

MINRAAA *news*

The gateway to resources for older adults, caregivers and service providers in the twenty-seven counties of southwest Minnesota.



Senior LinkAge Line® Outreach Specialist, Debbie Bauleke speaking at the Medicare 101: Where Do You Begin presentation in Montgomery, MN.

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Linda Giersdorf



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Legislative Impact

Linda Giersdorf, *Executive Director*



Dear Readers:

Are you concerned about legislative proposals that are being considered by lawmakers at the State and Federal levels? Would you like to express your concerns about legislative proposals that would have a negative impact on older adults and caregivers and their ability to access services in local communities? You can share your concerns with lawmakers by making a phone call, sending a letter or an email.

Contact information for State legislators can be located at:

www.house.leg.state.mn.us/members/hmem.asp or
www.senate.mn/members.

To contact members of Congress, use the following contact information:

- **Senator Amy Klobuchar** 1-888-224-9043
www.klobuchar.senate.gov/public/index.cfm/email-amy
- **Senator Al Franken** 507-288-2003
www.franken.senate.gov/?p=email_al
- **Representative Tim Walz (1st District)** 877-846-9259
walzforms.house.gov/contact
- **Representative Collin Peterson (7th District)** 507-637-2270
collinpetersen.house.gov/contact-me

Lawmakers value the input they receive from their constituents. Let them know that as a society, we need to promote and protect the health, security and well-being of older adults and caregivers.

Your voice makes a difference!



MNRAAA Theory of Change

Linda Giersdorf, Executive Director

Are you familiar with Theory of Change? Has your agency or organization developed one? Through a grant from the Southwest Initiative Foundation, MNRAAA engaged Aurora Consulting to lead MNRAAA through the development of its Theory of Change. Aurora Consulting defined Theory of Change as “an organization’s story of how and why the world will be different because of what it does. It’s a map that shows how your organization creates change”.

Through the leadership of Aurora Consulting, MNRAAA clarified its purpose, defined its organizational outcomes and connections between them, created a foundation for strategic planning and evaluation, and developed a tool to more effectively communicate with internal and external stakeholders.



Theory of Change

Older Adults Thrive in Southwest Minnesota

Older adults are able to maintain the lifestyle of their choice.

- Adults are **PREPARED** for long-term care costs.
- Adults are **SUCCESSFUL** caregivers.
- Adults are **SAFE** from exploitation.
- **SERVICES** are available for older adults and caregivers.
- **RESOURCES** are available to communities and providers serving older adults and caregivers.
- Older adults and caregivers have the **INFORMATION** and **ASSISTANCE** they need to access services.



MNRAAA THEORY OF CHANGE

Our theory of change shows the change we hope to make in Southwest Minnesota.

At MNRAAA, our work helps older adults thrive in Southwest Minnesota. We believe that older adults thrive when they are able to maintain the lifestyle of their choice.

We want adults to have choices as they age. Older adults who are prepared for long-term care costs; who are safe from exploitation; and who have caregivers in their lives have more choices for how they wish to live.

MNRAAA is the gateway to resources for older adults, caregivers and service providers in the twenty-seven counties of southwest Minnesota. We strive to ensure that services are available for older adults and caregivers by helping our communities and providers access resources. We also provide information and assistance to help adults find and use those services.

Thanks to the Southwest Initiative Foundation and Aurora Consulting for supporting our efforts to develop a Theory of Change and for laying a foundation for our Strategic Planning work that will begin in May.



Avoid Falling Victim to Medicare Telemarketing Scams

Robin Thompson, Information & Assistance Director

In recent years, telemarketing scams have become an easy way to prey on older adults, costing victims thousands of dollars and, in some cases, their identity. Below are some tips that can help you avoid becoming victim to common telemarketing scams.

- Medicare will not call you to ask for a Medicare number, bank account information or request that you purchase a new Medicare card.
- Often scammers will call impersonating a distressed family member or state they are calling on a family member's behalf during an emergency. Ask the caller to leave a contact number, then call a family member to verify if a loved one is in trouble.

