



## News from AoA May 2009

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## Top Stories

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### **HHS Secretary Kathleen Sebelius Confirmed by U.S. Senate on April 28, 2009**

Secretary Kathleen Sebelius was confirmed by the U.S. Senate on April 28, 2009. The Secretary has more than 20 years of experience in state government, and has been a leader on health care issues for over a decade. In 2005, Time Magazine named her one of the nation's top five governors.

Prior to her tenure as Governor, Secretary Sebelius spent eight years serving as the Kansas State Insurance Commissioner. In that capacity, Sebelius turned her department into a steadfast advocate for Kansas consumers, and helped senior citizens save more than \$7 million on prescription drugs. She also won praise for blocking the sale of Kansas Blue Cross/Blue Shield by an out-of-state, for-profit health care conglomerate, and for her role in drafting a proposed national bill of rights for patients. Previously, she was a member of the Kansas House of Representatives from 1986-1994.

Immediately upon her confirmation by the Senate, she went to work on the H1N1 Influenza virus outbreak to help lead national efforts to address this threat.

### **AoA Joins HHS in Federal H1N1 Influenza Efforts**

On April 26, 2009 the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS) issued a nationwide public health emergency declaration in response to recent human infections with newly discovered H1N1 influenza A virus.

This public health emergency declaration enabled the activation of Federal resources and medically trained staff including 25% of the national stockpile supply of antiviral products, materials for laboratory testing and other tools needed to determine the severity and spread of illness across the nation. The Administration on Aging (AoA) has been actively participating in DHHS' efforts related to the H1N1 influenza. The White House, public health officials and government-wide agencies are attentive to new developments and responding to requests for information and assistance on an ongoing basis. We will continue to keep our national aging services network abreast of the latest information as it becomes available. For the latest information on CDC activities and confirmed cases of the H1N1 influenza A virus, please visit:

<http://www.cdc.gov/swineflu/>

### **HHS Secretary-Designate Kathleen Sebelius Tags AoA as a Critical Partner in Long-Term Care**

While addressing the impact of long term care on the nation's health system at her April 2 confirmation hearing, then HHS Secretary-Designate Kathleen

Sebelius highlighted the important and longstanding role AoA has played in advancing home-and community-based long-term care services. Speaking before the Senate Committee on Finance, Sebelius stated “For more than 40 years, the Administration on Aging has played a prominent role in promoting home-and community-based long-term care services, providing a broad array of support services including home-delivered and congregate meals, transportation, and personal care for seniors, as well as information, training, and respite care for their family caregivers. This agency will be a critical partner in expanding our capacity to provide community long-term care services.” To receive a complete copy of the former Governor’s testimony, send an email to [aoainfo@aoa.gov](mailto:aoainfo@aoa.gov)

### **HHS Secretary Sebelius Helps Launch AoA’s National Legal Resource Center**

*Center helps protect the rights, financial security, and independence of seniors during tough financial times*

Recognizing the challenges many older Americans are facing in today’s turbulent economic climate, Acting Assistant Secretary for Aging Edwin L. Walker has announced the establishment of the National Legal Resource Center (NLRC) to more effectively protect the rights, financial security, and independence of seniors most in need. This \$825,000 collaborative project funded by the U.S. Administration on Aging (AoA) involves five national non-profit organizations known for their work in legal and aging services support who have teamed up to better help people in need. The purpose of the NLRC is to empower legal and aging services advocates with the resources necessary to provide high quality, free legal help to seniors who are facing direct threats to their ability to live independently in their homes and communities.

“For far too many older Americans, the economic challenges of today are becoming the legal problems of tomorrow,” said HHS Secretary Kathleen Sebelius. “Many older Americans are facing daunting personal crises that are threatening their financial security. We have an obligation to help our most vulnerable citizens. The National Legal Resource Center will ensure that our nation’s aging and legal services networks have the tools they need to help those in our communities who are least able to advocate on their own behalf.” To read the entire press release visit [http://www.aoa.gov/AoARoot/Press Room/for the press/pr/archive/2009/May/05\\_01\\_09.aspx](http://www.aoa.gov/AoARoot/PressRoom/for_the_press/pr/archive/2009/May/05_01_09.aspx).

