



RESOURCE GUIDE FOR SENIORS

ADULT DAY CARE/SERVICES – A center supporting the health, nutritional, social and daily living needs of adults in large or small group settings using professional staff. Adult day services centers serve as alternatives for families who are caring for an individual who is experiencing difficulties from a chronic condition or dementia such as difficulties in eating, bathing, grooming, toileting and other daily self-care needs. Most centers operate 10–12 hours per day and provide meals, meaningful activities and general supervision. Many centers maintain a nurse on-site or offer other health services from a medical assistant/nurse when needed. They may also provide transportation and personal care, as well as support, for family caregivers.

ALL INCLUSIVE CARE – A managed care program for frail, older adult recipients who have been determined to need “nursing facility level of care” but wish to remain in their home and community. Senior LIFE Lehigh Valley provides a comprehensive, all-inclusive package of services to meet their needs. It is known nationally as the Program of All-Inclusive Care for the older adult (PACE).

APPRISE – Pennsylvania’s name for the State Health Insurance Counseling Program. Apprise is run by the Area Agency on Aging and staffed by volunteers who assist with open enrollment for Medicare Part D on an annual basis. Volunteers provide, on a free and confidential basis, assistance with understanding Medicare and Medicaid benefits, Medicare supplemental insurance, Medicare HMOs and long-term care issues. Consultation can be provided in selecting a health care insurance plan and filing grievances and appeals.

AREA AGENCY ON AGING – Implements various programs and services for older adults. Is available to perform comprehensive assessments of need to develop plans of care, arrange services and provide information and advocacy. Acts as advocates to keep older adults active and independent in their own communities. The Lehigh Valley is divided between the Lehigh County Office of Aging and Adult Services and the Northampton County Area Agency on Aging.

ASSISTED LIVING RESIDENCES – A facility that offers room and board, supervision and assistance with activities of daily living such as bathing, grooming, meal preparation, medication administration and evacuating the building in the event of an emergency. They are inspected and licensed by the Office of Long-Term Living. Assisted living residences (ALR) are similar to personal care homes, but are different in three ways: concept, construction and level of care. The concept focuses on allowing a resident to “age in place” for a longer period of time before having to move to a nursing facility when their needs increase. ALR construction would require larger units, private bathrooms and the “capacity” for kitchen facilities. This model allows for more privacy and maximum independence. Regarding level of care, it provides more assistance for a resident whose needs become too great for a personal care home. See *Personal Care Home* for additional information.

BENEFITS CHECK UP – Provides information to older adults and their families and caregivers identifying programs and services they may qualify for and how to access them. This program is operated locally by Jewish Family Service of the Lehigh Valley.

CARE MANAGEMENT – The process of assessing and determining the needs and level of care of older adults, developing a plan of care, coordinating services, following up to ensure satisfaction and reassessing.

HANDYMAN SERVICE – Provides minor household repairs to maintain a person’s health and safety in the home. Work includes, but is not limited to, the installation of handrails, bathroom safety devices, ramps and non-cosmetic repairs.

CONGREGATE MEALS – Nutritious meals meeting a third of the recommended dietary allowance are served once a day, five days a week in a group setting, such as a senior center or an adult day care center.

CONTINUING CARE RETIREMENT COMMUNITY (CCRC) – Offers independent living, usually in an apartment or cottage, and access to a higher level of care, such as an assisted living or nursing facility. Residents move between levels of care as their needs change. Services, such as meals, medical care, social and recreational activities, are provided through a contractual arrangement for the lifetime of the resident. Entrance and monthly fees apply.

DRUG AND ALCOHOL ABUSE PROGRAMS – Manage federal, state and local dollars to provide prevention and education programs, assessments, interventions and treatment services ranging from detoxification to outpatient counseling.

ELDERCARE LOCATOR – A toll-free, nationwide information, referral and assistance phone number that links people to the aging network to find information about community services for older adults. Web site: www.eldercare.gov.

EMPLOYMENT PROGRAMS – Assist low-income individuals, age 55 and older, with part-time employment in subsidized positions in public and private non-profit agencies. Goal is for participants to build work skills and confidence in order to obtain an unsubsidized job through obtained experience.

ENERGY ASSISTANCE – Financial assistance in paying for fuel or heating bills for low-income individuals and families. Eligibility is based on income, assets and family size. Also known as Pennsylvania’s Low Income Home Energy Assistance Program (LIHEAP), the Lehigh Valley contact for this program is the County Assistance Offices. Additional assistance is available through PPL’s *Operation Help Program* that is administered locally by the Casa Guadalupe Center.

FAMILY CAREGIVER SUPPORT PROGRAM – Designed to relieve caregiver stress, this program begins with an assessment to determine what benefits best meet the needs of the caregiver and the older adult receiving the care. Income eligible families may be able to receive service reimbursement for caregiving expenses, consumables, home modifications and assistive devices. Other resources include care management, caregivers and benefits counseling, and access to support groups.

FINANCIAL AID AND PUBLIC ASSISTANCE – Programs which offer monetary assistance for items such as food, housing or fuel. May also help clients get their finances back in order. Public Assistance may be available from State and Federal programs that subsidize low-income individuals with limited resources.