- Remember that you cannot win a lottery or sweepstakes without knowingly entering a contest. If you receive a call informing you that you have won money or a prize, just hang up.
- A robocall is a phone call that uses a computerized autodialer to deliver a prerecorded message. If you receive a robocall offering free services, money or prizes hang up.

If you feel you have been the victim of a telemarketing scam or would like to report a scam that you have experienced, call the Senior LinkAge Line®. The Senior LinkAge Line® is a free statewide service of the Minnesota Board on Aging and Area Agencies on Aging. Specialists provide one-to-one assistance with helping older adults age well and live

well. The Senior LinkAge Line® is the federally-designated State Health Insurance Assistance Program (SHIP) and Senior Medicare Patrol (SMP) for Minnesota and is the place to call for Medicare and health insurance issues. Call 1-800-333-2433 for assistance Monday through Friday from 8:00am to 4:30pm or visit www.MinnesotaHelp.info® to chat with a specialist during business hours.



Spring Senior LinkAge Line® Outreach

Robin Thompson, Information & Assistance Director

Spring is the time of year that we can say good bye to cold dark winter and hello to those warm sunny spring days. This is also the time of year that our Senior LinkAge Line® staff and volunteers like to focus on community outreach. People look forward to getting out and enjoying various community events. I have heard some describe the free services provided by the Senior LinkAge Line® as the best kept secret in the state of Minnesota. These events give us an opportunity to share how we can help older adults and their families. Below is a sampling of events we will be hosting or attending this spring:

- 50+ Lifestyle Expo in Mankato
- Living Your Best Life event in Worthington
- Lower Sioux Wellness Fair and 5K in Morton
- 2017 Spring Dementia Event in Redwood Falls
- Bluestone Spring Staff Appreciation event
- Senior Surf Day classes in Luverne, Springfield, St. Peter, Granite Falls, Canby, Clarkfield and Gaylord
- Live Well at Home While You Age presentation in Montgomery
- Welcome to Medicare classes in Mankato, Slayton, Willmar and Hutchinson
- Medicare 101 Presentation in Blue Earth
- Older American's Banquet in Granite Falls
- Essentia Health Fair in Graceville

Call the Senior LinkAge Line® at 1-800-333-2433 to learn more about these events. The Senior LinkAge Line® is a free service of the Minnesota Board on Aging and the Minnesota River Area Agency on Aging®.



Healthy Living as You Age Regional Summits

Lynn Buckley, Health Care Partnership Developer

A total of 66 participants, representing health systems and community organizations, attended MNRAA's Healthy Living as You Age Regional Summits on April 5 in North Mankato and April 6 in Marshall.

The objectives of the Summit were to:

- › Provide an overview of the statewide initiative to broaden the reach of evidence-based health promotion workshops
- › Discuss the value of a culture shift toward healthy living and the role of evidence-based self-management programs
- › Identify collective opportunities and determine the organizing structure to support MNRAA's efforts
- › Develop a collective strategy and action plan, including clear next steps and a call to action

The overarching goal of the Healthy Living as You Age initiative is to build a statewide network of evidence-based health promotion programs for health systems and community-based organizations, reimbursed by health plans, and supported by a centralized referral and management information system. This initiative can: improve health and independence; reduce

