



Area Agency on Aging

Shift in Demographics: Planning for an Older Population

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Special points of interest:

- Executive Order 54 issued March 30, 2010.
- Governor's Policy Roundtables held April 22—June 2, 2010
- The Health Care and Education Reconciliation Act of 2010 signed into law March 30, 2010

North Carolina's demographics are changing! Over the next 20 years, more than 2.4 million or 25% of the population will retire. The influx of retirees presents both challenges and opportunities to state leaders as they work to meet the needs of older adults in our state. So far, there are several state initiatives to ensure a smooth transition from a younger population to an older one. In addition, legislation in the new health care law supports efforts to keep older individuals healthy and able to remain in their homes.

Executive Order 54

As we prepare for a shift in our state's population, the aging network is fortunate to have a bona fide Aging Specialist who now governs the state. In March, Governor Bev Perdue issued Executive Order 54 that mandates every cabinet agency to assess their readiness in serving older adults. According to the order, which is effective until 2012, 30 of North Carolina's counties already have more residents age 60 and better than people age 17 and younger.

The state also faces a downturn in the workforce. Adults who choose to retire will take invaluable knowledge and skill with them. The Governor asks

that all agencies work with the Aging Assessment Team to develop policy, and strategies for programs that target older adults.

The Aging Assessment Team is comprised of NC Division of Aging and Adult Services, NC Department of Health and Human Services, the Governor's Policy Office and Advisory Council on Aging, and the UNC Institute on Aging. These agencies will work together to plan and prepare the evaluation. Leaders also need input from older adults, families, caregivers, private sector businesses, and government to develop relevant programs, policies, or services for our aging population. Once the evaluation is complete the Aging Assessment Team will work with local governments to assess their readiness.

Policy Roundtables

As soon as Executive Order 54 was issued, a series of public forums began across the state. The policy roundtables, called *Building a Livable and Senior Friendly North Carolina*, engaged older adults, caregivers, aging network leaders, senior advocates, government officials, and private businesses to help identify the issues facing our aging population.

More than 600 people attended the forums and each meeting focused on a specific topic such as health, the economics of aging, services and supports, life engagement and contributions, safety, homes, and neighborhoods.

Two forums were held in eastern Carolina. The first roundtable, held in Pitt County, focused on health and aging. The top three issues identified at this forum included the need to strengthen the link between health care and community service providers, the shortage of trained health and allied health professionals, and the lack of support for preventative health care.

The second forum was held in Wilmington and focused on safe communities. The top three issues identified at this meeting were insufficient training and support for family caregivers, concerns about abuse, neglect and exploitation, and the lack of affordable housing. Information gathered from each policy roundtable will be used during the Governor's Conference on Aging in October.

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From the Director's Chair



Tonya Cedars
AAA Director
252.638.3185
ext. 3009
tcedars@eccog.org

It's hot outside! The temperature today is 100 degrees. Heat-related illness is a very serious problem, especially among older adults. Health conditions along with age sometimes make it difficult for older adults to handle high temperatures.

Older adults can prevent heat-related illnesses by following a few simple rules. First, check the weather forecast and be prepared for the hot temperatures. Have a

place to cool down. The senior center, mall, or community center will be a cool place to sit and relax. Drink plenty of water and natural juices. In addition, wear loose fitting and light colored clothing.

Use fans or air conditioners in your home, even if only a few hours at a time. The senior centers and two social service agencies in our region are giving away free fans during Operation Fan Heat Relief. The fans are available for

senior's age 60 and greater. Call your local senior center to get a free fan.

Also, be aware of the signs of heat stroke. Symptoms include nausea, vomiting, fatigue, weakness, headache, muscle cramps, and lack of sweat. If you come across anyone whom you suspect is suffering from a heat stroke, dial 911 and blanket the victim with a damp sheet.

Meet Our New Aging Intern!

Anita Fenner lives in New Bern and attends Barton College in Wilson. Her major is Gerontology. During her college career, she played on the Women's Basketball Team during the 2007-2009 season.

Anita is active in her church and is a member of Union

Missionary Baptist Church. Currently, she serves on the usher board committee and sings in the choir.

