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RI ARA

*“Fighting for the future of our members.
NOW, more than ever!!!!”*

*Affiliated with the Rhode Island AFL-CIO
RI ARA HealthLink Wellness*

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Social Security, Medicare & Medicaid Celebration

On August 29, 2014, the Rhode Island Alliance *for* Retired Americans held a celebration to honor two great events in American history, Social Security, Medicare & Medicaid Birthday's at the Salvatore Mancini Recourse & Activity Center in North Providence, RI.

Guest speakers included Alliance *for* Retired Americans Executive Director, Richard Fiesta, RI Senators Jack Reed & Sheldon Whitehouse, RI Congressmen Jim Langevin & David N. Cicilline and RI AFL-CIO President, George Nee.

The first great event, the 79th Birthday, August 14, 2014, the signing of the Social Security ACT by FDR. Retirees celebrate the program that they contributed to in their working years and can rely on for modest benefits when they need it most.

The second great event, the 49th Birthday, July 30, 2014, the signing of the Medicare & Medicaid Act as part of the Social Security Act by Pres. Lyndon B. Johnson on July 30, 1965.

The Medicare program, providing hospital and medical insurance for Americans age 65 or older, was signed into law as an amendment to the Social Security Act of 1935.

Medicaid, a state and federally funded program that offers health coverage to certain low-income people, was also signed into law by President Johnson on July 30, 1965, as an amendment to the Social Security Act.

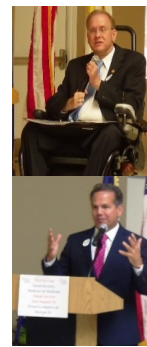
Mr. Fiesta told attendees that Rhode Island was very fortunate to have a Congressional Delegation that supports them 100% to PROTECT, IMPROVE and to INCREASE Social Security, Medicare & Medicaid.

Senators Reed & Whitehouse, along with Congressmen Langevin & Cicilline, pledge all of their support to stand with and for, not only Rhode Island seniors, but all seniors. We will fight to protect, improve and increase these very important earned programs, now, and in the future, for all seniors and retirees.

RI AFL-CIO President, George Nee told people how much Social Security, Medicare & Medicaid contributes to the Rhode Island economy each month.

RI ARA President, John A. Pernorio said that the Alliance *for* Retired Americans and it's three plus million members will continue to put pressure on Congress, especially people like House Budget Chairman, Paul Ryan, to not privatize or cut Social Security, Medicare or Medicaid to provide tax cuts to Corporations and the wealthy.

SOCIAL SECURITY IS NOT A HAND OUT, WE EARNED IT WITH OUR HARD LABOR!!!

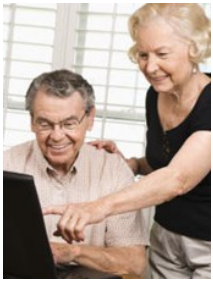


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Confusion about Medicare and Marketplace Cleared up by CMS Q&A

Many seniors will be surprised by this Q&A about Medicare and the Marketplace of the Affordable Care Act



There has often been confusion for many senior citizens between Medicare and the Health Insurance Marketplace - the health insurance program for U.S. citizens who have not reached the age of Medicare eligibility, which is normally age 65. Now, the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services, which also runs the Marketplace, is offering some help. It has issued a Q&A on the most frequent questions asked about Medicare and the Marketplace.

A good example of the confusion - both Medicare and the Marketplace have fall enrollment periods for joining or changing programs. Both are run and promoted out of CMS but they have different dates - Medicare opens October 15, while the Health Insurance Marketplace opens

November 15.

For a complete list of: **Frequently Asked Questions Regarding Medicare and the Health Insurance Marketplace as of August 1, 2014.** [Read More](#)

New Executives Name as CMS Prepares for 2015 Open Enrollment for Marketplace

Open Enrollment for Health Insurance Marketplace will be

November 15, 2014 to February 15, 2015; coverage can start as early as January 1, 2015

A new Marketplace Chief Executive Officer (CEO), Kevin Counihan, will join the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS), and Lori Lodes has been named the new Director of Communications for CMS. The announcement was made by Health and Human Services Secretary Sylvia M. Burwell, who is about to have her first turn at steering the Health Insurance Marketplace through an open enrollment period.