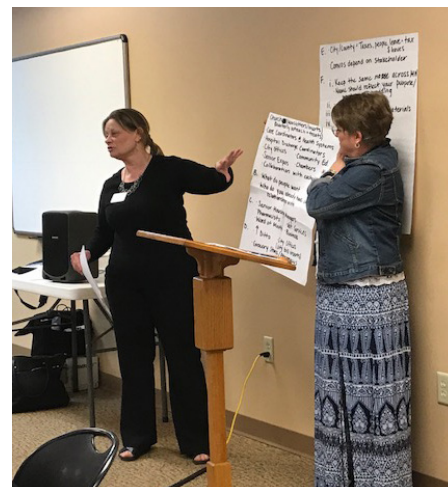
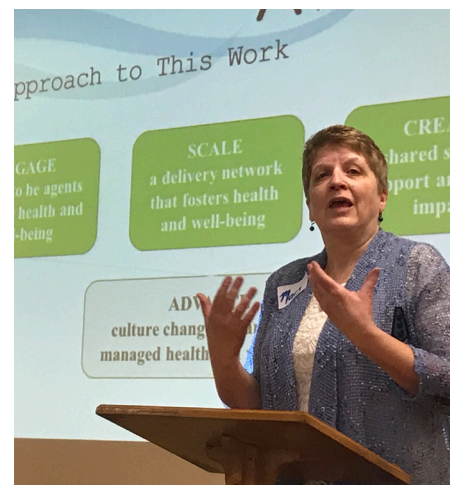
dependence on family and non-family caregivers; reduce utilization of costly care; improve the lives of those living in long-term care and congregate housing settings; provide the opportunity to expand service offerings for community organizations; reduce hospital readmissions; prevent escalation of disease; and create a healthier Minnesota.

Following presentations by key stakeholders, participants self-selected into one of five work groups and discussed the following topics:

- › Building Delivery Capacity in the Community
- › Building Delivery Capacity within Health Systems
- › Establishing Reliable Referral Pathways in the Community
- › Establishing Reliable Referral Pathways within Health Systems
- › Identifying and Securing Opportunities for Sustainability

The next step will be to schedule work group meetings to delve deeper into the above topics, while continuing to expand the evidence-based health promotion capacity throughout MNRAA's service area.

If you are interested in learning more about The Healthy Living as You Age initiative, or if you wish to join a work group, contact Lynn Buckley at lbuckley@mnraa.org or 507.995.0454.





Living Well with Diabetes

Diana Madsen, Program Developer



The newest program training offered through MNRAAA is the *Living Well with Diabetes* program, otherwise known as *Diabetes Self-Management Program*. This program was added to the strong line-up of evidence-based program Leader Training that MNRAAA offers, due to the successful outcomes of the program.

Originally developed as a Spanish curriculum, *Living Well with Diabetes* was translated to English and a controlled study was completed by Stanford Patient Education Research Center, thus noted as evidence-based. Participants demonstrated significant improvements in depression, symptoms of hypoglycemia, communication with physicians, healthy eating and reading food labels. These improvements, along with self-efficacy, or the patient's ability to manage their condition, were evident in patients who attended the workshop series not only for the first six months, but beyond.

Living Well with Diabetes does not replace existing programs or

treatments, but rather compliments the education offered by diabetic educators and health care providers. If any of the program content conflicts with instruction they receive elsewhere, participants are advised by the program leaders to follow their physician's orders and discuss concerns with their physician or health professional.

Diana Madsen and Lynn Buckley, MNRAAA Program Development staff, led a workshop in January 2017. Madsen said, "In our experience, there were noticeable changes in program participants." One physician contacted the local diabetic educator and expressed her amazement at the transformation in attitude and improved communication with one patient who attended the six-week workshop. Others said the workshop helped them find renewed energy to read food labels and focus on the issues that affect their diabetes, even though they entered the class feeling tired of monitoring and "dealing with" their diabetes. "It was most gratifying to know that the participants were

amazed at how quickly the six-week program went and expressed regret that the group would not be meeting together regularly," said Madsen. Participants were encouraged to self-organize and continue to support one another in this journey.