Antia is thrilled to intern at the Eastern Carolina Council Area Agency on Aging, and expects to increase her knowledge in aging services .



Anita Fenner
Aging Intern
252.638.3185 ext. 3014
afenner@eccog.org

Medicare Part D—Closing the Donut Hole

Medicare Part D checks were mailed June 10, three weeks earlier than scheduled, to nearly 80,000 people. The rebates are the first step in closing the Medicare "donut hole." Checks in the amount of \$250 will go to seniors who have reached the "donut hole." The "doughnut hole" is also referred to as the gap

in coverage, in standard benefits. The Medicare Part D plan pays 25% of seniors' prescription drugs. Once the enrollee's total bill reaches approximately \$3,000, he or she falls into the "donut hole." When seniors fall into this gap in coverage, they must pay the complete cost for prescription

drugs, until the enrollee's total spending reaches \$4,550. When the Medicare Part D enrollee reaches this amount, their drug plan pays most of the cost for prescription drugs. The enrollee is entitled to pay 5% of prescription drug cost for the remainder of the year.

Close to the end

We are very close to the end of another fiscal year and it has been a busy one. The aging service providers in our region have not only worked hard to serve the growing number of older adults, but they have also had additional administrative duties due to the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA).

As of May 2010, service providers in our region served 314,130 meals to older adults, 51,125 of those meals were funded by ARRA monies. At the end of FY 08-09, our region

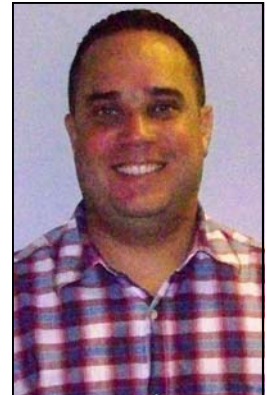
served a total of 329,100 meals. With one more month to go in this fiscal year, our region may surpass last years number of meals served.

Two issues are affecting our programs. First, more than 2.4 million “baby boomers” will retire starting next year! Many older adults will need services. Second, the downturn of the economy has forced older adults to cut costs. Some choose to save money by eating meals at nutrition sites and using public transportation services.

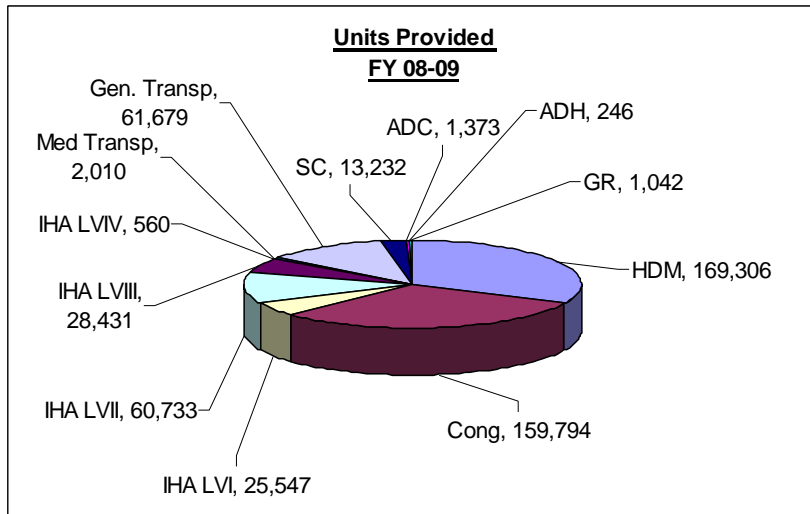
Unfortunately, the funding has

not followed the demand for services and our waiting lists continues to grow. In an effort to meet the needs of older adults, many service providers are trimming their budgets in in some areas in order to keep up with the increased number of participants in these nutrition programs.

