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Aging Matters



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2015 White House Conference on Aging Planning Begins

National Association of Area Agencies (n4a) CEO Sandy Markwood recently attended a high-level meeting of aging leaders at the White House to discuss the Administration's plans for a 2015 *White House Conference on Aging* (WHCoA). A date has not yet been set. Four primary focus areas - retirement security, LTSS, healthy aging and elder abuse - have been identified. It is widely understood that this event won't mirror previous WHCoAs given the lack of funding and direction from Congress. With existing White House funds, however, an executive director has been hired: Nora Super, an HHS official who previously lobbied for AARP on health care issues.

n4a will be closely involved in WHCoA discussions in DC and will share any additional details that emerge. No matter the form the 2015 WHCoA finally takes, it will be an important advocacy opportunity for the National Aging Network.

Senate Aging Committee Hears Stories on Observation Status

Over the summer the Senate Special Committee on Aging heard from health care industry leaders and Medicare beneficiaries about complications surrounding the increased use and duration of observation status. Whether a patient is seen on observation status or officially admitted as an in-patient in a hospital

determines the scope of care that is covered by Medicare following release. Both in the Senate and in the House, legislative proposals are pending to prevent long-term use of observation stays, which can be problematic for seniors seeking nursing home care following hospital stays. WV Senator Joe Manchin is a member of the committee.



Administration for Community Living Reorganizes

As you may have read in the Federal Register or in media coverage of the announcement included in it last week, the Administration for Community Living has made some changes to its organization structure. This was done to better align missions and incorporate the Paralysis Resource Center and the State Health Insurance Assistance Programs (SHIP), which respectively moved from the CDC and the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid to ACL earlier this year. This reorganization also will set the stage for success as programs are moved from the Department of Education to ACL as part of the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act over the next year.

Specifically, here are the key elements of what the re-organization does:

- Replaces the Center for Disability and Aging Policy (CDAP) with the Center for Consumer Access and Self-Determination. This is the “middle center” - it sits between the aging and disability centers and handles the programs that address both portfolios. The SHIP will be housed here, as will the Senior Medicare Patrol (SMP) and Medicare Improvements for Patients and Provider Act (MIPPA) programs, bringing together three programs with a common focus on Medicare beneficiary education and outreach. This is also where the Lifespan Respite program and some of the other smaller integrated activities, such as the coordinated transportation and supported decision-making grants, will reside.
- Realigns ACL’s existing policy development and program evaluation activities from CDAP to a newly created Center for Policy and Evaluation. This center will assume responsibility for evaluating ACL programs and reviewing departmental policies for their impact on older adults and people with disabilities.
- Locates the Paralysis Resource Center within the Administration for Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities’ Office of Innovation, which already administers the Help America Vote Act program that serves individuals with all types of disabilities.
- Moves the President’s Committee for People with Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities to the Commissioner’s immediate office. This previously was a separate box in the Administration for Intellectual and Developmental Disability.



Continued on page 5

National Index of Nonprofit Board Practices

A preview of the key findings of BoardSource's national survey, *Leading with Intent 2014: A National Index of Nonprofit Board Practices* (formerly known as the Nonprofit Governance Index) is now available. To Learn more go. <https://www.boardsource.org/eweb/images/bds2012/Leading-with-intent-PV.pdf> And stay tuned for more in-depth reports beginning in November.

U . S . Department of Justice Launches The Elder Justice Website



The site (www.justice.gov/elderjustice/) offers resources for victims, family members, prosecutors, researchers, and anyone who works with older adults.

- Victims and family members will find information about how to report elder abuse and financial exploitation in all 50 states and the territories.
- Federal, State, and local prosecutors will find three different databases containing sample pleadings and statutes.
- Researchers in the elder abuse field may access a database containing bibliographic information for thousands of articles and reviews.
- Practitioners - including professionals of all types who work with elder abuse and its consequences - will find information about resources available to help them prevent elder abuse and assist those who have already been abused, neglected or exploited.

