

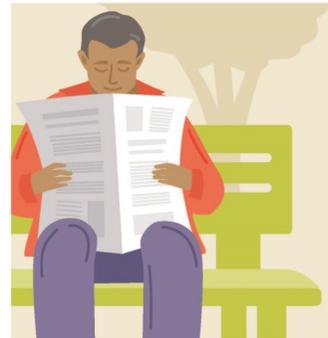
# Caregiver Chronicles

May 2022



Caring for Caregivers

AREA AGENCY ON AGING OF DANE COUNTY  
2865 N SHERMAN AVE, MADISON, WI 53704  
608-261-9930



# Age my way!



[acl.gov/oam](https://acl.gov/oam)



AGE MY WAY: MAY 2022

## Older American's Month: Age My Way

The 2022 theme for Older American's Month is *Age My Way*, an opportunity for all of us to explore the many ways older adults can remain in and be involved with their communities. Caregivers are at the heart of this effort in many ways. Throughout the time older adults remain in community their needs increase, sometimes slowly and other times very quickly. Whether you are a neighbor helping with lawn care and snow removal, a spouse taking over chores for a partner, or an adult child providing assistance for a frail parent, it is your participation that extends the time they can spend living their way by aging in place.

The Area Agency on Aging (AAA) of Dane County has a number of programs that provide assistance to older adults age 60 plus and their caregivers. The assistance can be short or longer-term, depending on need. In addition to the Caregiver Program, there are more resources to help older adults aging in place to plan, participate, access resources, and make connections:

**Senior Nutrition Program:** the program oversees [29 Dane County senior dining sites and home delivered meals](#) and offers personal nutrition counseling to older adults. In June, the AAA Senior Nutrition Program will begin distributing farmers market vouchers for lower income older adults (p. 10). For more information on nutrition programs contact Shannon Gabriel, 608-261-5678 or [Gabriel.Shannon@countyofdane.com](mailto:Gabriel.Shannon@countyofdane.com).

**Elder Benefits Specialist (EBS) Program:** co-located and operated in partnership with the Dane County Aging and Disability Resource Center (ADRC, p. 5) the Elder Benefits Specialist Program provides [legal advice/representation for older adults age 60 plus](#) that are faced with benefit, housing, and other disputes or denials; complications, changes in benefits, claims not paid, and other issues that have an economic or socially isolating effect on older adults. Service is prioritized by client needs.

The EBS staff includes *Medicare Improvements for Patients and Providers Act* (MIPPA) Program Specialist Leilani Amundson who produces the *Monthly MIPPA Moment* (p. 4). EBS Staff also offer free *Welcome to Medicare Seminars* that present detailed information from unbiased experts on benefit programs (p. 5).

**Dane County Client-Centered Case Management Program:** a partnership between Dane County government and geographically-defined agencies, the program features an organized group of trained case management professionals [located in 12 agencies](#) with designated service centers called Senior Focal Points. Their primary goal is to provide the support older adults need to achieve and maintain optimum independence by assessing need, coordinating, and monitoring community-based services.

For more information on these and other services provided by the AAA [click here](#).

Caregivers may contact me for information on how these programs, in addition to the Caregiver Program, can help your care partner age in place and provide you with resources to help them.



Jane De Broux  
Caregiver Specialist  
Dane County Area Agency on Aging



Caring for Caregivers

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Mobile phone: 608-381-5733  
[debroux.jane@countyofdane.com](mailto:debroux.jane@countyofdane.com)

## A New Approach in Music Therapy for Helping Alzheimer's Disease Patients



*Sundowning* is a term that is familiar to family members and caregivers of persons with Alzheimer's or other types of dementia. They may experience sundowning—the restlessness, agitation, irritability, or confusion that can begin or worsen as daylight begins to fade—often just when tired caregivers need a break.<sup>1</sup> Sundowning can continue into the night, making it hard for people with Alzheimer's to fall asleep and stay in bed. As the thesis of my recently completed Master of Music Therapy degree, I proposed there are similarities between *agitation* in persons with Alzheimer's Dementia and what is often

termed *dysregulation* by persons with Autism. Emotion Dysregulation is the inability to know how to innately manage the intensity and duration of negative emotions like fear, sadness, or anger. This is a particular challenge for those who have Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD)<sup>2</sup>.

