, mental health services, substance abuse, adult day care, nursing facility care, dental services, hearing aids, vision care, chiropractic care, podiatry and many other supports. You will also have a Care Coordinator to help you get the complete care you need.

There are currently three providers offering the One Care plans. Not all plans will be available in all areas. Some parts of the state will have no One Care plan at all.

One Care is not a mandatory program. If you are on **MassHealth AND Medicare**, the state will send you a One Care information packet. If you don't choose a plan, MassHealth may sign you up for a plan - but you have the right to tell MassHealth you do not wish to join any plan - and to keep receiving your care the same way you do now.

Before joining any plan, you can check to see if your current doctor or other providers are in that plan. You can also check to see if the medications you need are offered by that plan, and if you have to pay part of the cost for your prescriptions. Before joining any plan, you have the right to a free counseling session with a SHINE Counselor (Serving the Health Information Needs of Everyone) to help choose a plan.

Basic home care services - like help with bathing, dressing, toileting and walking are available from One Care plans. To help you figure out what long term services you need, you have the right to have a Long Term Services Coordinator on your care team, who is your advocate, and is not an employee of the One Care plan. This Long Term Service Coordinator is a new position not found in other health care plans. You can add a Long Term Service Coordinator at any time.

If you currently receive services from Tri-Valley, or another Aging Service Access Point in the state, you can continue to receive these services if you chose to enroll in the One Care Plan.

(continued page 2)



*A message from
Marilyn*

Weather Emergencies

Recent clear sunny days have been unseasonably cool, and reminders that fall and winter will soon be here. Now is the time to prepare for fall hurricanes, winter snowstorms and other weather emergencies or conditions.

For power outages, have flashlights with fresh batteries located on a bedside table, a kitchen counter or next to your favorite chair. Battery operated lamps and forehead lamps are very handy because they leave hands free for tasks.

Make certain you have enough ready-to-eat food in your cupboard along with a non-electric can opener. If your water comes from a well, make sure that you have emergency water on hand.

Now is the time to create your emergency plan. Which family members and neighbors will check on you in a weather emergency? Where will you go during an extended power outage? How will you get there? Who will clear your steps and sidewalks of snow and ice so that meals-on-wheels can be delivered safely?

Now is the time to plan and talk with people who will assist you. While you're talking to them, ask them to help you replace the batteries in your smoke alarms and clear the leaves from your gutters if you live in your own home.

All these suggestions may seem like a lot of work, but now is the time to prepare for fall and winter storms.

Marilyn

Program Updates

- ◆ **Tri-Valley Nutrition Program Announces First Donation Increase in 12 Years** — Effective October 1, 2013, our program will raise the *suggested, voluntary* donation to \$3.00 for all meals. Our last increase occurred in 2001. The cost of food, transportation and salaries has risen dramatically during the past 12 years. Participant donations represent 14% of the total operating revenue for our program. It is important that participants contribute whatever they can afford toward the cost of their meals so our program can continue to provide healthy, low-cost food. As always, no eligible senior will be denied service based on their income or their ability to make a donation.
- ◆ **Changes to Tri-Valley's Private Pay Personal Emergency Response System** — Rates for the standard personal emergency response system (PERS) and installation have been reduced. New additions include a cellular PERS for people without home phone lines and a medication dispenser. Now and through the end of December, we are offering a FREE installation and FREE first month of service for new subscribers on any of the units (see coupon on last page).
- ◆ **Upcoming Nutrition Education** — *Bacteria, the Good, the Bad and the Ugly* — free presentations coming to Community Dining Centers starting October 4th. Lou Pilczak RD, LDN will present information about recent food borne illness outbreaks, the effect on older adults and share lessons that have been learned plus free food samples. Call Tri-Valley's Nutrition Dept. at 1-800-286-6640 to find a location closest to you and for additional information. All are welcome.

“ONE CARE” *(continued)*

Working with your team, you will help develop a Personal Care Plan, which lists your goals for remaining independent. Only people you want will be on your care team.

