Older American’s Month 2017: Age Out Loud

Getting older doesn’t mean what it used to. For many aging Americans, it is a phase of life where interests, goals and dreams can get a new or second start. Today, aging is about eliminating outdated perceptions and living the way that suits you best.

Take Barbara Hillary, for example. A nurse for 55 years who dreamed of travel, at age 75 Hillary became the first African American woman to set foot on the North Pole. In 2011, at age 79, she set another first when she stepped onto the South Pole. Former president George H.W. Bush celebrated his 90th birthday by skydiving. Actress Betty White, now 95 years old, became the oldest person to host Saturday Night Live in 2010, coincidentally during May—the same month recognized as Older Americans Month (OAM).

Since 1963, OAM has been a time to celebrate older Americans, their stories, and their contributions. Led by the Administration for Community Living (ACL), the annual observance offers a special opportunity to learn about, support and recognize our nation’s older citizens. This year’s theme, “Age Out Loud,” emphasizes the ways older adults are living their lives with boldness, confidence and passion while serving as an inspiration to people of all ages.

The Division of Aging hopes you will use OAM 2017 to focus on how older adults in our community are redefining aging—through work or family interests, by taking charge of their health and staying independent for as long as possible, and through their community and advocacy efforts. We can also use this opportunity to learn how we can best support and learn from our community’s older members.

You can also use the hashtags #OAM17 and #AgeOutLoud on social media to help celebrate OAM 2017 and follow the Family and Social Services Administration on Twitter @FSSAIndiana
2017 Legislative Session Digest

The 2017 legislative session ended on April 21, and there were two House Bills that were enacted into law with particular impact on Division of Aging programs. House Enrolled Act (HEA) 1287 modernizes Indiana’s CHOICE program. HEA 1287 expands the pilot program in place in four areas of the state since January 2015. Elements of the expansion include changes to cost share calculations to include assets as well as income, increased flexibility in eligibility standards, and a shift in culture to focus more on needs-based assessment and person-centered planning. The goal is to address growing needs with a focus on information and assistance, options counseling and facilitating connections to community resources.

HEA 1493 is the Long-term Care Matters Bill. This bill calls for the Division of Aging to present a comprehensive report on Home-and Community-Based Services (HCBS) to the General Assembly by October 1, 2017. The report shall include what are the best services for people, what are our options, how do we transition people from institutional care (nursing facilities) to HCBS, rates and reimbursement methodology, and system access, including both functional and financial assessment processes. This bill also requires the division and the Indiana State Department of Health to work together to bring licensure requirements for residential care facilities into compliance with the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services’ Settings Rule.

HEA 1493 also requires the division to consult with stakeholders in the completion of the HCBS report. We are currently in the process of finalizing our workplan for gathering broad stakeholder input during June and early July. We will share this plan and the timeline for the report in the coming weeks.
Golden Hoosier Award Nominations Needed

Lt. Governor Suzanne Crouch, in collaboration with the Division of Aging, has announced that nominations are now being accepted for the 2017 Golden Hoosier Award. The award, which began in 2008, annually honors Hoosier senior citizens for their lifetime of service and commitment to their communities.

The award is considered one of the highest honors given by the state of Indiana to senior citizens. “What an honor it is to recognize senior Hoosiers who impact our great cities and towns each day through their volunteering and dedication to their local communities,” said Lt. Governor Crouch. “I would like to encourage everyone to nominate a special neighbor, but I am calling upon our mayors, town councils and community groups to take the time to recognize individuals who spend their time making our communities a better place for all of us and mode lifelong service for our young people. We would love to see nominations from all across Indiana.” To be eligible for the Golden Hoosier Award, the nominee must currently be an Indiana resident, age 65 or older, and been a volunteer in the community for the past three years.

Electronic nomination forms are available at www.lg.IN.gov. Completed applications must be electronically submitted by Wednesday, May 24, 2017. 2017 Golden Hoosier Awards will be presented to the honorees on June 23, 2017 at a ceremony in the Indiana Statehouse.
Person-Centered Thinking Training

Person-centered thinking is a new journey for the Division of Aging (DA). Our network is learning the person-centered approach that focuses on bettering the lives of our fellow Hoosiers. The value of being person centered is to empower a person to discover/explore their preferences, strengths, goals, abilities and desires that affirms their value and dignity. The DA is promoting person-centered thinking to our care management network through a two-day intensive training. This training focuses on the purpose of person centeredness and enhancing a care manager’s skill set to improve the quality of interaction with and empowerment of our fellow Hoosiers.

The DA is collaborating with The Lewin Group to develop a person-centered network in Indiana, including certified Person-Centered Trainers. We are proud to announce that two individuals in our network have earned their Person Centered Training Certification. Karen Wolfe, Division of Aging, and Erin Davis, SWIRCA, will continue to facilitate trainings across the state as our journey progresses.

Need information or resources? Visit the INconnect Alliance for help navigating the complex care puzzle. The more you know, the better decisions you can make for yourself or a loved one.