“When I arrived at the Department, I committed to retain, develop and recruit the best talent available, and that’s what we are doing,” Secretary Burwell said.

“We are building strong teams with the focus and know-how necessary to advance our mission and deliver impact for the people we serve. We are committed to instilling ongoing accountability for reaching milestones, measuring results and ensuring a successful open enrollment period. I’m particularly pleased to welcome Kevin Counihan to the new Marketplace CEO role. He brings additional operational and technological expertise to the position and will be a clear, single point of contact for streamlined decision-making.”...[Read More](#)



Some States, Seniors Bristle at Lack of Authority Over Medicare Advantage Plans

Medicare pays private health plans - an alternative to traditional Medicare - set monthly rate per patient: about 16 million have signed up, almost one third of elderly, disabled eligible for Medicare

By Fred Schulte, The Center for Public Integrity

When Minnesota retiree Doug Morpew needed surgery last year, he expected his Humana Medicare Advantage plan to step up and pay the lion’s share of the bill.

Morpew said the health plan had told him over the phone he would owe just \$450 for the two days he spent in a St. Paul hospital recovering from the operation to repair an aortic aneurysm.

Less than a month later, however, Humana hit him with a bill for \$6,461.66, claiming the surgery was not covered because the hospital was “out of network,” according to an affidavit he filed with the Minnesota Attorney General’s Office last year.

“Considering that I was expecting a bill of \$450, I was incredibly upset,” said Morpew, 68, who lives in Lonsdale, Minn., and works part time as a transportation industry consultant.

Morpew said that Humana paid the bill, but only after “several months of fighting” with him, and after he complained to state regulators....[Read More](#)



Humana hit him with a bill for \$6,461.66, claiming the surgery was not covered because the hospital was “out of network.”

Relief for 75 Percent of Seniors with Chronic Conditions May Come from New NIH Research

More chronic conditions means more health care services, negative outcomes, unnecessary hospitalizations, adverse drug reactions, declining functional status, and mortality



Three new research awards — totaling \$19.4 million over five years — will address the growing proportion of the U.S. population that has multiple chronic medical conditions. Estimates are that almost 75 percent of senior citizens over age 65 and 1 in 15 children suffer from two or more chronic medical conditions — such as diabetes mellitus, chronic kidney disease, hypertension, and chronic pain.

The grants are funded through the National Institutes of Health's Health Care Systems (HCS) Research Collaboratory, which engages health care systems as research partners in conducting large-scale clinical studies.

The HCS Research Collaboratory, created by NIH in 2012, currently supports five large-scale clinical trials with partnering health care systems across the United States, and a Collaboratory Coordinating Center at Duke University, Durham, North Carolina. The funds are managed through the NIH Common Fund, which encourages collaboration and supports a series of exceptionally high-impact, trans-NIH programs. ...[Read More](#)

FDA Approves First Non-Invasive DNA Screening Test for Colorectal Cancer Collaboration with Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services contributed to proposed Medicare coverage for Cologuard



The U.S. Food and Drug Administration on August 11 approved Cologuard, the first stool-based colorectal screening test that detects the presence of red blood cells and DNA mutations that may indicate the presence of certain kinds of abnormal growths that may be cancers such as colon cancer or precursors to cancer.

Colorectal cancer primarily affects people age 50 and older, and among cancers that affect both men and women, it is the third most common cancer and the second leading cause of cancer-related death in the United States, according to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC). Colorectal cancer screening is effective at reducing illness and death related to colon cancer.


The CDC estimates that if everyone age 50 or older had regular screening tests as recommended, at least 60 percent of colorectal cancer deaths could be avoided. ...[Read More](#)

Cologuard vs Fecal Immunochemical Test (FIT)
Cologuard detected 92% of colorectal cancers, 42% of advanced adenomas.
FIT screening detected 74% of cancers, 24% of advanced adenomas.
Cologuard was less accurate than **FIT** at identifying subjects negative for colorectal cancer or adenomas.

