



The Pro Wire

Pro Seniors Newsletter

Vol. 8 • January 2011

Ohio SMP Receives New Funding



Pro Seniors' Ohio SMP (Senior Medicare Patrol) program recently received a one-year capacity-building grant to (in the words of Health and Human Services Secretary Kathleen Sebelius) "put more boots on the ground" in the battle against health care fraud.

"We are very excited to have been awarded this funding," says **Anne Fredrickson**, Ohio SMP Project Manager. "With this grant, we will have the resources to personally deliver the message about Medicare fraud, prevention and detection to Medicare beneficiaries in the state of Ohio in a timely manner. Our message will be delivered by our staff, volunteers and the media in conjunction with the development of a media toolkit provided by the Administration on Aging." Through this funding, Ohio SMP will be able to target hard-to-reach populations, including rural areas, with a focus on counties where the Ohio SMP message hasn't yet been heard.

Five new part-time Volunteer Support Assistants will help step up the pace of SMP community education across Ohio. We welcome **Tom Gaumer, Don Hartman, Hal Hyde, Dave Lichtenfeld, and Gene Bishop**. The new Ohio SMP team also includes Project Assistant **Dave Kleinfelter**, who joins Anne Frederickson and Jane Winkler (Volunteer Coordinator) in Pro Seniors' office.



PLANNED GIVING ~ Leaving a Legacy of Generosity

by Christine Buttress, Graydon Head & Ritchey LLP

Many of us regularly support our favorite charities. Yet when it comes time to execute our estate plan (Will, Trust and beneficiary forms), we forget about those charities. Estate planning really is about giving, what you give, to whom you give, and how you give it. Hopefully, it is about effective giving; it is not just about saving taxes. Planned gifts to our favorite charities are an important part of our estate plan and our legacy, the gift we give to those who follow us.

Generosity is not one-size-fits-all, but there is a right size for everyone. It is not about the size of the gift, but rather the spirit of giving. Every gift counts, no matter the size. As we focus on our own good fortune, we are more likely to remember the needs of others. Gratitude motivates generosity. In the words of Percival Christopher Wren, "One cannot be too generous. Very few try; and none succeed."

As we begin 2011, let us reflect upon those individuals whose lives are better because Pro Seniors is there to enhance the independence and quality of life of Ohio's seniors. Call the Pro Seniors' development office at 458-5525 to find out more about how your legacy giving can assure that Pro Seniors will help more seniors in the years ahead.

Here Come the Boomers!

The baby boomers (Americans born from 1946 through 1964) begin turning 65 in January 2011. For the next 19 years, about 10,000 baby boomers will reach the age 65 milestone – and become eligible for Medicare – every day.

~ NEW MEDICARE BENEFIT ~

Beginning in 2011, first-time enrollees in Medicare will receive a free physical. This "Welcome to Medicare" benefit is offered during the first year of Part B enrollment and reflects the Affordable Care Act's emphasis on preventive medicine.

Pro Seniors

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Helping older persons resolve legal and long-term care problems



Making Rounds with the Ombudsman Program



Thanks to Bob Vines and Stacy Qucsai for allowing the Pro Wire newsletter editor to accompany them over a few days to experience the challenges and rewards of life as a Pro Seniors Long-Term Care (LTC) Ombudsman professional. Here is a sampling of their experiences:

Bob visited a Lebanon nursing home resident, Fred, who had called Pro Seniors for help, saying he was being discharged from the nursing home for reasons he didn't understand – and who called later to say, "Never mind, it's all been handled." Bob stopped in to visit the resident, who indicated that he was fine and was working with his family to resolve the issues. Bob continues to offer help and, with Fred's consent, communicates with Fred's caregivers and family to assure that his rights are always protected.

We passed through the nursing home lobby/gathering area and greeted a few smiling female residents who were being treated to manicures & fingernail painting. Bob let them know that **Pro Seniors is there for them** - all they have to do is call if they have a question or problem. (Pro Seniors' Ombudsman Program contact info is posted in the southwestern Ohio long-term care facilities we serve –currently over 290 LTC facilities.)