Social Security Benefits to Increase by 1.7 Percent in 2015

On October 22nd, the Social Security Administration announced the annual Cost of Living Adjustment (COLA) for benefits. Based upon the inflationary formula, benefits will increase by 1.7%, beginning in January 2015. This will lead to an average monthly retiree benefit of \$1,328, an average payment to individuals with disabilities of \$1,165. The new monthly SSI standard will be \$733. The COLA will also affect eligibility thresholds for certain Medicaid programs, including many Medicaid waivers which set eligibility at 300% of the SSI standard.

November is *National* Family Caregivers Month



Winter Safety Tips for Seniors



During the winter months, ice, snow and cold temperatures can make life challenging for everyone. Here is some helpful advice for preventing common winter dangers that the elderly population faces.

Avoid Slipping on Ice

Icy, snowy roads and sidewalks make it easy to slip and fall. Make sure to wear shoes with good traction and non-skid soles, and stay inside until the roads are clear. Replace a worn cane tip to making walking easier. Take off shoes as soon as you return indoors because often snow and ice attach to the soles and, once melted, can lead to slippery conditions inside.

Dress for Warmth

Cold temperatures can lead to frostbite and hypothermia -- a condition where the body temperature dips too low. So don't let indoor temperatures go too low and dress in layers. Going outside? Wear warm socks, a heavy coat, a warm hat, gloves and a scarf. In very cold temperatures, cover all exposed skin. Use a scarf to cover your mouth and protect your lungs.

Fight Wintertime Depression

Because it can be difficult and dangerous to get around, many seniors have less contact with others during cold months. This can breed feelings of loneliness and isolation. To help avoid these issues, family members can check in on seniors as often as possible; even a short, daily phone call can make a big difference. Seniors can also arrange a check-in system with neighbors and friends, where each person looks in on one or two others daily.

Check the Car

Driving during the winter can be hazardous for anyone. But it is especially dangerous for older people, who may not drive as often anymore or whose reflexes may not be as quick as they once were. Get your car serviced before wintertime hits - or ask a family member to bring it to a garage for you. Checking things like the oil, tires, battery and wipers can make a big difference on winter roads.

Prepare for Power Outages

Winter storms can lead to power outages. Make sure you have easy access to flashlights and a battery-powered radio in case the power goes out. Stockpile warm blankets. Longer power outages can spoil the food in your refrigerator and freezer so keep a supply of non-perishable foods that can be eaten cold on hand. If the power goes out, wear several layers of clothing, including a hat.

Eat a Varied Diet

Because people spend more time indoors and may eat a smaller variety of foods, nutritional deficits -- especially Vitamin D deficiency -- can be a problem. A registered dietician recommends consuming foods that are fortified with Vitamin D, such as milk, grains and seafood options like tuna and salmon.

Prevent Carbon Monoxide Poisoning

Using a fireplace, gas heater or lanterns can lead to carbon monoxide poisoning. Ensure your safety by checking the batteries on your carbon monoxide detector and buying an updated one if you need to.