MNRAAA offers two types of training opportunities for organizations interested in training volunteers and staff to lead the program. Standard training for new leaders consists of a four-day training, in which leaders walk through the program curriculum as participants, and then demonstrate their ability to lead the workshop through practice teaching assignments. Participants receive the program leader manual, agree to provide the program as outlined by Stanford Patient Education Research Center, and learn tips on implementing the program. For people that are already trained in *Living Well with Chronic Conditions*, there is a one-day cross-training offered to become a leader for *Living Well with Diabetes*. Since the method of teaching these two programs is similar, the cross-training provides an opportunity to learn the unique curriculum components of *Living Well with Diabetes* without re-training the teaching methods.

The programs are most effective when relationships with health care providers are established to build a referral system for the program. With outcome-based reimbursement being a viable solution for financial sustainability in healthcare, timing is ripe to introduce these programs to health care providers. Unfortunately, many providers are not aware of evidence based programs, their content or outcomes, so it is critical for implementing organizations to develop a strategy to educate

Continued on next page.

Living Well with Diabetes: Continued.

providers about these programs and demonstrate how patients can benefit from them. MNRAAA is working to develop a toolkit to help assist implementing organizations as they begin those conversations with providers and work to build a referral mechanism to drive participants to the programs. Collaboration is key to the success of any health

promotion program.

MNRAAA is hosting several upcoming training opportunities for *Living Well with Diabetes*:

- Cross-Training (for leaders trained in *Living Well with Chronic Conditions*) - July 25, 2017 from 9 am -5 pm in Hutchinson

- New Leader Training - October 2-5, 2017 from 9 am - 4:30 pm in Redwood Falls

For more information, contact Diana Madsen at 507-327-0841 or dmadsen@mnraaa.org or Lynn Buckley at 507-995-0454 or lbuckley@mnraaa.org.



Brittney Sheeran, LSW
Information & Assistance Specialist

Brittney joined MNRAAA in April as an Information & Assistance Specialist in the Mankato office.

She graduated from Minnesota State University Mankato in 2013 with a Bachelor's Degree in Social Work and is a Licensed Social Worker. She has worked with children and the elderly, as well as supervising group homes for adults with developmental disabilities and traumatic brain injuries.

Brittney lives with her husband Ben in Mankato with her step-children, Dakota and Ryder and a cat and dog.



Candice Conway
Administrative Case Aide

Candice joined MNRAAA in March as an Administrative Case Aide in the Slayton Office.

She is a graduate of Southwest Minnesota State University with degrees in Public Relations and Radio/TV Broadcasting and minors in Marketing and Speech Communications.

Candice lives in Slayton with her dog, Billi. She recently moved back from Florida to be closer to her 4 nephews and 2 nieces. Candice enjoys fishing, baking and loves being back in the great State of Minnesota - Uffda!

Practice healthy aging:



Be physically active



Make smart food choices



Get regular health screenings



Participate in activities you enjoy

NIH National Institute on Aging



Baby News

New Arrival

Kylie Chandler and her husband Josh welcomed their daughter, Kenley Kay on January 24, 2017. Kenley weighed 8 pounds 2 ounces and was 19.5 inches long.

Congratulations Kylie!



Heritage, Happiness & Hope - East African Elder Healthy Aging Event

Debbie Bauleke and Paula Traphagen-Bosert, Senior Outreach Specialists

Outreach is a wonderful way to become better connected with the different cultures and people who call Minnesota their home.

MNRAA and the Senior LinkAge Line® outreach staff recently partnered with Abdi Matan of HAARAN (Helping the Displaced Reach a Better Life) in St. Peter to host a "Heritage, Happiness and Hope" outreach event at the St. Peter Community Center.

Nicole Boelter, Exercise Physiologist at River's Edge Hospital in St. Peter, led the group in Tai Ji Quan and talked about the importance of maintaining good balance as we age. Participants were also given information and resources on the Senior LinkAge Line®.

"I am so pleased with the success of the event," said Abdi Matan. "It is so important to offer events that provide opportunities to socialize and learn. They enjoyed the Tai ji Quan because maintaining your balance is important."