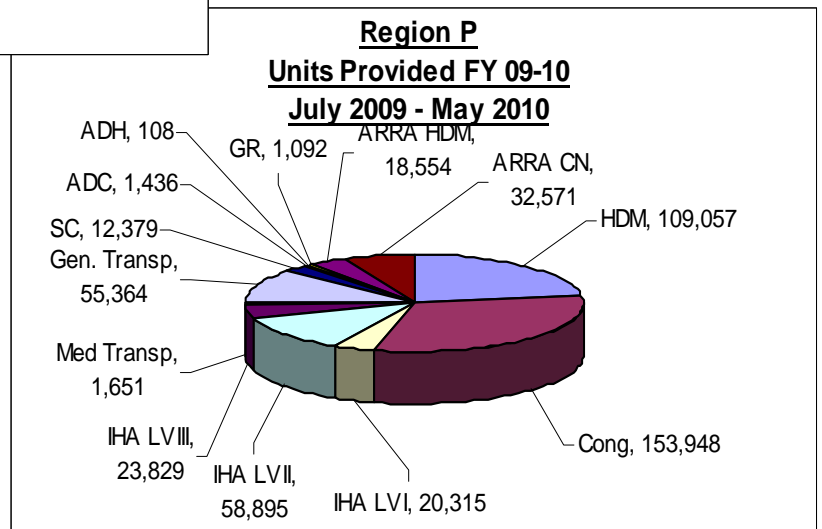
As service providers wrap up a productive year, they are faced with more challenges in the coming year, however, we hope to be of support to help them continue to meet the needs of older adults in Eastern Carolina.



David Rosado
Contracts Manager
252.638.3185 ext. 3012
drosado@eccog.org



“With one more month to go in this fiscal year, our region may surpass last years number of meals served.”



Our State Observes Vulnerable Adult and Elder Abuse Awareness Month



Angelia Pridgen
Regional Ombudsman I
252.638.3185
ext. 3007
apridgen@eccog.org

Each year, more than two million vulnerable and older adults are victims of abuse, neglect, and exploitation. Research shows older adults who are abused, neglected and exploited are three times more likely to die within ten years than those who are not. According to national statistics, elder abuse is grossly under reported because vulnerable and older adults who are being abused find it very difficult to tell anyone due to shame and fear. Elder Abuse affects men and women of all ethnic backgrounds and social status; it occurs in private residences and in facilities.

In 2009, more than 17,000 cases of abuse, neglect or exploitation of vulnerable older adults were reported throughout the state.

Reports are made not only by doctors and other professionals but by family members and concerned citizens. Anyone who suspects that a vulnerable or older adult is in need of protection is required by North Carolina General Statute (GS 108A-102) to report this information to the department of social services in the county where the adult resides.

Governor Bev Perdue proclaimed May 10, 2010 through June 18, 2010 as Vulnerable and Elder Abuse Awareness Month in North Carolina. This timeframe ties the awareness period to both the Mother's Day and Father's Day holidays, in the hopes of reinforcing the spirit of respecting and valuing, not just parents, but

all elders.

We all have a responsibility to support the safety, welfare, and dignity of North Carolina's vulnerable and older adults. We urge all citizens to work together to help protect adults from abuse, neglect, and exploitation. It is imperative that North Carolinians refuse to tolerate the indignity of Elder Abuse.



Take an active role in protecting vulnerable and older adults

- ◆ **SPEAK OUT** and advocate for the passage of legislation like the Elder Justice Act/Patient Safety and Abuse Prevention Act.
- ◆ **REPORT** suspected abuse, neglect, or exploitation to Adult Protective Services in the North Carolina county where the adult lives. Contact information for County Departments of Social Services is at this website: www.ncdhhs.gov/dss/local.
- ◆ **VOLUNTEER** in local programs that provide assistance and support for vulnerable and older adults in your community and long term care facilities.
- ◆ **EDUCATE** yourself, family, and community about Elder Abuse by visiting the following websites:
 - Elder Justice Coalition website <http://www.elderjusticecoalition.com/>
 - National Center on Elder Abuse website www.ncea.aoa.gov
 - National Adult Protective Services Association website www.apsnetwork.org
 - National Long Term Care Ombudsman Association website www.ltombudsman.org
 - North Carolina Division of Aging and Adult Services at www.ncdhhs.gov/aging

Show the world that you care, wear purple!

