



MI Health Link

APRIL 2024 BULLETIN

**OLDER
AMERICANS
MONTH**



POWERED BY CONNECTION: MAY 2024

Monthly Spotlight:

Older Americans Month

Every May, the Administration for Community Living leads the nation's observance of Older Americans Month (OAM). The theme for this year is Powered by Connection, which recognizes the profound impact that meaningful relationships and social connections have on our health and well-being. Connectedness plays a

vital role in supporting independence and aging in place by combatting isolation, loneliness, and other issues.

Older Americans Month was established in 1963 when at the time, there were only 17 million living Americans that had reached their 65th birthday. Around a third of older Americans lived in poverty, and programs to meet their needs were not many. For that reason, there was a growth of interest in older Americans and their concerns. In April 1963, a meeting was held between President John F. Kennedy and members of the National Council of Senior Citizens (NCSC), leading to the designation of May as Senior Citizens Month, now Older Americans Month.

At first, Older Americans Month was observed as an appreciation of past and present older Americans for their contributions to the country, especially those who defended the country. Since then, every president has been issuing a formal proclamation during or before May, requesting all citizens to pay tribute to older Americans in their communities.

Each of us play an important role in helping to celebrate Older Americans Month in our communities. Here are ideas for how to get involved and show support:

1. Share Facts on the Benefits of Social Connections:

Education is key to highlighting why powered by connection is an appropriate theme. Share information on how social ties directly impact older adults' mental, cognitive, and physical health:

Maintains Cognitive Function: Regular interaction with close friends and family lowers the risks for cognitive decline and dementia. Social and mentally stimulating activities build cognitive reserve.

Supports Physical Health: Relationships help older adults better manage chronic illnesses, from providing emotional support to directly assisting with medical visits and care tasks.

Aids Recovery: Strong social ties lead to better mental health outcomes after losses or hardships by providing grieving support.

2. Promote Local Older Adult Programs:

Spread the word on local programs helping older adults stay engaged, connected, and contributing to their communities. Great options include senior centers, intergenerational volunteer programs, continuing education classes, exercise groups tailored to older adults, book clubs, peer counseling, and social clubs. These programs lead to new meaningful friendships and support networks that enhance quality of life and an ongoing sense of purpose.

3. Help Overcome Obstacles to Connections:

Look at what barriers older adults in your community face in accessing social opportunities and connections with loved ones. Two of the biggest are the lack of accessible and affordable local transportation and the inability to adequately utilize communication technology/devices like cell phones, computers, and tablets. Consider volunteering to drive older adults to community events and programs. Also, provide technology assistance through one-on-one tutoring to stay connected using devices, apps, video calling, and social media.

4. Encourage Intergenerational Events:

Suggest local community groups host activities and events to bring younger and older Americans together. Examples include oral history projects, mentoring programs, art and music events, skill-sharing workshops, and more. These provide opportunities to trade stories and experiences that promote mutual understanding and respect.

5. Inspire #PoweredByConnection Sharing:

Motivate older adults to share personal stories on social media about what connections mean to them using the hashtag #PoweredByConnection. This shows online audiences the positive impact relationships have on older adults' lives. It also spreads awareness of the 2024 OAM theme and older Americans' continued value and contributions.

For more information and resources for staying updated on Older Americans Month 2024 click [here](#).

Program and Policy Notes

MI Health Link Program, Contractual, Policy Requirements and Highlights

Three Michigan Integrated Care Organizations Among Top 10 Performing Medicare-Medicaid Plans Nationwide.

The Michigan Department of Health and Human Services (MDHHS) is pleased to share that three Integrated Care Organizations (ICOs) that operate as Medicare-Medicaid Plans (MMPs) in the MI Health Link (MHL) Program are in the top 10 performing MMPs nationwide for overall rating of health plan based on 2023 Consumer Assessment of Health Providers and Systems (CAHPS) Survey results. Congratulations to Amerihealth, HAP Empowered (now HAP Caresource) Health Plan, and Upper Peninsula Health Plan on this notable achievement!

The Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS) requires MMPs to conduct the CAHPS survey on an annual basis with the goal that the data recorded will be used to improve healthcare services. The CAHPS survey asks beneficiaries (or in some cases their families) about their experiences with, and ratings of, their health care providers and plans. The surveys focus on matters that beneficiaries themselves say are important to them and for which beneficiaries are the best and/or only source of information including accessibility to and quality of services.

The overall rating of health plan measure is based on a question in which respondents are asked to rate their health plan on a scale from 0 to 10, where 0 is the worst health plan possible and 10 is the best health plan possible.