MassHealth will be mailing out an enrollment guide about each One Care plan to everyone who qualifies for MassHealth. The guide will include phone numbers to call for more information. When you get your mailing, you can choose a plan, or you can tell MassHealth you don't want to join any plan. If you do nothing, MassHealth may choose a plan for you. You will then have two months to ask for another plan, or to say you don't want to be in the plan at all. If you get a packet in the mail, call 1-800-841-2900 to ask MassHealth customer service any questions you have. Learn more at: www.mass.gov/masshealth/onecare.

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FALLS PREVENTION AWARENESS

Each year, one in every three adults age 65 and older falls, but less than half speak to their healthcare provider about it. Among older adults, falls are the leading cause of injury death. They are also the most common cause of non-fatal injuries and hospital admissions for trauma.

Fall Injuries

- People age 75 and older who fall are four to five times more likely than those age 65 to 74 to be admitted to a long-term care facility for a year or longer.
- Rates of fall-related fractures among older women are more than twice those for men. Over 95% of hip fractures are caused by falls. In 2009, there were 271,000 hip fractures and the rate for women was almost three times the rate for men.

How Can Older Adults Prevent Falls?

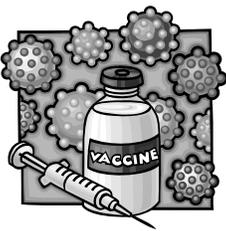
- Exercise regularly. It is important that the exercises focus on increasing leg strength and improving balance, and that they get more challenging over time. Tai Chi programs are especially good.
- Ask your doctor or pharmacist to review your medicines (both prescription and over-the-counter) to identify medicines that may cause side effects or interactions such as dizziness or drowsiness.
- Have your eyes checked by an eye doctor at least once a year and update your eyeglasses to maximize your vision. Consider getting a pair with single vision distance lenses for some activities such as walking outside.
- Make your home safer by reducing tripping hazards, adding grab bars inside and outside the tub or shower and next to the toilet, adding railings on both sides of stairways and improving the lighting in your home.

How to Lower Hip Fracture Risk

- Get adequate calcium and vitamin D from food and/or supplements.
- Do weight bearing exercise.
- Get screened and, if needed, treated for osteoporosis.

(Source: Centers for Disease Control and Prevention/www.cdc.gov)

Questions For the Flu Season



Is it OK to get a flu shot at a retail store or clinic instead of at my physician's office?

Yes. Influenza vaccines are now widely available at retail stores, pharmacies, workplace flu clinics, and many more places. You should get vaccinated at a place that is most convenient for you.

Can I get influenza from the flu shot?

No. The flu shot does not contain the live virus so it is impossible to get influenza from the vaccine.

Who should not get a flu shot?

The flu vaccine should not be given to anyone with a severe allergic reaction to any vaccine component, including eggs or egg products, or anyone who has had a serious reaction to a previous flu shot, or has experienced Guillain-Barré syndrome.

I hear there is a higher dose option, does Medicare cover the cost of the higher dose option?

Yes. Both vaccine options are covered by Medicare Part B with no co-pay.

Talk to your health care provider today about the dangers of the flu, the benefits of vaccination and the best vaccine option to meet the needs of your age group.

(See more at: <http://www.ncoa.org/improve-health/community-education/flu--you/learn-about-flu.html>)



TRI-VALLEY, INC.
10 Mill Street
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and caregivers.*

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800AgeInfo

Information for Massachusetts Elders and Their Families

1-800-AGE-INFO (1-800-243-4636)

www.800ageinfo.com

Help From SHINE

During the annual Medicare Open Enrollment (Oct. 15—Dec. 7) you will have a chance to change your plan for next year. SHINE Counselors can help you understand your health insurance options.

Tri-Valley hosts a SHINE Counselor one day a week for individuals who need this type of assistance. Appointments may be set through Tri-Valley's I&R Department at 1-800-286-6640.

You can access SHINE directly through the state-wide line at 1-800-AGE-INFO (1-800-243-4636). SHINE (Serving the Health Information of Everyone) is coordinated by the Massachusetts Executive Office of Elder Affairs in partnership with Councils on Aging, Tri-Valley and other agencies.

If you do not wish to receive this newsletter, contact us via e-mail at info@tves.org or call the Tri-Valley office.