

NEWSLINES

OF THE DIVISION ON AGING, DISABILITIES AND VETERAN SERVICES



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A look back at 2013 & what's next for 2014

2013 was a good year for the Monmouth County Office on Aging, Disabilities and Veterans Services (OOA) and 2014 is off to a great start.

Last year we answered 7,251 calls for information and assistance, our 10 Care Managers made 6,730 client visits and four Veterans Services Officers helped County veterans receive more than \$3.5 million in compensation and pension benefits while assisting more than 390 veterans with filing their cases with the Veterans Administration (VA).

In May, OOA became part of the statewide implementation of the Aging and Disabilities Resource Connection (ADRC), a one-stop point of entry to help connect people with the services they need to continue living independently in the community for as long as possible. This is done by finding the programs and services that fit their needs.

Also in May, we revived the county's Centenarian Birthday Party when we celebrated the lives of 11 Monmouth County centenarians in coordination with the Regency Park Nursing and Rehabilitation Center in Hazlet. The Senior Art Show was once again a great success in July with more than 100 participants.

Other OOA initiatives in the past year were the Caregivers Resource Guide, the Veterans Resource Guide and the Veterans Services Advisory Council. Late last summer, we began the electronic filing of Veterans compensation cases with the VA – we are the only VSO in New Jersey to do this. We also expanded our services to several timeslots at the County Connection Office on Rt. 66 in Neptune.

2014 has started off in new way for the OOA, too! We have moved into new offices at the County's Human Services building at 3000 Kozloski Rd. in Freehold Twp. This move saves the county over \$100,000 in rent and has co-located the OOA with other County social services allowing us to implement the ADRC concept in practice.

We are looking to extend our hours of operation in order to better serve our citizens who often cannot take time off during the day to come to the OOA.

This year we anticipate that the Veterans Services Office will assist our veterans in receiving over \$5 million in 2014. The benefits to the veteran and the county are many: stabilization of veterans' families by increasing household income; having most of the money received spent in Monmouth County; and lessening the need on County services/resources.

However, not all is a rosy picture. The economy, the aftermath of Sandy, sequestration, and no increase in funding continue to have a severe impact on OOA resources while the needs of seniors and citizens with disabilities increase. Calls for information and assistance are up an average of 500 calls a month. Financial help and housing are the primary needs request and there is now a waiting list for home-delivered meals.

2014 will prove to be another challenging one for the OOA, but we will continue to provide the best possible services to our residents in keeping with the assets and funding available.



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SANDY RECOVERY

State Housing and Transportation Program (SHTP)



The State Housing and Transportation Program has been expanded to assist victims of Superstorm Sandy with a grant of \$1 million. The program is funded through the Federal Social Services Block Grant program and is administered by the NJ Department of Human Services through Monmouth County's Aging and Disabilities Resource Connection (ADRC).

The Program may include replacement of interior wall boards, mold remediation, restoration of heating and cooling systems, fixing electrical problems, patching roofs, cutting and removal of trees, debris disposal, and refurbishing of major home appliances. An eligible household could receive up to \$5,000 in assistance.

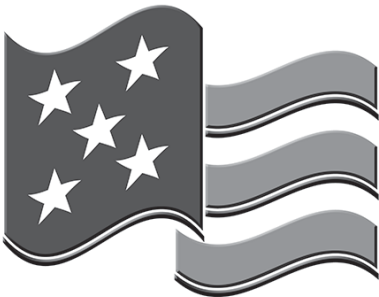
Applicants must attest that they have not received funding from any other state or Federal agency, private insurance, or charitable organization for the current items and/or services being requested on this application.

Documentation must be provided about what programs were applied for and

the amount received, or copies of denials from homeowners insurance, FEMA and flood insurance.

This program officially kicked-off in late 2013 and will continue until September 30, 2015. The ADRC has been receiving inquiries and applications. For more information or to request an application, call the Monmouth County Office on Aging at 732-431-7450.

VETERAN'S NEWS



County to Offer Veteran's ID Cards

Governor Christie has authorized all County Clerks to provide Veteran's ID photo cards to any veteran that registers their DD 214 with the County Clerk's office. The card proves the person is a U.S. Veteran and the card can be used for many discounts made available from the business community. They are available at the County Clerk's offices in Freehold and in Neptune at the Monmouth County Connection. For information call 732-683-8740

HAPPENINGS

Centenarian Birthday Party

The Office on Aging in cooperation with the Regency Park Nursing and Rehabilitation Center in Hazlet will again host Monmouth County's Centenarian Celebration honoring residents aged 100 and over on May 7, 2014. If you know of anyone who is 100 years old and would like to participate in the celebration, please have them call the Office on Aging at 732-431-7450 for a registration form.



Signs Your Loved One May Need Help

In the last Caregiver Corner column, I discussed the questions one should ask when hiring an in-home caregiver. However, I didn't list what issues might alert you to the fact that your loved one could benefit from home assistance or may need a higher level of care.

It's unusual for an individual to request help as it represents a loss of independence and is something most people would rather not accept. It often falls to the family caregiver to raise the subject and encourage their loved one to consider help. Here are some signs that your loved one may need help at home or a higher level of care.

- Changes in communication:
 - Have letters and cards slowed or stopped?
 - Does she seldom call anymore?
 - Is she in a hurry to get off the phone? Have difficulty answering questions like "where were you yesterday?"
- Changes in self care:
 - Losing or gaining weight?
 - Dressing inappropriately or exhibiting a decline in grooming?
 - Do you smell urine on clothing or furniture?
 - Does she stay up later at night and sleep later in the morning?
- Changes in social life:
 - When you pick her up for an appointment, is she routinely not ready yet?
 - Does she forget you said you'd be visiting and seem surprised to see you?
 - Does she no longer mention certain old friends?
 - Has she quit longstanding social engagements?
- Changes in the household:
 - Is the refrigerator empty or is the food spoiled?
 - Is the temperature of the house inappropriate?
 - Are there piles of unopened mail?
 - Do you see signs of spills that have not been cleaned up?
 - Are there burned or melted pots?

Home care may be appropriate if she prefers to stay at home and needs minor assistance with activities of daily living. It can prolong an individual's independence indefinitely.

However, moderate to severe memory impairment and/or the need for more comprehensive assistance may require a more supportive living environment such as an Assisted Living facility. Approach this subject matter delicately, respectfully and factually (with examples). Engage your loved one in the decision making process if at all possible.

Put yourself in their position and think about how you would like to be treated. Call our office if you need options counseling or resource information about home care agencies, programs that provide home care, and Assisted Living facilities.



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Jointly funded by the Monmouth County Board of Chosen Freeholders and the
New Jersey Division on Aging Services, Department of Human Services

ODDS & ENDS

Cell Phones Needed

Old and no longer in use cell phones are needed for the emergency 911 program. If you have a phone, please drop it off at the Office on Aging at 3000 Kozloski Rd, Freehold or at the County Connection (Attn; Office on Aging), 3544 Highway 66, Neptune, 07753.

On the Lighter Side:

While working for an organization that delivers lunches to elderly shut-ins, I used to take my 4-year-old daughter on my afternoon rounds. She was unfailingly intrigued by the various appliances of old age, particularly the canes, walkers and wheelchairs. One day I found her staring at a pair of false teeth soaking in a glass. As I braced myself for the inevitable barrage of questions, she merely turned and whispered, "The tooth fairy will never believe this!"

Email or Snail Mail?

If you would prefer to receive your copy of "Newslines" electronically, let us know by calling 732-431-7450 and we'll put you on our email list.

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Monmouth County Division on Aging,
Disabilities and Veteran Services

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