SNAP (SUPPLEMENTAL NUTRITION ASSISTANCE PROGRAM) – Also known as “food stamps.” Direct financial assistance in the form of a debit card for certain food items for those who meet income and asset eligibility guidelines. County Assistance Offices review applications for food stamps.

GRANDPARENTING PROGRAM – Helps to reduce stress and financial burden of caregivers over 60 years of age who are primary caregivers for a child under 18 years of age with a developmental disability.

GUARDIANSHIP – An individual appointed through a court proceeding to make decisions for another person who is determined to be “legally” incapacitated.

HOME DELIVERED MEALS – Nutritiously balanced meals delivered to the home of an individual who is unable to prepare his or her own meals. Meals are prepared at a central location and transported to the consumer’s home. One or two meals (one hot/one cold) are available along with special requests for dietary restrictions. Frozen meals are provided for the weekends and emergency needs. The daily meal delivery also serves as a check upon the well-being of the recipient and opportunities for socialization. This program is operated locally by Meals on Wheels.

HOME HEALTH CARE – Provision and coordination of services for consumers needing nursing and other health care services in the home as ordered/prescribed by the consumer’s physician. These services, such as skilled nursing and physical, speech and occupational therapies, are provided by registered nurses and licensed home health care aides who, in addition to personal care, provide home health aide services—changing and reinforcing simple wound dressings, monitoring consumer’s condition and needs, and performing vital signs.

HOSPICE CARE – A concept of coordinated care given to persons who are terminally ill. This model of care, and a Medicare benefit, emphasizes comfort care, as opposed to treatment to cure for persons with a terminal disease. Services include attention to pain control, caregiving necessities and psychosocial and spiritual needs. This team approach of formal and informal care can be provided in one’s home, a hospital, nursing home or freestanding hospice center.

INFORMATION AND REFERRAL – The first point of contact for all individuals who are requesting information and/or services. Offers answers about specific programs and provides referrals to the Department of Human Services and community agencies and resources. There is assistance in completing various forms and entitlements for older adults. Printed information is available.

LEGAL ASSISTANCE – Counseling by an attorney providing assistance with issues and matters such as housing, public benefits, unemployment, discrimination, veteran benefits, tenant/landlord problems, financial concerns, power of attorney, credit problems, etc...

MEDICAL ALERT SYSTEMS – See *Personal Emergency Response*.

MEDICAL ASSISTANCE (MA) AND MEDICAID – A subsidized program that pays for medical care for low-income persons over age 65, people with disabilities or families with children. Income and asset limits apply. A person can apply through their County Assistance Office.

MEDICARE – A federal health insurance program for people age 65 and older or people with disabilities. Part A is hospital insurance and Part B is medical insurance (doctor and clinic visits). The premiums for Medicare are deducted from Social Security payments. Deductibles and co-payments are the enrollee’s responsibility. There are Medicare savings programs for those who meet certain income and asset limitations. Part C is Medicare Advantage Plans which include HMOs, PPOs and private fee-for-services. Part D is the drug benefit program and may be included under the Medicare Advantage Plans or a stand-alone prescription drug plan.

KEY TERMS AND DEFINITIONS

MENTAL HEALTH AND MENTAL RETARDATION – Individual or group counseling, education, workshops, subsidized employment, group homes or institutional care to help individuals with mental health concerns and/or mental retardation.

NURSING HOME – Provides 24-hour nursing care to individuals deemed to be medically eligible for nursing home care. Services include, but are not limited to, nursing care, medical care, skilled therapies and dietary services.

NURSING HOME TRANSITION – A program that offers information to individuals, 18 years of age or older and currently residing in a nursing facility, about available community resources and services that can be provided as an alternative to nursing home placement. It includes the planning, coordination and arrangement of necessary services in relocating to an alternate setting.

OMBUDSMAN – Provides assistance in investigating and resolving complaints brought by, or on behalf of, long-term care consumers, such as residents of nursing homes, personal care/assisted living facilities and recipients of home health care. Concerns may include quality of care, patient rights, safety, appeals of transfers, discharges or changes in services.

PARISH NURSE – Programs housed within churches with paid nurses who act as advocates and educators for members of their faith community. Along with other health professionals, they might sponsor health fairs, provide education, make referrals or find volunteers to assist older adults. Not all Parish Nurses are paid.

PENNSYLVANIA DEPARTMENT OF AGING WAIVER – Assessment of need for provision of services and care management of persons 60 years of age or older who are clinically eligible to be admitted to a nursing facility but choose to receive services at home. Recipients need to be determined financially eligible for Medicaid nursing facility payments. Services include personal care, home delivered meals, transportation, adult day care and home modifications.

PERSONAL CARE HOME – A facility that offers room and board, supervision and assistance with the activities of daily living such as bathing, grooming, meal preparation, medication administration and evacuating the building in the event of an emergency. They are inspected and licensed by the Department of Public Welfare. This facility is similar to an Assisted Living Residence, but differs in that older adults who require bed transfers or skilled nursing needs would not be eligible to stay in the facility as their needs increase and would be moved to a nursing home. See *Assisted Living Residences* for more information.

