Aging Futures NEWS

A Publication of the Aging Futures Project

SEPTEMBER 2004

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Partnership Co-sponsors Sept. 28th Health Expo

Christine Himes, MD, a national speaker and co-author of the book *Aging in Stride*, will speak about "Building Blocks for Healthy Aging," September 28th, 1 p.m. at the Oakdale Mall Center Court. Dr. Himes' remarks will support the Partnership's efforts to foster early planning with our seniors to secure a future that reflects their personal desires.

Dr. Himes notes it is impossible to predict when challenges to an individual's health and well-being will appear. However, the choices we make and our responses to life's events can have an even greater impact.

This program is part of Health Expo 2004, which will feature other Center Court appearances, numerous Real Choices seminars and vendor displays. This free event is made possible through the Aging Futures Partnership in conjunction with Real Choices Systems Change grant, Steps for a Healthier New York and WBNG-TV. For scheduling information check out www.tier.net/aop, or call Action for Older Person, Inc., 722-1251.

Creating Effective Social Marketing Messages

Workshop Planned for November 30th

Aging Futures will offer a workshop on creating effective social marketing messages for seniors on Tuesday, November 30, 2004 at the Binghamton Regency. Social marketing is using marketing techniques to promote healthy and positive behaviors.

Social marketing strategies look at how to encourage and support desired changes in behavior. Examples of positive behavior changes are reducing weight, managing hypertension and remaining socially active. Changes that result in a healthier lifestyle are cost effective. For example, over-weight seniors are at risk of diabetes and a limiting lifestyle, all of which place attendant costs on the health care community.

The speaker, Marvin Waldman, who recently presented at the Joint Conference of the American Society on Aging and the National Council on the Aging, will provide practical training on how we as a community can create messages and campaigns that will help seniors manage chronic conditions, stay socially connected, and make other positive choices.

The registration fee is $10.00. For information or to receive a conference brochure, call 778-2064.

The Robert Wood Johnson Foundation Awards

$750,000 Grant to Aging Futures Partnership

The Aging Futures Partnership was recently selected by The Robert Wood Johnson Foundation (RWJF) as one of eight communities across the nation to receive a Community Partnership for Older Adults grant. This four-year grant will allow Broome County to implement plans that improve the long-term care system and support seniors to live independently in their home and neighborhoods. In 2004 the main projects are – to better meet the needs of caregivers, to offer seniors with chronic conditions self-management supports, to promote awareness of the importance of social connections for seniors, and the coordination of a media campaign about local senior services.

In 2002, Broome County was one of 13 communities nationwide to receive a planning grant from the RWJF to assist communities in developing long-term care solutions and to improve supportive services that will meet the current and future needs of older adults.

DeeDee Camp, the Aging Futures Project Manager, welcomes involvement from all sectors of the community. She may be reached at 778-2064.

From the Project Manager's Desk

Dear friends of Aging Futures,

We are pleased to offer this first edition of *Aging Futures News*. This quarterly publication will keep you abreast of the activities of the five busy workgroups, several advisory committees, and the core management team.

The Community Partnership for Older Adults (CPOA) web page features an article about "Partnership Evolution." It points out that each community partnership is as unique as the community that creates it. Aging Futures recently adopted an organizational structure that focuses on three important areas – Partnership development, program development and communications. The new structure supports us in aggressively implementing the strategies of the CPOA RWJF grant, as well as offering our community a forum to discuss and respond to changes in our long-term care system. The new structure is an important milestone in our Partnership evolution.

The article on partnership evolution further points out that the hallmarks of a good community partnership are its cooperative efforts, shared resources, shared authority and leadership. We are excited about our Partnership's ability to reflect these hallmarks.

The workgroups offer community members opportunities to participate in planning and decision making in many ways. The core management team recently expanded, and committees and workgroups are being chaired by members who offer Aging Futures a broad perspective and much talent. We welcome all of the members and our new leaders.

I look forward to an exciting year as the Partnership plans for an improved future for our aging population.