Bob also met with the nursing home administrator to make a case for repair of a disabled resident's (Ronnie's) wheelchair. Ronnie wanted more mobility and even hoped to marry another resident there. Once payment for the wheelchair repair was approved by the administrator, the future looked brighter for Ronnie and his girlfriend. As Bob says, "Did we change long term care? Maybe not. Did we change the LTC experience for this resident? Sure did."

Bob headed over to a Franklin, OH nursing home where he emceed a lively game-show quiz and discussion about **residents' rights** with a team of caregiving professionals, enhancing their knowledge of this important topic. (The teams were pretty competitive, even for a prize of a little basket of winter-time snacks.) Nursing home administrators gave Bob high praise for an awesome staff learning experience!

Later, I accompanied LTC Ombudsman, Stacy, on a visit with Gloria, the administrator of a west side group home of five mentally disabled residents. (Pro Seniors advocates for the rights, care and welfare of persons of all ages who live in LTC facilities.) Gloria had reported to Pro Seniors that some of the residents were concerned about their safety due to area home robberies. Stacy arranged to meet there with the administrator and a local police officer to discuss the situation and develop a partnership to address the residents' concerns. Stacy also explained to Gloria how our Crime Victim Assistance program

works and provided some brochures to share with the residents.

We traveled to Cincinnati's east side to meet with administrators of a long-term care facility, at their request, regarding a few potential resident discharges they were considering. Involuntary discharge from a nursing facility, usually after a resident's personal funds are exhausted, is unfortunately a frequent issue affecting nursing home residents.

The administrators told us about a son's neglect of his parents' affairs – he was avoiding calls from the facility and failing to cooperate with the Medicaid application process so his parents could stay in the facility. The residents, Cleo and Betty, both suffer from moderate dementia and the administrators felt they are unable to make decisions on their own. Stacy recommended that the facility and their legal counsel follow up again with the son about the seriousness of the situation. After our meeting, Stacy went to visit with Cleo and Betty to assess if they are cognizant of the situation and potentially able to play a part in resolving this issue. Both were napping at the time, so Stacy plans a return visit soon. The residents' involuntary discharge is averted for now.

The son and daughter-in-law of Greta, an 80-year old resident from Bosnia (who does not speak English), aren't returning calls to the facility about the need to apply for Medicaid coverage so Greta can continue to live there. Stacy recommended that the facility use an interpreter service to communicate with Greta about this issue, and she promised to send them information about this service so they can resolve the problem.

Stacy traveled back to the Pro Seniors office to document the day's activities, make appropriate follow-up plans, and to assemble materials for tomorrow's Ombudsman volunteer training session that she will be facilitating. She is expecting at least six new volunteers who will help Pro Seniors continue to advocate for the rights of vulnerable Ohio seniors and other residents of LTC facilities.

Last year, Pro Seniors' ombudsman staff and volunteers made more than 1,600 visits to LTC facilities, enhancing the quality of life for the vulnerable residents who live there. With continued support from our funders and the community, we can continue these valuable services to benefit Ohio seniors, their families and caregivers.

Comments from an Ombudsman Program Satisfaction Survey:

"I don't think Pro Seniors could have done more – you exceeded my expectations. By providing outstanding literature, choice options, and care and empathy in my time of need, you helped me in ways I cannot fully communicate. I thank you!"

Donor Honor Roll

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“ROCK ON FOR SENIORS” 2010: A Rockin’ Success!

Thanks to our many sponsors, auction donors, attendees and volunteers for making Pro Seniors’ premiere fundraising event on August 14, “Rock On for Seniors,” a major success! Sold out with 300 attendees, we netted over \$27,000 in profits as a result of the sponsorships, ticket sales, and auctions including the live auction of one-of-a-kind painted rocking chairs by wonderful local artists, including Jim Borgman and C. F. Payne.

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SAVE THE DATE FOR 2011!
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at The Radisson Cincinnati Riverfront*

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