After Recognizing World Elder Abuse Awareness Day on June 15th, participants boarded the Marina Cafe Cruise Boat to tour the New River in Jacksonville. We enjoyed good company, tasty food, and valuable information regarding the recognition of abuse, neglect, and exploitation. The group of nearly 80 aging service professionals learned various ways in which we can protect some of our most vulnerable adults.



Sheila Lewis
Regional Ombudsman II
252.638.3185 ext. 3010
slewis@eccog.org



Onslow CACs participate in the Elder Abuse Awareness Day. From Right to Left. Ozzie Keyes, Norma Voss, Christy O'Daniel's, Marion Shiver, and Sheila Lewis, Ombudsman.



Audrey Tyson, Lenoir County CAC Chairman enjoys cool water aboard the boat. In the back ground, Minnie Carmichael enjoys a cold frozen treat.



New River, Jacksonville, NC



CAC members, facility staff, and presenters all enjoy an afternoon ride aboard the Marina Café cruise boat.



Mineko Holloway
Family Caregiver
Resource Specialist
252.638.3185 ext. 3011
mholloway@eccog.org

Caregiver Respite Voucher Program

A new consumer directed program allows caregivers in Carteret and Lenoir Counties more options for respite care. The new voucher program permits caregivers to choose to hire a private individual or an approved licensed agency to deliver respite services.

Currently, we have respite services available in each county, however, the type of service we contract with a local provider to deliver is not always appropriate to meet the caregiver’s needs. In the past we have made individual arrangements for other types of service when these cases have presented themselves.

However, we have seen an increase in the amount of these cases.

Community partners are knowledgeable about the new voucher program and can make appropriate referrals. Once it’s determined that a caregiver is eligible for the program, he or she will receive a voucher and counseling as to how to use it.

Respite care is designed “to enable caregivers to be temporarily relieved from their caregiving responsibilities”. This includes tasks such as meal preparation, financial management, and arrangement of medical care. The services allowable under the voucher

will be limited to temporary care to allow the caregiver to spend time apart from the person they care for.

The consumer directed model is beneficial to a caregiver because it allows the caregiver flexibility, drives quality of service, reinforces the temporary nature of respite care, and provides more options for residents of extremely rural areas.

For more information on the new program in Carteret and Lenoir Counties call Mineko Holloway at 252-638-3185 ext. 3011.

Grandparents Raising Grandchildren

A group of children are prepared to start a new school year, while another group has a chance to attend camp for free! The two projects were funded by the Eastern Carolina Council AAA Family Caregiver Support Program (FCSP) and are geared toward helping grandparents who are raising their grandchildren.

The first project, in Jacksonville, provided backpacks for grandchildren. Because of school budget constraints, many parents or grandparents have to purchase school supplies beyond the traditional backpacks and crayons. Suzie McGlaughon, Director, Onslow County Schools Head Start Program, identified several children in the More at Four program who needed some

extra help getting their supplies.

We used FCSP funds to purchase several backpacks and filled them with school items such as facial tissue, hand wipes, folders, glue, pencils, and other supplies. The children also received a gift card to Payless Shoe Store. We all know that a child can run faster and behave better when they have a shiny new pair of shoes!

The FCSP sponsored grandparents 55 years of age or greater and those less than 55 years of age were sponsored by area businesses and churches. Grandparents greatly appreciated the backpacks for their grandchildren. It also helps relieve their burden as well.

The second project, in Lenoir County, provided some respite care for grandparents raising their grandchildren. Tammy Kelly, Lenoir Cooperative Extension Director, identified children who qualified for scholarships to attend the Lenoir 4-H summer camp. This respite service helped the grandparents and children spend some time away from one another, provided a time of rest for the grandparent, and summer fun for the grandchildren.

We appreciate both agencies taking the time to identify these grandchildren. Our agency could not have provided these services without the knowledge and assistance of the Onslow County Schools Head Start Program and Lenoir Cooperative Extension.