Be sure to check out: www.partnershipsforolderadults.org

— *DeeDee Camp*, Aging Futures Project Manager

Elder Service Guide In Print and on the Web

The *Elder Services Guide* was updated and reprinted by Action for Older Persons, Inc. as well as put on the Internet. The *Elder Services Guide* helps people find needed services by category (such as transportation, housing, senior centers and services). It includes a description of the service, how to contact the agencies, and more.

Call Action for Older Persons, Inc. at 722-1251 to receive a copy or read it on the web at: www.broomeelderservices.org. To update information about your agency in the Guide, contact Dick Italiano at AOP.

Findings Report Available for Community Planning

Demographics, Surveys, Focus Groups and More About Broome Seniors

The *Findings Report* is a compilation of findings from and about Broome County's older population. The data draws from surveys, focus groups, one-on-one interviews conducted with seniors and their caregivers, population data and projections.

Current qualitative and quantitative data about seniors in Broome County will assist the community in planning services for the upcoming year. It includes information about seniors' awareness and understanding of services and their preferences and their perceptions. Research presented in this report occurred between August 2002 and September 2003.

Seven issues raised as primary concerns of Broome County's vulnerable seniors are discussed in detail including why each is important, the impact of the issue, and questions that our community needs to address.

Community groups and organizations are encouraged to use the data for planning purposes and to secure funding for efforts that will improve the quality of life for older adults, their family and friends and those who care for them.

To receive a copy, call the Aging Futures Project at the Broome County Office for Aging, 778-2064. Watch for an electronic copy coming soon on the Aging Futures web site.

Partnership Adopts Organizational Structure

The Aging Futures Partnership adopted an organizational structure to promote **Partnership Development, Program Development** and **Communications Activity.**

The **Partnership** is charged to facilitate planning that enhances Broome County's long-term care plan. The Partnership implements a Strategic Plan. New members are welcome. Partnership members are required to uphold the Guiding Principles of the organization.

A **core management group** oversees Partnership activities and is responsible for the implementation of the Community Partnership for Older Adults grant. The core team seeks guidance from the membership and reviews recommendations from the workgroups.

Several workgroups and committees have been formed, each with significant responsibilities for projects outlined in the *Aging Futures Strategic Plan* and the CPOA work plan. Workgroups offer Aging Futures' participants opportunities to explore community solutions and coordinate community-based activities. The groups are:

- **Chronic Disease Management Workgroup –** They are charged with supporting seniors in self- management of chronic conditions and supporting senior independence. They are currently working on activities related to hypertension and stroke prevention. Depression awareness and prevention efforts are also planned. The chair of this committee is Jen Lesko, Senior Health Educator for Broome County Public Health.
- **Social Connections Workgroup –** Erik Jensen, Director of Allocations and Planning, United Way, and Stacey Kalechitz, Public Health Nurse, CASA, serve as co-chairs. This group is developing ways to help people recognize and understand the importance and benefits of staying connected in later years and how we, as a community, can help.
- **Communications Workgroup –** This group is charged with helping the Partnership take our message to the community. They will provide technical support on communications and media for all projects. Projects for 2004 include development of a web site and print media campaigns. Linda Hoke, Marketing Director of Lourdes Hospital, will co-chair the workgroup with Jan Chytilo, Director of Health Education, Broome County Health Department.
- **Data and Evaluation Workgroup –** Chaired by Neil Eldred, Deputy Director, Broome County Office for Aging, this workgroup is charged with evaluating Aging Futures activities and the effectiveness of the Partnership. The workgroup also identifies ways to collect and organize data on Broome County seniors to ensure that Aging Futures can provide stakeholders with reliable and up-to-date information that supports community planning.
- **Professional Education Workgroup –** Kathy Gitto, Executive Director of RSVP, is chairing this committee. The professional education workgroup promotes systems change by encouraging an open exchange of ideas and information among aging service providers as well as providing training that support collaboration and mutual understanding. (See "Creating Effective Social Marketing Messages," page 1.)
- **Real Choices Advisory Committee –** This committee is co-chaired by Mary Vivona, Program Coordinator, Action for Older Persons, Inc. and Partnership liaison Michelle Berry, Director of CASA. (See "Real Choices Grant Received," page 3.)
- **Return-To-Home Advisory Committee –** This committee will form in the fall of 2004 and will advise and assist in the implementation of this program. (See "Return-to Home Program Planned," page 4.)