Attendees were provided with a delicious meal of east African flavors. There was also a great deal of socialization as well as sharing of language and cultural differences before and during the meal.

Abdi Matan also said, "I am happy to work with MNRAA and the Senior LinkAge Line® to reach out to people who spend most of their time at home and have language barriers because the socialization and educational opportunities are so important to them."

If you are interested in hosting a similar event in your community or volunteering with the Senior LinkAge Line®, call 1-800-333-2433.



Support MNRAA with AmazonSmile

How does AmazonSmile work?

When first visiting AmazonSmile, customers are prompted to select a charitable organization from almost one million eligible organizations. In order to browse or shop at AmazonSmile, customers must first select a charitable organization. For eligible purchases at AmazonSmile, the AmazonSmile Foundation will donate 0.5% of the purchase price to the customer's selected charitable organization.

In order for purchases to qualify for AmazonSmile donations, you

must log in to Amazon and place your orders at <https://smile.amazon.com>. Once you have gone to AmazonSmile and selected your charity, you can use your existing Amazon account, just remember to shop on <https://smile.amazon.com>.

Start shopping and support MNRAA by clicking on the link below.

<http://amzn.to/2qbqrV0>

amazonsmile
You shop. Amazon gives.



MNRAAA Volunteers: The Ripple Effect of Outreach

Sarah Reiman, LSW, Volunteer Coordinator



"Just as ripples spread out when a single pebble is dropped into water, the actions of individuals can have far-reaching effects." ~ Dalai Lama

Recently, one of our staff had the pleasure of receiving a message from a VERY satisfied consumer who had just learned she received a \$6,000 grant to pay for one of her medications. This is after she had also found out a month earlier that she qualified to get one of her expensive medications for free from a patient assistance program. She was elated! This type of news is always so exciting for staff and volunteers at the Senior LinkAge Line®. It is helpful to be reminded that our efforts can be life changing! So, you might be asking yourself, "how did this happen?". Sometimes it is the ripple effect of one simple action that leads to positively changing a person's life! So, the story goes...

One of our amazing volunteers was assigned to complete a dining site assessment at a senior center

in a small town in southwest Minnesota. She was impressed by the senior center coordinator, who was enthusiastic and determined to create an environment in which the seniors in the community could socialize and be connected to the resources available to them.

The volunteer returned from her dining site assessment and sent an email to the Senior LinkAge Line® outreach staff in that community encouraging her to reach out to the senior center coordinator. This connection led to several outreach events being conducted at the dining site, including a Medicare Open Enrollment site this past fall.

The consumer had been using up her small savings account and stressing about affording her medications when she met with one of the Senior LinkAge Line® staff at the Medicare Open Enrollment site and voiced distress at her high medication costs. Unfortunately, she was \$85.00 above the income guideline for the Extra Help Program

(a program through Social Security that would have significantly reduced her out-of-pocket costs). The staff person assisted the consumer with an application for a patient assistance program to pay for one expensive medication and another application for a foundation to help with the costs of a second medication. This assistance reduced her out-of-pocket costs from over \$6,000 a year to nearly nothing.

Senior Outreach Specialist, Bridget Schwebach, said: "This just goes to show how VERY valuable the work Senior LinkAge Line® volunteers do can be for seniors in their communities! Even if they are not the ones that directly provide the assistance that ends in an outcome like this one....it is the work they do every day by telling people about the Senior LinkAge Line® that leads to a result like what happened here!"

To learn more about volunteer opportunities, and to add your pebble to the ripple effect of serving older adults and caregivers in your community, contact Sarah Reiman, Volunteer Coordinator, at 1-800-333-2433 x82026 or sreiman@mnraaa.org.

April is Volunteer Appreciation Month

We are thankful for our volunteers' countless efforts and commitment to assisting older adults and caregivers in our service area.

Thank you!