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Health Care Law

The *Health Care and Education Reconciliation Act of 2010* has several health reforms geared towards older adults. Some of the legislation coincides with the very topics covered during the governor's roundtables. The health care act calls for several demonstration plans to improve quality of care and services. For example, the ***Independence at Home*** demonstration program provides high-risk Medicare beneficiaries with primary care services in their homes. Participating teams of health professionals will share in any savings if they are able to reduce preventable hospitalizations, prevent hospital readmissions, improve health outcomes, improve the efficiency of care, reduce the cost of health care services, and achieve patient satisfaction. The program will begin no later than January 2012.

Another demonstration plan, ***Medicare Senior Housing Plans***, amends the Social Security Act to make permanent the Medicare Advantage Senior Housing Facility Demonstration Plans. The policy serves individuals living in a continuing care retirement community by providing onsite primary care services and transportation to offsite providers.

A new voluntary insurance program will be available beginning in October 2012. Individuals can purchase the ***Community Living Assistance Services and Supports (CLASS)*** plan for long term care needs. The CLASS plan is financed by voluntary payroll deductions for all working adults ages 18 and older. The benefit will not be subject to an aggregate limit, and the funds can be used to purchase non-medical services and supports that the beneficiary needs to maintain his or her independence at home or in a residential setting of his or her choice in the community. Patients can spend their money on home modifications, assistive technology, assessable transportation, homemaker services, respite care, personal assistance services, home care aides, nursing support, counseling, and legal assistance.

Aging and Disability Resource Centers (ADRCs), known locally as Community Resource Centers (CRCs), will receive a financial boost over the next four years. Legislation appropriates \$10 million for outreach and assistance for low income programs, and \$10 million annually for four years to carry out the ADRC provisions of the Older Americans Act.

The new health care law will fund grants for ***Health Promotion and Disease Prevention*** programs. For example, states, local health departments, or Indian tribes are eligible for grants geared toward pilot programs that provide public health interventions, screenings, and clinical referrals to individuals between the ages of 55 and 64 years of age. Another grant opportunity appropriates \$100 million to provide incentives to Medicaid beneficiaries who successfully complete healthy lifestyle programs.

Next year, the first boomers will turn 65 years old. There is plenty to be done to evaluate, plan, and implement new policy, programs, and services to help older adults. However, we are fortunate to have the right tools and support team in place to ensure a smooth transition for our aging population.

"The Independence at Home demonstration program provides high-risk Medicare beneficiaries with primary care services in their homes. "



*Jillian Hardin
Aging Specialist
252.638.3185
ext. 3015
jhardin@eccog.org*

Eastern Carolina Council

PO Box 1717
233 Middle Street
New Bern, NC 28563-1717

Phone: 252.638.3185
Fax: 252.638.3187
E-mail: jhardin@eccog.org



The Area Agency on Aging (AAA) helps to maintain and improve the quality of life for older adults (55 years or better) and to address their needs and concerns. The Agency focuses on supporting and assisting older adults in obtaining aging services offered in their communities through local aging service providers.

AAA Staff Directory

Tonya Cedars , Director, Area Agency on Aging tcedars@eccog.org	Ext. 3009
David Rosado , Contracts Manager drosado@eccog.org	Ext. 3012
Mineko Holloway , Family Caregiver Resource Specialist mholloway@eccog.org	Ext. 3011
Angelia Pridgen , Regional Ombudsman I apridgen@eccog.org	Ext. 3007
Sheila Lewis , Regional Ombudsman II slewis@eccog.org	Ext. 3010
Jillian Hardin , Aging Specialist jhardin@eccog.org	Ext. 3015

Events

July 12—RAAC Meeting

July 20—Service Provider Meeting, New Bern

July 29—30, Diabetes Self Management Lay Leader Training, Duplin County Services for the Aged

August 2—September 13, Living Healthy workshop, Lenoir Memorial Hospital

August 3—STHL Meeting

August 6—September 10, Living Healthy workshop, Onslow County Senior Services

September 13—October 18, Living Healthy workshop, Swansboro Library

September 29—November 3, Living Healthy with Diabetes, Onslow County Senior Services

October 4—RAAC Meeting

October 4—5, NCSTHL Meeting