If you are interested in participating in a committee please call DeeDee Camp at 778-2064 or 778-2411.

Real Choices Grant Received

In the fall of 2003, Broome County CASA was awarded a grant from the New York State Department of Health to administer a Real Choices Systems Change Grant. The overall goals of the project are to support projects that divert persons from nursing home care, encourage collaborative relationships at the local level, promote consumer independence, and identify barriers that impede an individual's ability to live independently in the community.

Broome County CASA is working in partnership with Action for Older Persons, Inc. (AOP) and the Broome County Office for Aging (OFA). Action for Older Persons is developing two education modules, one for consumers of long-term care and their caregivers and another for professionals. The goal of these educational initiatives is to enhance the collaboration among providers and to empower the consumers by providing information they need when accessing the system. AOP will also train advocates who will become information brokers for consumers who may need assistance in accessing services. These volunteers may sit with the consumer while they call an agency or support them by providing them with the right questions to ask.

The Broome County Office for Aging will conduct a 12-month demonstration of enhanced case management. A professional case manager will work with clients who were previously assessed by OFA or CASA but received no hands on case management assistance. The case manager will contact a random sample of assessment-only clients to see if they followed through on the recommendations made on the care plan and offer further assistance if requested.

Michelle Berry, Director of CASA, states that "The long-term goal of this project is to look at the activity described and determine if systems changes are needed." For further information on the project or to arrange for the consumer education series to be presented to your community group, call Michelle Berry at 778-2420.

Our Mission: Creating and strengthening community systems, thus enabling persons age 60 and over to maintain the highest quality of life.

Aging Futures Commitment

Aging Futures is a Partnership of more than 50 agencies and community representatives dedicated to enhancing the quality of life for seniors in Broome County through community-based planning. The Partnership has been strengthening Broome County's long-term care system and supporting seniors to live independently since 1989.

Return-to-Home Program Planned

A request for proposals (RFP) for the Return-to-Home Program will be released in September 2004. This program is intended to assist and support caregivers who are making plans to continue care for a spouse, relative or close friend, age 65 and older, following hospital discharge.

This caregiver support service will begin in the hospital and provide follow-up after the return to home. This program is to service 100 caregivers in a 12-month period. Lourdes and United Health Services will be participating. Return-to-Home is one of the primary strategies to improve our long-term care system under the Community Partnerships for Older Adults grant. To receive a copy of the RFP, call Aging Futures at the Broome County Office for Aging, 778-2064 or e-mail dcamp@co.broome.ny.us.

Communications Activity Benefits Seniors

"Senior Connections," a news segment highlighting a different senior service each week for 52 weeks, airs live on WBNG-TV every Wednesday at noon. Response has been terrific as measured by the number of phone calls agencies received on the discussed topic following the broadcast. If there is a topic you would like included, call Action for Older Persons, Inc., 722-1251.

Several commercial spots are also airing. These spots encourage people with questions to call the Broome County Office for Aging Senior Resource Line (778-2411) where trained information specialists can help them. Call volume has increased as a result of the campaign.

Time Warner has aired two Community Corner shows about Aging Futures. Two additional one-half hour shows are also planned for 2004. They will focus on caregiver issues and chronic disease management.

A phone bank promoting availability of the *Elder Services Guide* in March 2004 resulted in over 1,000 telephone calls while on the air at WBNG-TV and during the next day. The effectiveness was beyond our expectations. A future phone bank in November will focus on stroke prevention initiatives.

The Community Foundation for South Central New York, in partnership with the Stewart W. and Wilma C. Hoyt Foundation, provided funding for this public awareness campaign about Broome County senior services. Action for Older Person, Inc. launched this campaign on behalf of the Aging Futures Partnership.

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