MNRAAA Annual Staff Retreat

Robin Thompson, Information & Assistance Director

Every President's day MNRAAA staff come together to recharge, reconnect and participate in staff training. This year our all-staff training was held at Key Largo on February 20, 2017 in Slayton, MN. In the morning, we spent time discussing some recent "Theory of Change" work we are doing with Aurora Consulting as well as our upcoming plans to do strategic planning. We completed a "Continuity of Operations Plan" exercise, took staff photos and enjoyed a wonderful lunch provided by Key Largo.

Thad Shunkwiler, Assistant Professor at Minnesota State University in Mankato, was our afternoon speaker. He presented information on how mental health issues impact the lives of those we serve. He also provided information and useful tips on helping consumers

resolve complex issues over the phone. Staff found his presentation insightful and interesting. We wrapped up the day by giving out some humorous staff awards and sharing a laugh with each other. We are already starting to plan for next year's retreat.



2018 Title III Funding Cycle

Rhonda Hiller Fjeldberg, *Program Development and Grant Director*

The Minnesota River Area Agency on Aging® is authorized under Title III of the Older Americans Act to award grants/contracts to local public and/or non-profit organizations to develop and expand services for older people (60+) and their caregivers in southwest Minnesota.

Funds are to be used to expand the range of community-based programs and services designed to maintain the independence of older persons in a home environment, to fill gaps in existing services and to contribute to the development of a comprehensive and coordinated system of services.

Information on MNRAAA's 2018 Title III Funding Cycle will be released in June at www.mnraaa.org.

If you have questions about Title III funding, contact Rhonda Hiller Fjeldberg at 507-387-1256 x105 or rfjeldberg@mnraaa.org.

Older Americans Month 2017

Each May, the Administration for Community Living (ACL) leads our nation's celebration of Older Americans Month (OAM). ACL designed the 2017 OAM theme, Age Out Loud, to give aging a new voice—one that reflects what today's older adults have to say.

This theme shines a light on many important trends. More than ever before, older Americans are working longer, trying new things, and engaging in their communities. They're taking charge, striving for wellness, focusing on independence, and advocating for themselves and others. What it means to age has changed, and OAM 2017 is a perfect opportunity to recognize and celebrate what getting older looks like today.

Let's amplify the many voices of older Americans and raise awareness of vital aging issues across the country. Join us as we speak up and out loud for OAM!

Article courtesy of OAM website and the ACL <https://oam.acl.gov/>

OLDER AMERICANS MONTH

AGE OUT LOUD: MAY 2017

STRIVE FOR WELLNESS

KNOW YOUR RIGHTS

STAY ENGAGED

EXPLORE NEW THINGS

AGE OUT LOUD!

oam.acl.gov

ACL Administration for Community Living

AoA Administration on Aging



Minnesota River Area Agency on Aging®

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WE'D LOVE TO HEAR FROM YOU

If you would like to read about specific topics in future MNRAAA *news* or to request MNRAAA *news* by email, contact us at: kwolle@mnraaa.org or 507.387.1256 x102.

Program Developement Leader Training Calendar

Below are dates for evidence-based program leader training and other training opportunities from MNRAAA. More detailed descriptions and registrations are available on our website at: <http://mnraaa.org/training-opportunities>.

Date	Program Training	Location
May 10, 2017	Sustainability/Business Planning Meeting	Redwood Falls
June 5-6 & 12-13, 2017	Chronic Disease Self-Management Program	Willmar
July 11-12, 2017	Matter of Balance	Willmar
July 25, 2017	Diabetes Self-Management Cross Training	Hutchinson
September 12-13, 2017	Powerful Tools for Caregivers	Hutchinson
September 18-21, 2017	Chronic Disease Self-Management Program	Windom
October 2-5, 2017	Diabetes Self-Mangement Leader Training	Redwood Falls
October 4, 2017	Caregiver Coaching	Willmar
October 24-25, 2017	Matter of Balance	Marshall
November 8, 2017	Live Well at Home/Evidence-Based Training	Redwood Falls