Because music therapy has a long tradition of helping persons with Autism<sup>3</sup>, it was my hope to identify music therapy approaches that have been used to help them with dysregulation that might also help decrease agitation or sundowning in persons with Alzheimer's or other dementias. I began my research by implementing a case study and enrolling a participant who had Alzheimer's dementia and occasionally exhibited agitation. It is important to note that there are certainly many differences between Autism and Alzheimer's Dementia, but I wanted to focus on the outward behavior of dysregulation or agitation because it is a clear signal of distress in the individual who is experiencing it. As a music therapist it is most important to me that my work through the vehicle of music improves the lives of my clients.

After analyzing existing research from music therapy journals as well as other peer-reviewed journals that address agitation in persons with Alzheimer's Dementia, I interviewed board-certified music therapists who have provided direct services to persons with Autism. From this research, I assembled a list of music therapy exercises to use in my case study to determine if they would consistently decrease agitation. I focused these music exercises on the use of multi-modal sensory stimulation, which is the use of stimulation from more than one sensory area simultaneously. It eventually became clear throughout the course of the case study that when the participant was attending (or paying attention) to the various types of sensory input during the music exercises, agitation or distress consistently decreased.

My thesis was a philosophical inquiry and a case study and therefore it is not intended to be definitive. My hope is that these findings will inspire further research both inside and outside the field of music therapy to help decrease the symptoms of agitation and sundowning in persons with Alzheimer's Dementia. As I like to say to my music therapy practicum students, "if we can make today better for the client and their family/caregiver, then we have done a good day's work."

—Ingrid Gruett, MMT, MT-BC, WMTR, [Middleton Music Therapy Services](#)

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<sup>1</sup>NIH National Institute on Aging (NIA)

<sup>2</sup>Centria Healthcare, December 2019

<sup>3</sup>[American Music Therapy Association Fact Sheet Autism/ASD](#), accessed 4.19.22

## Monthly MIPPA Moment: Medicare and Mental Health

*MIPPA (Medicare Improvements for Patients and Providers Act) has a goal of educating older adults on Medicare's cost-saving benefits and preventive services.*

**May is Mental Health Awareness Month** in the United States. It is estimated that 20% of people age 55 years or older experience some type of mental health concern. The most common conditions include anxiety, severe cognitive impairment, and mood disorders such as depression or bipolar disorder.

Medicare covers a one-time *Welcome to Medicare* preventive visit, which includes a review of your potential risk factors for depression. You pay nothing for this visit if your doctor or other health care provider accepts assignment. (Note: This visit is only covered if you get it within the first 12 months you have Part B.) Medicare Part B also covers a yearly *Wellness* visit. Medicare covers a yearly *Wellness* visit once every 12 months (if you have had Part B for longer than 12 months). This is a good time to talk to your doctor or other health care provider about changes in your mental health so they can evaluate your changes year to year. You pay nothing for your yearly *Wellness* visit if your doctor or other health care provider accepts assignment.

If you or someone you know is in crisis and would like to talk to a crisis counselor, call the free and confidential National Suicide Prevention Lifeline at 1-800-273-TALK (1-800-273-8255). TTY users can call 1-800-799-4889. Call 911 if you are in an immediate medical crisis.

*Adapted from <https://www.medicare.gov/Pubs/pdf/10184-Medicare-and-Your-Mental-Health-Benefits.pdf>. For more MIPPA Program information, call MIPPA Program Specialist, Leilani Amundson, at 608-240-7458. This project was supported by the Wisconsin Department of Health Services with financial assistance, in whole or in part, by grant number 2101WIMIAA, from the U.S. Administration for Community Living, Department of Health and Human Services, Washington, D.C. 20201.*





# FREE Virtual (Online) Welcome to Medicare Seminars

Sponsored by Area Agency on Aging of Dane County's  
Elder Benefits Specialist Program

## What you need to know about enrolling in Medicare

If you are turning age 64 this year, we can help you make informed choices about your Medicare options! You'll receive accurate and detailed information from unbiased experts in benefit programs.