### **Older Americans Month 2009 Focuses on *Living Today for a Better Tomorrow***

Each year the Administration on Aging (AoA) issues a theme for Older Americans Month to assist our National Aging Services Network of state, tribal,

area agencies on aging, and community services providers plan for activities that might take place in May or throughout the year. This year's theme "*Living Today for a Better Tomorrow*" reflects AoA's continued focus on prevention efforts and programs throughout the country that are helping older adults have better health as they age and avoid the risks of chronic disease, disability and injury.

To obtain an electronic copy of the May 2009 Older Americans Month logo and poster and other materials visit:

[http://www.aoa.gov/AoARoot/Press\\_Room/Observances/oam/oam.aspx](http://www.aoa.gov/AoARoot/Press_Room/Observances/oam/oam.aspx).

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## **AoA News**

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### **Share Your OAA Stories**

For more than 40 years, the Older Americans Act programs funded by AoA and provided in nearly every community in America have made a difference in the health and lives of millions of older Americans. We'd like to hear how these programs have made a difference in your life, your family member or friend, or in the lives of the people you work with or serve. Click on the link below to share your story with us and it may appear on our website!

[http://www.aoa.gov/AoARoot/Press\\_Room/For\\_The\\_Press/medadv/Share\\_Story.aspx](http://www.aoa.gov/AoARoot/Press_Room/For_The_Press/medadv/Share_Story.aspx).

### **AoA and HRSA Unite to Create New Tool to Safeguard Against Prescription Mishaps**

The Health Resources and Services Administration (HRSA), Healthcare Systems Bureau, Poison Control Program is pleased to announce the availability of its newest brochure, *Safe Medicine Use & Poison Prevention Tips: A Guide for Older Adults and Caregivers*. The brochure includes useful tips for the safe use of prescription and over-the-counter medicine. Developed in partnership with the Administration on Aging (AoA), the brochure promotes the use of the Poison Help toll-free number (1-800-222-1222) as a resource for questions about medicine use and poison prevention. The brochure is available for printing online at [http://www.poisonhelp.hrsa.gov/resources\\_campaign\\_info.htm](http://www.poisonhelp.hrsa.gov/resources_campaign_info.htm). This Web site presents a variety of poison prevention resources; you will find the Safe Medicine Use Brochure at the bottom of the page. A limited number of brochures will also be made available after April 30, 2009 through the HRSA Information Center by calling 1-800-ASK HRSA or by visiting <http://ask.hrsa.gov>.

### **AoA Joins NIA to Present part of HBO's "The Alzheimer's Project" to Aging Organizations and HHS Staff in Washington, D.C.**

AoA and NIA are teaming up to present parts of a documentary series on Alzheimer's Disease to members of the Leadership Council of Aging Organizations and HHS staff in Washington, D.C. on May 5, 2009. For more than two years, the NIA along with the Alzheimer's Association, Fidelity Charitable Gift Fund and the Geoffrey Beene Gives Back Alzheimer's Initiative has been working with HBO Documentary Films on "The Alzheimer's Project." NIA and AoA will show two segments of the multiplatform health series: "Grandpa Do You Know Who I am? with Maria Shriver" and "Caregivers." Co-executive produced by Maria Shriver and HBO Documentary Films President Sheila Nevins, the series debuts May 10-12, 2009 on HBO.

In conjunction with this showing, AoA will announce the availability of funds for Alzheimer's Disease community-based grants to help families and caregivers.

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## **HHS News**

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### **Office of Women's Health Kicks Off National Women's Health Week on Mother's Day**

The 10th annual National Women's Health Week (NWHW) will kick off on Mother's Day, Sunday, May 10.

A weeklong health observance coordinated by the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services' Office of Women's Health, NWHW empowers women to make their health a top priority. With the theme *It's Your Time*, this nationwide initiative encourages women to take simple steps for a longer, healthier, and happier life. During National Women's Health Week, communities, businesses, government, health organizations, and other groups work together to educate women about steps they can take to improve their physical and mental health and lower their risks of certain diseases.

Activities built into this year's celebration include National Women's Checkup day on Monday, May 11 and the eight-week Woman Challenge, an online physical activity program that starts on May 10. To learn more about these events and others visit <http://www.womenshealth.gov/whw/>.

### **Number of U.S. Adults Reporting Disabilities Is Increasing**

The number of U.S. adults reporting a disability increased by 3.4 million between 1999 and 2005, according to a recent report released by the [Centers for Disease Control and Prevention](#).