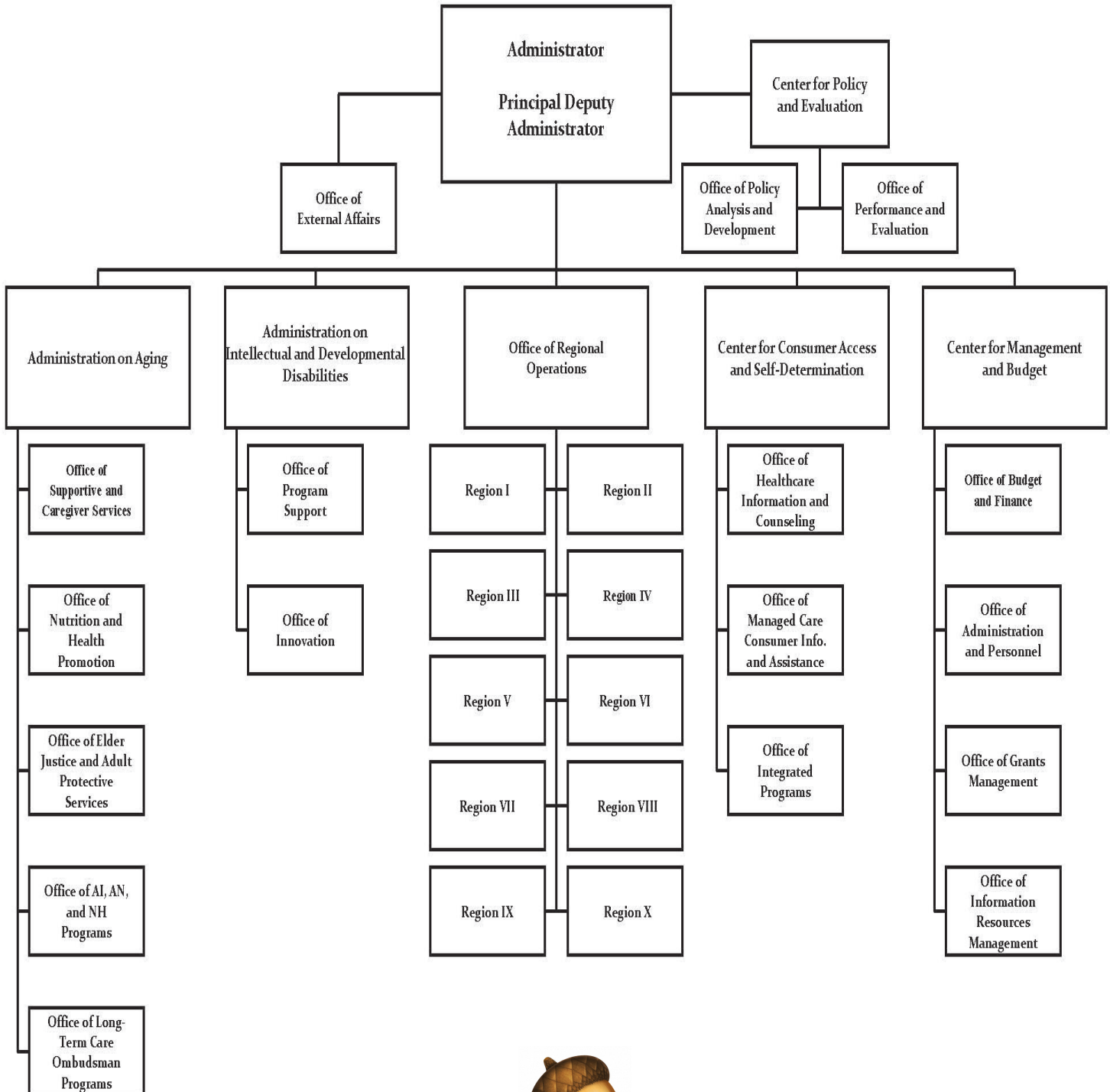
The most important tip to keep in mind during the colder months is to ask for help. If you need to clear your property of snow and ice, don't hesitate to ask a family member or neighbor, or hire a professional. Arrange rides to the grocery store and doctor's appointments. Many communities have shuttle services specifically for seniors. Don't be afraid to reach out for help. Wintertime certainly poses challenges for seniors, but with a bit of planning and awareness, you will stay healthy and experience the joys of springtime soon enough.



- Expands the Office of Elder Rights to become the Office of Elder Justice and Adult Protective Services. ACL recognize that APS spans both the aging and disability communities, and will use the expertise developed in the elder justice area as a foundation for building the APS framework to serve all populations.

This new structure does not yet delineate where the programs that are moving under the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act will reside, but ACL believe: the overall framework will provide logical places for those programs to fit.

Administration for Community Living Organizational Chart



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**Launching the White House
Conference on Aging Website**

Nora Super, Executive Director, 2015 White House Conference on Aging

*ACL is pleased to announce the launching of the White House
Conference on Aging website logon to the site at
www.whitehouseconferenceonaging.gov/. While visiting the
conference website, discover ways to get involved,
including signing up to receive updates on conference activities.*



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