**May 21, 2022**  
Email [aaa@countyofdane.com](mailto:aaa@countyofdane.com) to register by 5/14/22

This seminar will be offered via Zoom.

**Additional Dates:**  
**(Location: TBD)**

July 16, 2022

September 17, 2022  
November 12, 2022



## Connecting People with the Assistance They Need



Monday through Friday  
Call 7:45 am—4:30 pm

**(608) 240-7400**

Website: [www.daneadrc.org](http://www.daneadrc.org)

Email: [ADRC@countyofdane.com](mailto:ADRC@countyofdane.com)

To read the most recent newsletter from the ADRC copy and paste this link into your browser:

<http://www.daneadrc.org/documents/pdf/Newsletter/Resource-Wise-March-2022.pdf>





# CAREGIVER TELECONNECTION



[www.caregiverteleconnection.org](http://www.caregiverteleconnection.org)



## Date Time Topic A LEADING VOICE FOR CAREGIVERS

Tuesday  
May 3  
11:00 am Eastern  
10:00 am Central  
9:00 am Mountain  
8:00 am Pacific

**Online - How the Pandemic Impacted Caregiver's Mental Health with Dr. Elliot Montgomery Sklar and Lucy Barylak, MSW** *We've all struggled during these past 2 years at times, but new research has highlighted just how the pandemic has affected informal family caregivers. We'll discuss these new findings, and how we can work together to heal our mental health after the fallout of the pandemic.*

Thursday  
May 5  
2:00 pm Eastern  
1:00 pm Central  
12:00 pm Mountain  
11:00 am Pacific

**Online-The ABC's of Alzheimer's with Tam Cummings, PhD** *This session will cover the history, domains and variations of Dementias of the Alzheimer's Type. Knowing and understanding the effects of the disease on a Person with Dementia will be discussed along with stress relief tips for the family caregiver. **\*\*Sponsored by VITAS Healthcare\*\****

Monday  
May 9  
1:00 pm Eastern  
12:00 pm Central  
11:00 am Mountain  
10:00 am Pacific

**Federal, State and Local Services with Doni Green** *Learn about federal, state, and local programs and services for adults age 60+ and for family and informal caregivers. **\*\*Sponsored by the North Central Texas Caregiver Teleconnection program\*\****

Thursday  
May 12  
11:00 am Eastern  
10:00 am Central  
9:00 am Mountain  
8:00 am Pacific

**Dear Lucy: What seniors and caregivers need to know about delirium with Lucy Barylak, MSW** *Join Lucy Barylak, MSW as she discusses what causes delirium and how it is diagnosed. She will also share what signs to look for and what are some treatment plans available. This is an interactive session, so please plan to share your experiences and questions.*

Tuesday  
May 17  
11:00 am Eastern  
10:00 am Central  
9:00 am Mountain  
8:00 am Pacific

**Online - Caring for Someone with Mental Health Issues with Dr. Elliot Montgomery Sklar and Lucy Barylak, MSW** *The pandemic has heightened anxiety, depression, addiction and other mental health issues. We may not even realize that we live with or care for someone with mental health issues. This session will provide a forum for caregivers to discuss their experiences and to learn about coping strategies.*

Tuesday  
May 24  
12:00 pm Eastern  
11:00 am Central  
10:00 am Mountain  
9:00 am Pacific

**Online - Frontotemporal Degeneration: What it is, What it isn't and What are the Signs and Symptoms with Sharon Hall** *This dementia is highly misunderstood, even in the medical community, and takes families up to 4 years to get a proper diagnosis. She will explain what signs show up first, how to get an accurate diagnosis, and what to do after you receive the diagnosis.*

Thursday  
May 26  
2:00 pm Eastern  
1:00 pm Central  
12:00 pm Mountain  
11:00 am Pacific

