

CCoA
California Commission on Aging

AGEWATCH

United States of Aging 2015 looks at top concerns about aging

The 2015 *United States of Aging* survey of older adults and the professionals who serve them finds maintaining physical health, avoiding financial exploitation, memory loss, mental health and affordable housing are the top concerns of both groups.

Each year the United States of Aging Survey – conducted by the National Association of Area Agencies on Aging (n4a), National Council on Aging (NCOA) and UnitedHealthcare – polls U.S. adults 60 and older for their insights on how older Americans are preparing for their later years, and what communities can do to better support this growing population. New in 2015, the survey also polled professionals who work closely with older adults, including Area Agencies on Aging staff, credit union managers, primary care physicians and pharmacists, to gain their perspectives on the challenges older Americans face as they age.



The prioritization of concerns differ between the two survey groups:

FOR ADULTS 60 AND OLDER

- 1) Maintaining their physical health (40%)
- 2) Memory loss (35%)
- 3) Maintaining their mental health (32%)

FOR PROFESSIONALS

- 1) Protection from financial scams (43%)
- 2) Access to affordable housing (38%)
- 3) Memory loss (38%)

To read the full report, visit the [UnitedHealthcare newsroom](#).

Excerpted from N4A, NCOA, UnitedHealthcare press release, United States of Aging 2015, July 8, 2015.

Social Security turns 80 today!!!



On August 14, 1935, President Franklin D. Roosevelt signed the Social Security Act, landmark legislation that continues to provide hope and protection to some of the most vulnerable members of society.

Earlier this year, Social Security launched a commemorative [80th anniversary website](#) where people can learn more about the agency's legacy and the importance of the Social Security program. The public has used the [website](#) to submit stories that show how Social Security has benefited them or their families. Social Security employees around the country have also expressed their enthusiasm and support through the agency's "Why I Serve" campaign, which highlights employees telling their own stories illustrating why they enjoy giving back through public service.

To learn more about the impacts of Social Security, the Center for Budget and Policy Priorities has posted [Policy Basics: Top Ten Facts about Social Security](#).

Information from the Social Security Administration August 14, 2015 "Happy 80th Anniversary, Social Security!" press release and the Center for Budget and Policy Priorities.

AGE WATCH is an occasional publication of the California Commission on Aging (CCoA) intended to inform, educate, and advocate. The CCoA is an independent state agency established in 1973 to serve as the principal state advocate on behalf of older Californians. The CCoA office is located at 1300 National Drive, Suite 173, Sacramento, CA 95834. (916) 419-7591

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New Linkage Lab Initiative provides guidance to community-based organizations partnering with healthcare providers



A new suite of resources are now available for community-based organizations (CBO) seeking partnerships with the health care sector. Created by The SCAN Foundation in partnership with the Health Foundation of Western and Central New York, the *Linkage Lab* is an organizational development program for leadership and management teams from selected California CBOs. Its goal is to prepare CBOs seeking to deliver care-coordination services for effective partnership with health care entities (e.g., health plans, hospitals) through structured management education and on-site technical assistance.

According to The SCAN Foundation, The *Affordable Care Act* and other policy actions have changed the landscape for delivering services to older adults and persons with disabilities. Community-based organizations (CBOs) can play a central role in integrating long-term services and supports with the health care sector for these populations.

The Linkage Lab includes:

[Case studies](#) from the first cohort of Linkage Lab grantees. Learn about their key objectives and strategies, successes, challenges, and lessons learned.

[Free online learning modules](#) for CBOs to build leadership and management capacity.

[Perspectives](#) from TSF President & CEO Bruce Chernof on the importance of forming effective health care/CBO partnerships.

To read more and to access the Linkage Lab resources, click [here](#).
Information from *TSF: New Resources for CBOs*, August 12, 2015.



NCOA's Senior SNAP Initiative helps connect seniors and benefits

Millions of older Americans are at risk for hunger. In 2012, 9.3 million older Americans faced the threat of hunger, representing 15.3% of all seniors. The food insecurity rate for all senior households was 8.6% in 2013, up from 5.5% in 2001. At the same time, the percentage of seniors facing the threat of hunger has more than doubled.

Too few seniors are enrolled in SNAP, the federal Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program. 3 out of 5 seniors who qualify for SNAP do not apply. This means that 5.2 million seniors miss out on benefits. Older Americans who qualify for SNAP are significantly less likely to participate in the program than other demographic groups.

The National Council on Aging has released new informational materials to help older adults access the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program, known as SNAP.

See ways your organization can help with NCOA's new [Seniors & SNAP Handbook](#).

Information from *NCOA Week* August 11, 2015.



