

February 2025

CAREGIVER CHRONICLES

BULLETIN

Dane County Caregiver Program

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Monthly MIPPA Moment: Get Free Cardiovascular Screening with Medicare

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

February is American Heart Month. Heart disease, or cardiovascular disease, is a condition that can lead to heart attack or stroke and is the **leading cause of death for men and women in the United States** and has been since 1950, with rates highest among people over 65. Cancer is a very close second. In 2023 the CDC reported 680,909 deaths attributed to heart disease and 613,331 to cancer.

Medicare will cover one "Annual Wellness Visit" per year with a primary care doctor in a primary care setting to help lower your risk for cardiovascular disease, as long as your provider accepts Medicare assignment.

The doctor may discuss medication use, check blood pressure, or provide healthy eating tips. Some factors that increase the risk of heart disease include: age, gender, smoking, high blood pressure, cholesterol, being overweight, and physical inactivity. **Screening blood tests for cholesterol, lipid, and triglyceride levels can also be covered by Medicare Part B at 100% once every five years when ordered by your provider if they accept Medicare assignment.** You do not need to show signs of heart disease or have any particular risk factors to qualify for these tests. During the course of your heart disease screening, your provider may discover and need to investigate or treat a new or existing problem. Additional care is considered diagnostic and Medicare may, however, then bill you for a portion of any follow up diagnostic care. <https://www.medicare.gov/coverage/cardiovascular-disease-screenings>

For more MIPPA Program information, call MIPPA Program Specialist, Leilani Amundson, at 608-240-7458.

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≡ **FREE Welcome to Medicare Seminars**

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

What you need to know about enrolling in Medicare

If you are turning **age 64 this year**, the Dane County Area Agency on Aging wants to help you make informed choices about your Medicare options! Do you understand what Medicare is and isn't...how to avoid penalties for late enrollment in Medicare...and how to get the most out of your health and prescription benefit plans? **Some decisions and actions about Medicare can take place 3-6 months before you turn 65, so don't wait until you are turning 65 to understand all you need to know about this important benefit.**

Want easy to understand answers to all of these complex questions? Sign up to attend one of the following **Free Welcome to Medicare Seminars**. By attending a seminar, you'll walk away with the accurate and detailed information you need from unbiased experts in benefit programs. In-Person seminars have limited space so sign up early.

All dates are on Saturdays, 9–11:30 am

January 18, 2025 Virtual
Email AAA@danecounty.gov to register by 1/10/25

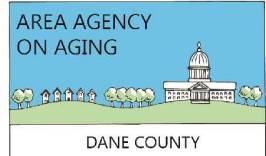
March 15, 2025 In-Person
Fitchburg Senior Center,
5510 Lacy Rd, Fitchburg
Email AAA@danecounty.gov to register by 3/7/25

May 17, 2025 Virtual
Email AAA@danecounty.gov to register by 5/9/25

July 26, 2025 In-Person
Middleton Senior Center, 7448
Hubbard Ave, Middleton Email
AAA@danecounty.gov to register by 7/18/25

September 13, 2025 Virtual
Email AAA@danecounty.gov to register by 9/5/24

November 15, 2025 In-Person
UW Extension
5201 Fen Oak Dr, Madison
Email AAA@danecounty.gov to register by 11/7/25



Almost everything will work again if you unplug it for a few minutes, including you."

-Anne Lamott

Being deeply loved by someone gives you strength, while loving someone deeply gives you courage.

-Lao Tzu



*All sessions will be available on Zoom and/or the telephone. Your choice!
You may log in or call in to participate*

Thursday February 6 11:00 am Eastern
10:00 am Central
9:00 am Mountain
8:00 am Pacific
How to cope with Fear with Elliot M. Sklar, PhD and Lucy Barylak, MSW Coping with the declining health of someone around us can trigger fear – fear about what is to come, and even fear about our own health. This session will address coping with ongoing fear and anxiety.

Monday February 10 1:00 pm Eastern
12:00 pm Central
11:00 am Mountain
10:00 am Pacific
How to Choose: Making the Best Long Term Care Decision for Yourself of Your Loved One with Suzanna M. Sulfstede, LMSW This presentation offers a comprehensive guide to understanding long-term care options. Participants will learn to differentiate between various facilities, such as nursing homes and assisted living, and determine the appropriate level of care. The session will equip attendees with the knowledge and tools to navigate the selection process effectively, advocate for quality care, and understand the role of ombudsmen in supporting residents and families. ****Sponsored by the North Central Texas Caregiver Teleconnection****

Thursday February 13 11:00 am Eastern
10:00 am Central
9:00 am Mountain
8:00 am Pacific
How to Deal with Anger with Elliot M. Sklar, PhD and Lucy Barylak, MSW Many of us feel frustrated, overwhelmed, and angry at times along the caregiving journey. Interpersonal conflict can also surface when it comes to sharing responsibilities and making difficult decisions. This session will address healthy ways to deal with anger and conflict.

Tuesday February 18 1:00 pm Eastern
12:00 pm Central
11:00 am Mountain
10:00 am Pacific
Caregiver Guilt and Distorted Thinking with Jamie Cobb Tinsley, CAEd Feelings of guilt and other distorted thoughts are common for caregivers. Please join Jamie Cobb CAEd to identify different types of caregiver guilt and twisted thoughts and how to break the guilt cycle and “untwist” and reframe thoughts.

Thursday February 20 11:00 am Eastern
10:00 am Central
9:00 am Mountain
8:00 am Pacific
How to Handle Uncertainty with Elliot M. Sklar, PhD and Lucy Barylak, MSW One thing for certain is that being a caregiver comes with a lot of uncertainty! It’s hard to know what’s around the corner and how to plan for the unknown. This interactive session will address how to cope with the uncertainty we all feel at times, and we’ll talk about making informed decisions.

Monday February 24 1:00 pm Eastern
12:00 pm Central
11:00 am Mountain
10:00 am Pacific
El estrés y el regalo que nos brinda con Dr. Mario Siervo, MD Acompañenos con el doctor Mario Siervo, nos compartirá cómo el estrés nos afecta y cómo podemos tomar medidas para disminuir el impacto que tiene en nosotros. Él proporcionará consejos prácticos para Tomar su Oxígeno Primero.

Thursday February 27 11:00 am Eastern
10:00 am Central
9:00 am Mountain
8:00 am Pacific
How to Process Sadness with Elliot M. Sklar, PhD and Lucy Barylak, MSW Sadness is something difficult for most of us to process and cope with, and a hard thing to talk about – which is why we have a dedicated session in this series to discuss the importance of sadness. We’ll also explore anticipatory grief – a common experience of caregivers.



A program of the WellMed Charitable Foundation
Register online at www.caregiverteleconnection.org or call
866.390.6491 Toll Free



*You, yourself,
As much as anybody in the entire universe,
Deserve your love and affection.*

-Sharon Salzberg