**Online - Within Us All Are Super Powers that We Underestimate But Can Get Us Through Many Challenges. You Are Stronger Than you Think! Dr. James Huysman, PsyD, LCSW** *As caregivers one of the hardest things about the Covid-19 pandemic is that it has limited our ability to pursue new experiences. Research shows that understanding our past experiences in our lives and cultivating them is a recipe for the present and the future. This month lets go within and become self-aware using the mosaic of our own lives and experiences to move ahead with ourselves and those we care for.*

[www.caregiverteleconnection.org](http://www.caregiverteleconnection.org)



WELLMED  
CHARITABLE FOUNDATION

**A program of the WellMed Charitable Foundation**  
**Register online at [www.caregiverteleconnection.org](http://www.caregiverteleconnection.org)**  
**call 866.390.6491 Toll Free**



## Online - How the Pandemic Impacted Caregiver's Mental Health with Dr. Elliot Montgomery Sklar and Lucy Barylak, MSW

We've all struggled during these past 2 years at times, but new research has highlighted just how the pandemic has affected informal family caregivers. We'll discuss these new findings, and how we can work together to heal our mental health after the fallout of the pandemic.

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May 3, 2022

11:00 am Eastern | 10:00 am Central  
9:00 am Mountain | 8:00 am Pacific

[REGISTER  
HERE](#)



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The pandemic has heightened anxiety, depression, addiction and other mental health issues. We may not even realize that we live with or care for someone with mental health issues. This session will provide a forum for caregivers to discuss their experiences and to learn about coping strategies.

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[REGISTER  
HERE](#)



## Online - Within Us All Are Super Powers that We Underestimate But Can Get Us Through Many Challenges. You Are Stronger Than you Think! Dr. James

**Huysman, PsyD, LCSW** As caregivers one of the hardest things about the Covid-19 pandemic is that it has limited our ability to pursue new experiences. The loss of engagement in our usual environments can undoubtedly endanger mental health, but those who have been able to immerse themselves in new hobbies, goals, or even walking routes have found the activities to be beneficial and refreshing. We all have untapped Hidden Superpowers that can get us through tough times once we uncover them. Research shows that understanding our past experiences in our lives and cultivating them is a recipe for the present and the future. We actually have these skills hidden within that can improve well-being.

This month lets go within and become self-aware using the mosaic of our own lives and experiences to move ahead with ourselves and those we care for .

Thursday  
May 26, 2022

2:00 pm Eastern | 1:00 pm Central  
12:00 pm Mountain | 11:00 am Pacific

[REGISTER  
HERE](#)

## Online Classes

### ***Let's Get Away Together***

This series is comprised of interactive sessions with each week focusing on a new place or cultural activity, while incorporating storytelling, music, poetry writing, and/or a simple craft. Each session will include a follow-up message filled with tips, activities, and recipes for families to continue to enjoy after the virtual trip. The focus of each group is to explore a new world, experience a variety of engaging opportunities, and enjoy a sense of camaraderie and community.

Let's Get Away Together is intended to be an enjoyable activity for family caregivers and the person they care for. Those receiving care who are able to participate in the discussion and activities are encouraged to attend with their family caregiver. Read a Q&A about the series [Click here](#)



**May 3**

**Let's Explore Our Strange and Beloved Pollinators**



**May 10**

**A Tribute to Mothers—The Many Shapes they Come In**



**May 17**

**Best of National Parks**



**May 24**

**Let's Go to the British Virgin Islands!**



### **April 26**

*Special 10th Series Encore! Let's Go to Italy*  
The country of pasta, wine, opera, ocean, vespas, fashion, and so much more! Join Katrina in traveling to Italy to explore this amazing place - live music included!

### **May 3**

*Let's Explore our Strange and Beloved Pollinators*

Join Samantha in exploring pollinators locally and globally. We will take another look at fascinating hummingbirds, butterflies, and more, and what you can do to keep pollinators thriving in your backyard!

### **May 10**

*A Tribute to Mothers - The Many Shapes They Come In*

Join Alicia to explore the variety of mothers throughout history. We will explore some more well-known mothers while covering others that are "outside of the box".