The study in today's [Morbidity and Mortality Weekly Report](#) also finds an estimated 1 in 5 U.S. adults (47.5 million, or 21.8 percent) report a disability.

The three most common causes of disability among adults in the United States are arthritis or rheumatism, back or spine problems, and heart disease.

<http://www.cdc.gov/media/pressrel/2009/r090430.htm>

### **Getting Older. Living Healthier. Feeling Better. - Start Today with the Dietary Guidelines for Americans**

The *Dietary Guidelines for Americans, 2005* (DGAs), published every five years jointly by the Secretaries of the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) and U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA), are the cornerstone of federal nutrition policy and education. They are based on what experts have determined to be the best scientific knowledge about choosing a nutritious diet, maintaining a healthy weight, achieving adequate exercise, and “keeping food safe” to avoid foodborne illness. The DGAs are designed to help Americans choose diets that will meet nutrient requirements, promote health, support active lives and reduce risks of chronic diseases.

To help older adults, their caregivers and health and social service professionals, especially in the aging network, in interpreting and using the DGAs and put into practice the recommendations of the DGAs, the Administration on Aging, in conjunction with other agencies in HHS, has developed several educational materials. These materials include:

- *Getting older. Living healthier. Feeling better.* This consumer brochure is for older adults and provides basic guidelines for eating a healthy diet and being physically active
- *Older Adult Health Fact Sheets.* These eight fact sheets provide specific information for older adults and their caregivers to use in planning healthy diets and/or physical activity.

These materials may be accessed at

<http://www.health.gov/dietaryguidelines/dga2005/toolkit/>.

### **Medicare and You Handbook Goes Electronic**

New in 2009 the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Service (CMS) will offer an electronic option of *Medicare and You Handbook*.

In an effort to go green and save taxpayer dollars starting this fall all Medicare beneficiaries that sign up on <http://www.mymedicare.gov> by May 31, 2009 will get their *Medicare and You* books electronically. Those that miss the cut off date can still sign up but will get their books electronically starting fall of 2010.

CMS is asking you to promote this new improved option for those who are interested. Below are links to promotional flyers in 8x10 and 11x17. Different

versions are available for four target audiences. Simply click the links and wait for the file to download.

African American

<http://www.cms.hhs.gov/partnerships/downloads/AAeHB8x11.pdf>

<http://www.cms.hhs.gov/partnerships/downloads/AAeHB11x17.pdf>

Asian American

<http://www.cms.hhs.gov/partnerships/downloads/AeHB8x11.pdf>

<http://www.cms.hhs.gov/partnerships/downloads/AeHB11x17.pdf>

General Market

<http://www.cms.hhs.gov/partnerships/downloads/GMeHB8x11.pdf>

<http://www.cms.hhs.gov/partnerships/downloads/GMeHB11x17.pdf>

Spanish Version

<http://www.cms.hhs.gov/partnerships/downloads/SeHB8x11.pdf>

<http://www.cms.hhs.gov/partnerships/downloads/SeHB11x17.pdf>

### **AHRQ and the Ad Council Team Up with New National Public Service Advertisements to Get Consumers Involved in Their Health Care**

The HHS Agency for Healthcare Research and Quality (AHRQ) recently partnered with the Ad Council to produce a new series of national public service advertisements (PSA) designed to encourage consumers to get involved in their health care by knowing and asking appropriate questions when visiting their doctor or other clinicians.

The television, radio, print, outdoor and Web ads direct audiences to visit a comprehensive Web site, <http://www.ahrq.gov/questionsaretheanswer>, to learn the 10 questions every patient should think about asking when visiting their doctor or other clinicians.

In the press release about the PSAs, AHRQ Director Carolyn M. Clancy, M.D. noted "We know that patients who ask questions receive better quality health care and get better results."

To view the two 30-minute PSA featuring actress and health advocate Fran Drescher visit <http://www.ahrq.gov/news/drescherpsa.htm>.

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## **Federal Funding Opportunities**

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## **USDA Seeking Applications for Its 2009 SNAP Participation Program**

The US Department of Agriculture's Food and Nutrition Service will award grants totaling \$5 million to support projects that develop and implement simple food stamp application and eligibility determination systems, or measures to improve access to food stamp benefits. The closing date for applications is June 11, 2009.

