

Rural Healthy Aging Network

Volume 2

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GREETINGS!

The purpose of this newsletter is to provide an update on the activities of the Rural Health Aging Network (RHAN). If you have anything you would like to include in this newsletter, please send it to Joshua Byrd at jbyrd@hsc.wvu.edu.

Alzheimer's Association Upcoming Events

The Alzheimer's Association is on the MOVE to end Alzheimer's with their fall Memory Walks to be held in eight locations, Beckley, Charleston, Oak Hill, Princeton, Parkersburg, Huntington, Martinsburg, and Romney. Visit the website at www.wvalz.org for more information on each walk and how to become involved.

The Alzheimer's Association Annual Education Conference will be held November 8 and 9 at the Charleston House Holiday Inn in Charleston. CEUs are available. This year's conference is titled "Alzheimer's Care: Clear the Confusion." Keynote speaker is author, caregiver and well know dementia trainer Kathy Laenhue. Mark your calendar now and plan to attend.

WVU Dental Health Study

The West Virginia Center on Aging is conducting an NIH funded study that is looking to improve the dental health of older adults in West Virginia. Participants will receive a free dental exam, a free memory exam, and a gift card for up to \$60. If you are age 70 years or older and have four natural teeth, you may qualify to participate in our research study.

For additional information, call 1-866-566-1212.

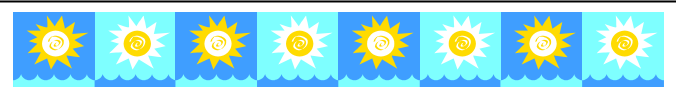
West Virginia Active Options

Over the course of 18 months, RHAN collected data from physical activity organizations throughout the state to register on the Active Options website. Active Options is a national electronic resource guide of physical activity programs for older adults. Individuals can log onto the website and search for physical activity organizations in their area by entering a zip code. Turner Goins along with her research team identified 180 organizations in West Virginia that have specific physical activity programs for older adults. Out of the 180 programs identified, currently 158 are registered on the Active Options website. Our goal is to promote healthy aging and increase physical activity levels among older West Virginians. This website allows those targeted to easily find facilities in their area to accommodate their physical activity needs.

National Assisted Living Week

The West Virginia Health Care Association and assisted living communities throughout West Virginia will celebrate National Assisted Living Week by focusing on the privilege, value, and responsibility of passing the legacies of our elders' lives down through the generations. The week-long celebration will begin on Grandparent's Day, 9/9/07 through 9/15/07.

This year's theme, *Legacies of Love*, will provide opportunities for residents to share their legacies with family, friends, volunteers, and those that care for them. Stop by an assisted living community during the week and visit a friend or loved one. Call your local assisted living community to find out more about the events planned during the week.



McDowell County Fit and Strong!

RHAN with the McDowell County Commission on Aging and the Tug River Health Association's Fitness Center recently completed an 8-week physical activity program for older adults. The Fit and Strong! program consists of 90 – minute sessions held 3 times a week for 8 weeks. The class is designed specifically for older adults suffering from osteoarthritis. The first 60 minutes incorporates both resistance training and aerobic walking, while the last 30 minutes serves as an education and discussion session to enhance adherence efficacy. As a result of the successful implementation of Fit and Strong! in McDowell County, two more programs are scheduled to begin. Turner Goins has also applied for funding to begin a program in Hampshire County. We hope that as a result of this successful older adult program, other community and state leaders may begin to implement similar programs to help West Virginia's older adults become more active.



Active Aging Week is **September 24, 2007 to October 1, 2007**. During Active Aging Week you can come celebrate a healthy lifestyle and feel better which will allow you to participate in the activities you enjoy.

Currently there are no sites in West Virginia. If you are interested in including your site in Active Aging Week 2007 contact Christine at the International Council on Active Aging at 1-866-335-9777. Active Aging Week activities are FREE! All across the country fitness centers, churches, and retirement communities will be offering these activities.

Visit <http://www.icaa.cc/Aboutus.htm> for more information.

WVU Healthy Brain Initiative

The CDC has provided supplemental funding to the PRC-HAN Member Centers to assist in the development of a National Action Plan to promote brain health through health promotion interventions. The PRC-HAN will play an important role in the CDC's collaboration with the Alzheimer's Association and the National Institutes of Health to prevent the development of cognitive decline in older adults, or to mitigate its impact.

The University of South Carolina serves as the PRC-HAN Lead Center for this initiative. We anticipate that over several years the PRC-HAN will collaborate in the planning of a multi-faceted intervention for existing aging services network providers, health departments, and other relevant organizations to deliver.

WVU RHAN plans to conduct two dementia caregiver focus groups in two communities in West Virginia. Caregivers are being recruited through the West Virginia Alzheimer's Association. Dr. Bei Wu and her graduate assistant completed a focus group on 7/16/07. Ten dementia caregivers participated in the focus group. We plan to conduct another focus group at Alzheimer's Association in Parkersburg on 9/6/07.

Publications of Interest

A New Vision of Aging: Helping Older Adults Make Healthier Choices
<http://www.cfah.org/pdfs/agingreport.pdf>

Using the Evidence Base to Promote Healthy Aging
http://www.healthyagingprograms.org/resources/IssueBrief_1-R_UsingEB.pdf

Moving Ahead: Strategies and Tools to Plan, Conduct, and Maintain Effective Community-Based Physical Activity Programs for Older Adults
http://www.cdc.gov/aging/pdf/Community-Based_Physical_Activity_Programs_For_Older_Adults.pdf

For a hardcopy of any of these publications, contact Josh at 293-1796.