### **May 17**

*Special 10th Series Encore; Best of National Parks!*

Join Samantha as we take a look at our favorite U.S. National Parks. From mountain tops to tropical coastlines, together we'll take a bucket list trip to the best preserved natural landscapes of the USA.

### **May 24**

*Let's go to the British Virgin Islands (Caribbean) with Alicia!*

Life is rich and relaxed in the untainted beauty of the British Virgin Islands. Together we will sail on the clear waters, swim in the wonders of The Baths, and soak in the endless sky.

### **May 31**

*Encore of Music Around the World*

Let's visit some of our favorite spots around the world, hearing snippets of folk music, performed live by Katrina, learning about the culture, and celebrating the beauty of getting to 'travel' together in this way!

### **June 7**

*Alicia's Around the World*

Let's Explore Around the World: Fun Facts that may Sound Unreal but are True! Join Alicia and discover something new - our world is truly a place of unique, and often stunning, realities!

### **June 14**

*Best of The Golden Era Musicals!*

Join Katrina in learning, singing, and reminiscing about favorite songs from our well-known Broadway shows. You might hear (or sing!) snippets from The King and I, An American in Paris, or Meet Me in St. Louis!

**When:** Tuesdays, April 26 to June 14, from 1 to 2 p.m. (PT)

**Where:** Online

**Cost:** No charge

**Registration:** [Click here](#)





*It's finally time...*

## **For Farmers' Market Vouchers!**

Starting in June, the Area Agency on Aging (AAA) of Dane County will distribute farmers' market vouchers to senior adults for use in purchasing fruit, vegetables, or herbs at farmers' markets and roadside farm stands in Wisconsin during the 2022 growing season (June 1—October 31).

The vouchers are distributed on a first come/first serve basis to those age 60+, who live in Dane County, and have gross incomes under **\$25,142 per year (or \$2,095/month) for a one person household and \$33,874 per year (or \$2,823/month) for a two person household**. One set of vouchers per household regardless of size of household.

Distribution of farmers' market vouchers will be done by mail. Individuals that received vouchers last year will automatically receive an application by mail this year. If you wish to apply to the program, or need to update your mailing address, contact AAA Dietitian Shannon Gabriel at 261-5678. Applications will be mailed during the week of May 15<sup>th</sup>. Once we receive and approve your application, vouchers will be mailed starting on June 1st.

*"This program is funded by the United States Department of Agriculture. USDA is an equal opportunity provider and employer."*



*Madison VA Caregiver Program*  
**Virtual Caregiver Day Off Class**

**The Mindfulness Series**

**ALL 3 CLASSES FROM 10am-11am**

**Class 1: Paying Attention - Thursday, May 5, 2022**

**Class 2: On Purpose – Thursday, May 12, 2022**

**Class 3: Without Judgement – Thursday, May 19, 2022**

**\*\*\*All classes are held virtually *by phone***

**\*\*\*We encourage caregivers to ATTEND ALL 3 CLASSES to get the *maximum benefit***

**\*\*\*RSVP is REQUIRED**

To RSVP call **608-256-1901 ext. 11576.**

Please leave a message to include:

- YOUR NAME and your Veteran's name
- **PHONE #** you can be reached
- We will call you to confirm and provide details for joining the event

**CLASSES** provided in partnership with the Memphis VA Caregiver Center.

For more information, please contact:  
Meghann Schmitt, CISW  
Caregiver Support Program at the  
**#608-256-1901 ext 11576**



**VA**  
HEALTH  
CARE

Defining  
**EXCELLENCE**  
in the 21st Century

# NATIONAL TRAILS DAY A CELEBRATION OF THE OUTDOORS

This is a community-wide, all Inclusive, family event on the trails and throughout the open lands of the Pheasant Branch Conservancy.

There will be many activities and presentations to participate in for all ages and abilities over a three-hour time period.

Nature Walks (short and long)  
Scavenger Hunts  
Displays  
Madison Reading Project  
(free nature books; ice cream)

Saturday, June 4, 2022  
1:00 PM to 4:00 PM

Orchid Heights Park in  
Middleton and  
Pheasant Branch  
Conservancy