Deaths from Heart Disease and Stroke Have Plunged in Last Decade

Rates declined more for these conditions than for any others; improved lifestyle, quality of care and prevention strategies contributed to the decrease.

Drop in Hospitalizations



Heart Attack -38.0%
Unstable Angina -83.8%
Heart Failure -30.5%
Ischemic Stroke -33.6%

U.S. hospitalizations and deaths from heart disease and stroke dropped significantly in the last decade, according to new research in the American Heart Association journal *Circulation*.

“Interestingly, these improvements happened in a period when there were no real ‘miracle’ clinical advancements,” said Harlan Krumholz, M.D., S.M., lead author of the “most comprehensive report card to-date”

on America's progress in heart disease and stroke prevention and treatment.

“Rather, we saw consistent improvements in the use of evidence-based treatments and medications and an increase in quality improvement initiatives using registries and other data to track performance and support improvement efforts — as well as a strong emphasis on heart-healthy lifestyles and behaviors.”...[Read More](#)

The National Heart, Lung, and Blood Institute supported the study.

More at American Heart Association.

Tripping seniors for science?



It's no joke. Researchers are teaching seniors how to fall without injury using simulated tripping in the laboratory.

It almost sounds like a cruel joke. Researchers at the University of Illinois in Chicago are tripping senior citizens for science. And the seniors are thanking them for it.

Falls are the leading cause of injury among the senior set, resulting in costs of up to \$30 billion each year in hospital visits. Not to mention the resulting poor health and disabilities that plague many seniors after a fall.

The conventional method for preventing falls is preventative exercises that boost strength and improve balance, but physical therapist Clive Pai is leading research on a new method of fall prevention that he calls a "vaccine against falls."

Pai and his team work with senior citizens using computerized treadmills that simulate falls — similar to slipping on a banana peel. Don't worry, the seniors are strapped into harnesses suspended from the ceiling to prevent injury. But by simulating the fall in a controlled environment, Pai believes it teaches the body subconsciously how to handle a fall to prevent injury in real-life incidents.

Pai has a \$1 million, five-year grant from the National Institute on Aging to study and develop the treadmill system. He is hoping in this initial phase of the research to enroll 300 participants over the next five years of the study....[Read More](#)

Sleep Apnea Treatment Helps Seniors, Study Finds

British researchers report it improved slumber, lowered daytime sleepiness

WEDNESDAY, Aug. 27, 2014 (HealthDay News) -- A new study finds that continuous positive airway pressure (CPAP) is an effective treatment for seniors with sleep apnea.

CPAP is widely used to treat moderate to severe obstructive sleep apnea, a condition in which the airway relaxes and narrows during sleep, causing breathing problems and interrupted sleep that leads to daytime drowsiness.

CPAP keeps the airway open by pushing a stream of air through a patient's nose via a mask that is worn during sleep. Previous research has shown that CPAP benefits middle-aged adults with sleep apnea, but there had been no studies on whether it was useful and cost-effective in seniors...[Read More](#)



Spanish Friday Alert now Available

The *Friday Alert* will now be available each week in Spanish! To see last week's *Alerta Semanal*, go to <http://tinyurl.com/mq7gpry>. For the Alliance's Spanish language page, which includes fact sheets and other translated documents from the main site, go to <http://tinyurl.com/nllcz6n>. More outreach from the Alliance to the Hispanic elder community will be coming in the next few months.

The New England ARA state affiliates are actively pursuing these Petitions.

Petition Subject: Observation Stays: "Current Hospital Issues in the Medicare Program"

ADD
YOUR
NAME

**Get The Message Out:
SIGN THE PETITION!!!!**

Petition Subject: House Concurrent Resolution 67 and Senate Concurrent Resolution 26 to get power doors installed in Post Offices and other federal buildings.

ADD
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**Get The Message Out:
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Petition Subject: Elimination of the Unfair GPO and WEP Provisions of the Social Security Act to make sure the Congress of the United States enacts legislation, HR 3118 & S 896

ADD
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