PERSONAL EMERGENCY RESPONSE/MEDICAL ALERT SYSTEM – A system that connects a person to responders by a transmitter. When activated, personal information, such as location and medical history, is identified and help is sent to the person’s home.

PHARMACEUTICAL ASSISTANCE – PACE, PACENET and PACE Plus Medicare offer comprehensive prescription coverage to older Pennsylvanians administered by the Pennsylvania Department of Aging and funded through the Pennsylvania lottery. Drug companies permit low-income individuals access to needed prescription medicines.

PRE-ADMISSION ASSESSMENT – Required for all persons applying for Medicaid, or who will be Medicaid-eligible in six months, and for nursing home admission. Also required for those applying for the SSI personal care home supplement. Includes screening for specialized services for persons with mental illness, mental retardation or other related conditions.

PROTECTIVE SERVICES – Investigates alleged abuse, neglect, exploitation or abandonment. Provided to persons age 60 or over who are unable to care for themselves and are at imminent risk. Reports of alleged abuse can be made to the Area Agency on Aging 24 hours a day, seven days a week. Persons can report self-neglect, financial exploitation or physical abuse anonymously. Reporting of abuse is mandatory for employees and administrators of nursing homes, personal care homes, domiciliary care homes, adult day care centers and home health care providers.

RESPIRE CARE – Short-term care assistance and relief for those caring for a loved one in their home. May be provided in the home through a formal home care agency or an informal volunteer program, an Adult Day Services setting or short-term admission to an Assisted Living Facility or Nursing Home.

RSVP – The Retired and Senior Volunteer Program matches people who want to volunteer with community or non-profit organizations that need assistance. Major organizers of volunteer efforts and provider of community services.

SENIOR CENTERS – Offer adults age 60 or older an opportunity to participate in social and education experiences and health and wellness activities, as well as provides nutritious meals in their local communities. Transportation can be arranged to and from centers.

SERVICES PROVIDED IN THE HOME – Services covering a wide range of needs include home health care, such as skilled nursing; therapies and home health aide services; personal care, such as providing assistance with bathing, dressing, eating, grooming, and toileting; home support services, such as shopping assistance and laundry; respite care (caregiver relief); transportation; home delivered meals; and chore services as necessary to maintain a consumer’s health, safety and ability to remain in the home.

SHARED RIDE PROGRAM – Handicapped accessible vans with trained staff available to transport people to senior centers, adult day care centers, medical appointments, shopping and more. Provides reduced fare transportation services to eligible older adults. The cost to the rider is 15% of the existing shared ride fare; the Lottery fund pays the remaining portion of the fare. In some cases, the 15% charge or reduced fare may be paid by a third party sponsor, thus resulting in a free fare program.

SOCIAL SECURITY ADMINISTRATION – An independent agency of the U.S. government that administers Social Security, a social insurance program consisting of retirement, disability and survivor’s benefits. Also assists with Supplemental Security Income (SSI).

SUBSIDIZED RENTAL HOUSING – The federal government provides rental assistance to low-income older adult/families and to people with disabilities/families. Income eligibility is a percentage of the median income for the county of residence; age eligibility is 62 years for older adults, and 18 years for permanently disabled people. Tenants pay 30% of their income toward rent.

TELECARE – A model of care which integrates social and healthcare services that are supported by innovative technologies to sustain and promote independence, quality of life and reduce the need for nursing home placement. By utilizing in-home technology, there will be more options to assist and support individuals so that they may remain in their own homes. Four types of Telecare services include Health Status Measuring and Monitoring, Activity and Sensor Monitoring, Medication Monitoring System and Personal Emergency Response System.

TRANSPORTATION – LANta provides free transportation for persons 65 years or older at all times. Community-based providers also offer transportation services.

VETERANS ASSISTANCE – Assists veterans and family members with information regarding federal, state and local benefits. Provides information and assistance in filing for and acquiring federal benefits including compensation for service-connected disability, pension for veterans unable to work, medical care and burial benefits.

VOLUNTEER PROGRAMS – Opportunities exist for matching older adults with volunteers in intergenerational programs, such as tutoring, literacy, environmental protection and the Apprise and Volunteer Ombudsman programs.

WEATHERIZATION/HOME MAINTENANCE – Major focus of the program is the repair and replacement of heating systems. Other services include air filtration care, door and window weatherization, glass replacement, attic insulation and electric hot water heater maintenance. Service is provided at no charge to eligible individuals and families and is available to homeowners and renters who must acquire permission from the landlord.

United Way of the Greater Lehigh Valley Alliance on Aging
1110 American Parkway NE, Suite F-120, Allentown, PA 18109
610.758.8010 • www.unitedwaytlv.org



GIVE. ADVOCATE. VOLUNTEER.
United Way of the
Greater Lehigh Valley
UnitedWay.org

LIVE UNITED
United Way

LIVE UNITED
United Way
United Way of the Greater Lehigh Valley
Alliance on Aging
1110 American Parkway NE, Suite F-120
Allentown, PA 18109

