



November 2017						
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FROM THE DESK OF DR. THELMA B. WATSON, CEO WORTHY NEWS ABOUT AGING ADULTS...11/20/2017

Senior Connections continues to research and roll out guidance and technical assistance to assist seniors to age well and to experience as much progress as possible for healthy living. This issue focuses on night vision challenges, attitudes about aging, making connections and CMS changes for Medicare Advantage and the prescription drug benefit. **Have a great week and Happy Thanksgiving. We value your support! Thelma**

NIGHT VISION PROBLEMS AND DRIVING

Older people are especially susceptible to night vision problems—even if their daylight vision is okay—because of changes that occur in aging eyes, including a gradual reduction in the size of the pupil (so less light hits the retina) and a decrease in the number of rods in the retina (the cells that are important for twilight and night vision). There is also a loss in contrast sensitivity (the ability to distinguish an object from its background), which makes it harder to see pedestrians, animals, and obstacles on the road. Plus, the retina’s ability to quickly adjust between bright light (as with oncoming headlights) and low-light conditions decreases with age.

<http://www.berkeleywellness.com/self-care/preventive-care/article/night-vision-problems-and-driving>

CMS PROPOSES POLICY CHANGES AND UPDATES FOR MEDICARE ADVANTAGE AND THE PRESCRIPTION DRUG BENEFIT PROGRAM FOR CONTRACT YEAR 2019 (CMS-4182-P)

On November 16, 2017, the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS) issued a proposed rule with comment period that proposes to update Medicare Advantage (MA) and the prescription drug benefit program (Part D) by promoting innovation and empowering MA and Part D sponsors with new tools to improve quality of care and provide more plan choices for MA and Part D enrollees.

<https://www.cms.gov/Newsroom/MediaReleaseDatabase/Fact-sheets/2017-Fact-Sheet-items/2017-11-16.html>

ATTITUDES TOWARDS AGING OFTEN AFFECT HEALTH

Among the myriad of wonderful ideas available to caregivers for coping with the care of a loved one, some strategies that can influence the attitude of care recipients are often

neglected. On strategy, simply put, is cultivating a more positive attitude towards aging. This can have a profound effect on the health of a care recipient.

<https://www.longtermcarelink.net/article-2017-10-27-Attitudes-towards-Aging-often-Affect-Health.htm>

MAKING CONNECTIONS: CONSUMER NEEDS IN AN AGING AMERICA

An analysis of more than 308,000 calls made to the Eldercare Locator in 2016, shows that transportation and home and community-based services were the top consumer needs of among older adults contacting the Eldercare Locator. Funded by the U.S. Administration on Aging, an agency of the Administration for Community Living, the Eldercare Locator is administered by the National Association of Area Agencies on Aging (n4a). The Eldercare Locator's Call Center operates five days a week from 9:00 a.m. to 8:00 p.m. ET. Through its website and Call Center, the Eldercare Locator serves America's aging population by connecting consumers to resources that enrich their lives and help them meet their daily needs.

The Eldercare Locator does this by directing consumers to the appropriate local resource—most often the local Area Agency on Aging—to help meet their needs, address their concerns or otherwise connect them to public and private resources. The Eldercare Locator helps consumers navigate the maze of federal, state and local resources to find the help they need where they need it.

More than 90 percent of the inquiries received by the Eldercare Locator's Call Center come via a phone call. When the phone rings, the Eldercare Locator's Certified Information Specialists answer and begin the process of responding to callers' questions, listening to and helping determine their specific needs, and providing reliable and unbiased referral information—all before directly connecting them with the most appropriate federal, state or local resource to respond to and address their needs.

<https://www.n4a.org/Files/eldercare-locator-data-report-508.pdf>



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