To get more information on this funding opportunity go to

<http://www07.grants.gov/search/search.do;jsessionid=dRXQJm1P7QCyJrFIY83mJ7Qm7bG1snSGMLRQX1PZNh115BG2Mngx!907486171?oppId=46089&flag2006=false&mode=VIEW>.

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## **More Aging News**

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### **Call for Proposals - n4a to Fund Outreach Projects for Hard-to-Reach Medicare Beneficiaries**

The National Association of Area Agencies on Aging (n4a) is working in partnership with the Administration on Aging (AoA), and the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS) in a nationwide campaign to develop innovative communication methods to educate young retirees, individuals aging into Medicare, their family members and caregivers about their options for health care benefits and long-term care.

It will make funds available to organizations within the Aging Services Network to support outreach and education activities related to Medicare benefits and long-term care planning. n4a will award up to 10 pilot projects up to \$47,000 each. Successful applicants will develop plans and implement innovative approaches to raise the awareness of young retirees, individuals aging into Medicare, their family members and caregivers about available Medicare benefits, and the long-term care planning process. **Completed Standard Submission Forms should be emailed to [GenerationalRFP@n4a.org](mailto:GenerationalRFP@n4a.org) by 5:00 p.m. EST on May 19, 2009.**

To learn more about this campaign go to

<http://www.n4a.org/programs/medicare-rx-outreach/?fa=gcc-more>

### **May Is National Stroke Awareness Month**

Stroke is the third leading cause of death and a major cause of disability in the United States. A stroke can occur when the blood supply to part of the brain is blocked, or when a blood vessel in the brain bursts, causing damage to a part of the brain.

Some health conditions and behavioral and lifestyle factors can put individuals at a higher risk for stroke. The most important risk factors are high blood pressure, heart disease, diabetes, and cigarette smoking. Individuals can help prevent a stroke by making behavioral and lifestyle changes that lower their risk. For more information on preventing a stroke and stroke risk factors visit <http://www.cdc.gov/genomics/activities/monthly/may.htm>.

National Stroke Awareness Month is a great opportunity to educate your employees, friends, family and community about stroke. To learn more about National Stroke Awareness Month visit <http://www.stroke.org/site/PageServer?pagename=SAM>.

### **National Senior Health & Fitness Day**

The 16th annual National Senior Health & Fitness Day will be celebrated on Wednesday, May 27. With the *Fitness is a Good Move!*, the goal for this day is to help keep older Americans healthy and fit. 100,000 older adults will participate in activities at more than 1,000 locations throughout the U.S.

To learn more about this year's National Senior Health & Fitness Day visit <http://www.fitnessday.com/senior/index.htm>.

### **National Osteoporosis Foundation Offers Falls Prevention Checklist Online**

The National Osteoporosis Foundation (NOF) is celebrating its 25th anniversary this year, and the organization is encouraging individuals to visit its website and download its free *25 Ways to Prevent Falls Checklist*. NOF also has made its comprehensive patient education booklet, *Boning Up on Osteoporosis*, available in Spanish. For a free copy, send an email request to [\*\*education@nof.org\*\*](mailto:education@nof.org)

To download the checklist and to learn more about NOF visit [http://bones.nof.org/site/PageServer?pagename=NOF 25th Anniversary Fall Prevention](http://bones.nof.org/site/PageServer?pagename=NOF_25th_Anniversary_Fall_Prevention)

### **New FTC Website Helps Consumers Cope with Tough Economic Times**

The Federal Trade Commission just launched a new website – [Money Matters from the Federal Trade Commission](#) -- for people dealing with debt; struggling to find a job; or trying to create a budget, save, and spend wisely during these difficult times.

Money Matters offers short, practical tips, videos, and links to reliable resources for more information on topics like credit repair, debt collection, job-

hunting and jobs scams, vehicle repossession, managing mortgage payments, and foreclosure rescue scams.

The site contains banners/buttons for easy linking, too. To learn more, go to <http://www.ftc.gov/MoneyMatters>.

If you have questions, please contact Colleen Tressler at [ctressler@ftc.gov](mailto:ctressler@ftc.gov) or at 202-326-2368.

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## **Conferences**

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Stay up to date with the latest aging meetings and conferences by visiting the AoA events calendar at:

[http://www.aoa.gov/AoARoot/Press\\_Room/events/events\\_List\\_Day.aspx#title](http://www.aoa.gov/AoARoot/Press_Room/events/events_List_Day.aspx#title).

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