For more information on the MA-PD CAHPS survey see: <http://www.ma-pdcahps.org/>



Beneficiary Health and Welfare:

Social Security Administration Scam Alert

The Social Security Administration (SSA) Office of the Inspector General (OIG) is receiving alarming reports that criminals are impersonating SSA OIG agents and are requesting that their targets meet them in person to hand off cash. SSA OIG agents will never pick up money at your door or in any type of exchange. This is a SCAM!

NEVER exchange money or funds of any kind with any individual stating that they are an SSA OIG agent. This new scam trend introduces an element of physical danger to scams that never existed before. This recent method of handing cash directly to a phony agent is a dangerous twist on a known scam tactic that pressures

individuals to pay in a specific way by using cash or gift cards. SSA OIG and official government agencies do NOT conduct business in this manner. “This is the latest example of how scammers are constantly evolving their tactics to intimidate or pressure people into making hasty decisions that usually involve stealing their target’s hard-earned money,” said Inspector General Gail S. Ennis. “While our agents are out in the field, they will not ask you for money. I urge you not to respond to these kinds of requests.”

What to do if You Have Been Scammed:

Stop talking to the scammer. Notify financial institutions and safeguard accounts. Call the police and file a police report. File a complaint with the FBI [Internet Crime Complaint Center](#). Report Social Security-related scams to [SSA OIG](#). Report other scams to the [Federal Trade Commission](#). Keep financial transaction information and records of all communications with the scammer.

Education and Support Opportunities

Behind Closed Doors: The Reality of Human Trafficking

Tuesday April 30th, 2024 11:30AM

This learning opportunity will highlight the healthcare needs of human trafficking survivors and inform participants on trauma informed and culturally sensitive care. Attendees will be educated on legal definitions and examples of sex trafficking, the top three ways victims are recruited into sex trafficking, and much more. To register for this learning opportunity sponsored by Brightstar Care of Howard County, Maryland please click [here](#).

Social Isolation and Loneliness in Rural Areas: Impact on Older Adults

Wednesday May 1st, 2024 12:00PM

This learning opportunity brought by the Michigan Center for Rural Health will educate participants on the state of social isolation and loneliness in Michigan with a focus on rural communities. Participants will be able to explain the impact of social isolation and loneliness on mental and physical health, particularly in older adults and identify strategies for addressing these issues. To register or learn more click [here](#).

Supporting Disabled Veterans and their Caregivers

Tuesday May 14th, 2024 3:00PM

Join this webinar to hear about the **Disabled American Veterans (DAV) caregiver support program** and the free services offered by this trusted organization. Learn how to navigate and connect with DAV's inventory of no-cost resources and services for veterans and their caregivers. Additionally, a program representative will share specific examples of how DAV and the DAV Auxiliary team have helped veterans and their caregivers as they navigate the often-difficult adjustment to civilian life. Click [here](#) to register for this opportunity.

Resource Link:

Housing-Related Services for People Experiencing Homelessness



Many people experiencing homelessness benefit from interventions that package housing (rental) assistance with case management and other wraparound supportive services. Programs with a particular focus on serving people experiencing homelessness that could fund such wraparound services include:

- The U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development's Continuum of Care (CoC)
- Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA) programs, including Projects for Assistance in Transition from Homelessness (PATH), Treatment for Individuals Experiencing Homelessness (TIEH), and Grants for the Benefit of Homeless Individuals (GBHI)
- The Health Resources and Services Administration (HRSA)'s Federally Qualified Health Centers (FQHCs) and Healthcare for the Homeless program

There are, however, many additional federal programs that can serve people experiencing homelessness, even if they are not specifically targeted to this population. This [HUD resource](#) provides an overview of federal health programs and resources that communities and housing providers can leverage to provide

supportive services to help people experiencing homelessness transition to and sustain their housing. For more resources, visit the Housing and Services Resource Center's [homelessness topic webpage](#).



Q & A: Your Questions About MI Health Link

If you have a question about the MHL program we want to hear from you. We will work to get you the information you need.

Q: There are trainings I would like to recommend for a quarterly MI Health Link training- where should I send those suggestions?

A: Please reach out to MDHHS-MHL-Waiver@michigan.gov with any ideas or suggestions for future trainings.

Please send any questions for future bulletins to Integratedcare@michigan.gov.

Topic Submission

If you have suggestions for topics to be addressed in future additions of the MI Health Link Bulletin, please send them to Integratedcare@michigan.gov



Quick Links

[MI Health Link Website](#)

[CMS Financial Alignment Website](#)

[MI Health Link Minimum Operating Standards](#)

[MDHHS Medicaid Provider Manual](#)

Previously Released MHL Bulletins

Previously released MI Health Link Bulletins can be found by visiting the [MI Health Link Website](#).

[Become a foster parent through Michigan Department of Health & Human Services foster care program.](#)



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