

Senior GAZETTE

Spring 2012

by Carol Schmitkons, Director, Amherst Township Senior Service Office (ATSSO)

2012 Medicare Information

While Social Security benefits have increased 3.6%, several of the Medicare charges have actually dropped this year. **Alcohol misuse screening** and **behavioral counseling** were added as Medicare Coverage Determinations.

- **Part A deductible: \$1,156**
- **Part B deductible: \$140**
- **Hospital stay co-pay days 61-90: \$289/day**
- **Skilled nursing facility co-pay days 21-100: \$144.50/day**
- **Basic Part B premium: \$99.90/mo.** (Amount is higher if you made more than \$85,000 per year the last two years of employment prior to going onto Medicare).

A free “Welcome to Medicare” event for those turning 65, sponsored by the Ohio Senior Health Insurance Information Program (OSHIIP) is scheduled for Lorain County at Wesleyan Village in Elyria on Wednesday, July 25th at 6 PM.

Need help before then? Call the office for an appointment (988-5894 ext. 102) or go to the Medicare.gov website and get personalized information by entering your zip code. The website will tell you what health insurance & prescription drug plans are available in your community. It will also access doctor, hospital, nursing home, home health care, & dialysis facility comparisons as well as give details for various kinds of resources, help and support.

ATSSO OFFICE HOURS:

8:00 A.M. – NOON (M-F)

Phone: 988-5894 – Ext. 102

Email: amhersttwpseniors@oh.rr.com

Home-Delivered Meal Program

ATSSO provides home-delivered meals for those over 60 and disabled adults over 18, with a cost that is adjusted to your income. This nutritious, hot lunch program includes your choice of an entrée, soup & sandwich, or soup & salad. A new “soup only” option has also been added to your choices. To receive a home-delivered meal, contact the office at **988-5894, extension 102**.

Lorain County Office on Aging Helps You Access Your Benefits

Did you know that you may be eligible for help to handle many of your needs? Lorain County Office on Aging’s new program “Access to Benefits” can put you in touch with over 1,700 local, state, and federal programs to help you adjust to changes that challenge your independence as you age. Some of the benefits they can screen for are: Medicare Premiums & Prescription Drug Costs; Food Assistance; Low Cost Housing; HEAP & PIPP (Utility Costs); Veteran Services & Benefits; Golden Buckeye; Ohio Best RX; and Safe-Link Phone.

Screening can be done in your home or on the phone. Contact Lauren at 440-326-4822 or Brenda at 440-326-4811 or email them at smalik@loraincounty.us.

Tips for SENIORS

MANAGING PAIN

Caregivers need to understand and help their loved one(s) be able to assess and communicate pain symptoms to their doctors for proper pain management.

Patience and Understanding

It may sound like your loved one is just complaining or cranky, but these can be signs that your loved one is in much pain. Pain can often result in trouble sleeping, poor concentration, anxiety, and even depression. Ask about the pain and take notes on information that is important to discuss with their physician or a pain management specialist.

Symptoms through Body Language

Because it is sometimes hard for seniors to verbalize pain and the actual amount of pain, watch for pain symptoms such as facial expressions, a groan when moving, limping, reduced activity and increased time in bed.

Relieving Pain

Make an appointment to go along on a doctor visit to explain the assessments you have made and discuss both medication and non-medication ways to relieve stress.

Pain medication should be taken at prescribed intervals and not as pain occurs in order to keep the medicine levels in the blood consistent to relieve pain.

Non-medication pain reduction techniques can help both the body and mind decrease pain. Some of these techniques include:

- Warm showers or baths, or heating pad use to bring soothing comfort by warming muscles
- Cool cloth use for icing of muscles to ease the pain caused by inflammation or swelling

- Use of pillows and soft seat cushions
- Relaxation
- Avoiding stressful situations
- Use of breathing techniques and exercises such as yoga and stretching.

SELECTING CLOTHING FOR INDEPENDENCE

Impaired finger dexterity

Shirts that open and close with Velcro tabs give independence to those with dexterity problems. Place Velcro behind the button of a current shirt, nobody will notice.

Limited range of motion

Raglan, dolman or deep-set sleeves allow for freedom of movement and easy dressing. Skimmer dress with Velcro shoulder opening and complete right side, arm-hole to hem opening, eliminates need to raise arms.

Impaired ability to maneuver feet through leg openings or limited ability to stand

Wrist or finger loops help individuals lift garments when dressing. Clothing with side openings increases room and comfort to ease over hips or over leg.

Toileting and changing needs

Extended Velcro fly's offer easy access to personal needs or when using a urinal.

Buttuner

Slip the wire through your buttonhole, over the button, and then pull it through.

Articles taken from **WRAAA News & Updates** for December 2011 & February 2012