CMS Releases First Star Rating System Measuring Home Health Quality of Patient Care

A new star rating system for home health agencies is now available on the Center for Medicare and Medicaid Services' (CMS) Home Health Compare website. The new *Home Health Compare Quality of Patient Care Star Ratings* site for home health agencies is designed to help consumers more quickly identify differences in quality and make use of the information when selecting a health care provider. In addition to summarizing certain data about Home Health Agency performance for consumers, star ratings can also help the agencies identify areas for improvement.

Each Home Health Agency will receive a single summary Quality of Patient Care Star Rating encompassing that agency's relative performance on 9 of the 29 quality measures already posted on Home Health Compare, including:

Process Measures:

1. Timely Initiation of Care
2. Drug Education on all Medications Provided to Patient/Caregiver
3. Influenza Immunization Received for Current Flu Season

Outcome measures:

4. Improvement in Ambulation
5. Improvement in Bed Transferring
6. Improvement in Bathing
7. Improvement in Pain Interfering With Activity
8. Improvement in Shortness of Breath
9. Acute Care Hospitalization

The new Home Health Compare Quality of Patient Care

Star Ratings will be updated each quarter as new data becomes available. In addition, CMS plans to introduce additional star ratings based on a patient experience of care survey in January 2016. It is the sixth star rating system that has been added by this Administration to Medicare.gov and is part of a larger effort at the Department of Health and Human Services to transform the health care system to deliver better care, spend taxpayer dollars more effectively, and put patients in the center of their care to keep them healthy.

For more information about the Home Health Quality of Patient Care Star Ratings, please visit the CMS Home Health Star Ratings web site at www.Medicare.gov/HomeHealthCompare.

	A1 Home Health Care, Your Town	CALIFORNIA AVERAGE	NATIONAL AVERAGE
Quality of patient care star ratings	★★★★●	★★★★●	★★★★●



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Rancho Mirage**Baby Boomers At the Epicenter of the Alzheimer's Crisis***Guest editorial**by Susan DeMarois, State Policy Director, California Council of the Alzheimer's Association*

Researchers from around the world gathered recently in Washington, DC, for the 2015 Alzheimer's Association International Conference (AAIC). A key take away message from the scientific gathering was this: what has long been known as the Baby Boom Generation is on the verge of becoming "Generation Alzheimer's."

In a new study presented at AAIC, researchers estimate that more than 28 million Baby Boomers will develop Alzheimer's disease between 2015 and 2050, significantly higher than previous projections made nearly a decade ago. Of all Baby Boomers, 37 percent will develop the disease before they die. And, in 2050, among those Boomers alive (they will be ages 86 to 104), over half will be living with Alzheimer's. The large prevalence combined with the high costs of caring for those with the disease will place an enormous burden on the health and long-term care systems. For example, the new study estimates that in 2040, nearly one-quarter of the Medicare budget will be spent just on Baby Boomers with Alzheimer's disease.

Already, Alzheimer's disease is the 5th leading cause of death in California, and the one in the top ten without a known cause, treatment or cure. For public health, it is time to ask: will we as a nation be ready? Will we have enough capacity in the long-term care system? Are we developing enough home- and community-based support services? Is enough being done to educate Americans about reducing the risk of cognitive decline? The oldest Baby Boomers turn 70 next year. The time to prepare is now.

Researchers gathered in Washington, D.C. were encouraged by news on multiple fronts of promising clinical drug trials. In addition, scientists discussed pioneering new approaches and interventions. For example, could you one day spit and find out if you are at risk of developing Alzheimer's disease? Maybe, according to a new study which found that an excess of certain proteins in saliva may be a strong predictor of Alzheimer's. Researchers reported strong associations between certain substances and a person's cognitive abilities. Currently, many diagnosis techniques can be costly or invasive. But, saliva is easy to obtain, making it particularly useful for performing repeated assessments that span days, weeks, months, or longer.

On the heels of the AAIC, the National Institutes of Health (NIH) recommended an increase of \$323 million in its first professional judgment budget aimed at providing Congress with a scientific estimate of what research funding is needed and can be immediately well-utilized to address Alzheimer's disease in fiscal year 2017. Under the Alzheimer's Accountability Act incorporated in the 2015 funding bill, a professional judgment budget for Alzheimer's research that identifies the funding necessary to achieve annual research milestones established under the National Plan to Address Alzheimer's Disease will be submitted each year until 2025. It will reflect the state of Alzheimer's knowledge, and the effectively deployable investments in research identified by leading scientists as required to achieve the plan's first goal to prevent and effectively treat Alzheimer's by 2025.

AGEWATCH

August 2015

Upcoming Events

September 17-18, 2015 -- California Commission on Aging, Chico. www.ccoa.ca.gov for information.
August 29 -- Sept 3, 2015. NASUAD/National Home and Community Based Services Conference, Washington DC. [Information and registration](#).

October 27, 2015 -- The SCAN Foundation 2015 Long-Term Services and Support Summit. Sacramento Convention Center. Visit The SCAN Foundation website for [registration information](#).

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