

## New Community Resource on Caregiving Is Available

On Tuesday, April 26, Action for Older Persons Inc. (AOP) unveiled the latest communications effort for the Aging Futures Partnership. Thirty people sat in a darkened room snacking on popcorn as they previewed a 27 minute video introduction to caregiver services in our community. All of the actors are local Broome County residents; most were on hand to watch for the first time *Now That Your Loved One is Home: What Do You Do?*

"The film talks about caregiving, how hard it is and where to go for help," says Marisue Mayes of Endwell, one of the featured caregivers in the video.

Caregivers often face a number of challenges and are unaware of the organizations in the community that can help. *What Do*

*You Do?* features caregivers talking about what they do for their loved one and how resources in their community help them manage the daily challenges of constant care. It also features professionals talking about their social day care or medical day care programs and about other services such as CASA.

By filming support group meetings and elders in respite care, the video explains how these options can help caregivers and their loved ones. Marisue and her sister, Peggy Johnson of Binghamton, help their 86 year old mother, Mary Fausey, who had a serious stroke.

The theme of the video is to show that caregivers are not alone. Twenty-three percent (23%) of American households have one or more people involved in providing unpaid care



These "actors" were on hand for the unveiling of the caregiver video, *Now That Your Loved One is Home: What Do You Do?* Seated is Mary Fausey. From left to right are Judy Whiteman, Michelle Berry, Peggy Johnson, Donna Gavula, Anne Linn, Violet Story, Jeanne Randall, and George Story.

Continued on Page 2

## Primary Care Sites Begin QI Supporting Seniors

The last Aging Futures News reported on the first phase of the *Strike Out Stroke* program. Now United Health Services Hospitals, Inc. is beginning its Quality Initiative, which will encompass the medical component involved with reducing the modifiable risk factors associated with hypertension.

It goes beyond knowing how to monitor your own blood pressure or when it is too high.

This phase includes using an educational curriculum at four primary care sites operated by UHS, as well as a practice-based patient registry, chart audits, data gathering and electronic medical record (EMR) templates that facilitate hypertension screening and management during routine office visits.

All these tools help the primary care staff to support each patient's efforts toward self-management of hypertension. Patients will receive (grant-funded) tool kits during routine exams. At regular intervals patients will be monitored during planned office visits and through additional phone contact by Stay Healthy's NurseDirect. The purpose is to educate and reinforce patient self-management by teaching how to set realistic goals, identify barriers, and learn problem solving skills. Patients will also be provided with multiple community resources available to help make the lifestyle changes which will improve blood pressure control.

A baseline study will be conducted to document the current control rate in the subset of hypertensive patients qualifying for this initiative. A comparison study will be conducted on patients who have participated a minimum of 6 months in the initiative to assess the effectiveness of the *Strike Out Stroke* initiative in improving the percentage of patients whose hypertension is controlled.

By the end of the project, it is anticipated that this investment of \$25,000 by UHS and Aging Futures will allow us to create a successful systems change program to leave as a legacy for Broome County.

## Sharpening Our Vision

Often it is said that a vision statement is the basis of the two minute “elevator speech” we make when we have the opportunity to pitch our organization. A vision statement that speaks to the heart and soul of our work draws other people into that work, and keeps us committed and hopeful.

The Partnership approved a new vision statement on May 17, 2005.

**Ageing Futures Partnership is successfully linking the active engagement of older people with the collective support of the community to create the essentials for vital aging, healthy lifestyles, optimal independence and dignified care.**

The vision statement may not flow off our lips just yet, but we all can speak to its importance. To prepare our community to meet the challenges and opportunities inherent to an aging population, agencies, seniors, businesses, neighborhood based groups, and faith communities all need to be at the same planning table. That is active engagement. Broome County is better prepared to address the evolving needs of seniors and caregivers because of the Partnership.

Already life is different for seniors in Broome County because of the Partnership. Over 100 seniors are enrolled in the Strike Out Stroke Initiative. An estimated 11,000 seniors watched the Senior Connections programs on WBNG television that exposed them to local services. Soon caregivers will be offered special support after hospitalization of someone they will be caring for. These initiatives are representative of our new vision, and how the Partnership members are committed to helping all seniors stay independent.

---

## New Community Resource

*Continued from Page 1*

for an individual age 50 or older. In Broome County there are an estimated 18,000 caregivers. If the video can help people approach the caregiving process with excitement and confidence, and raise awareness of the support programs that are available in our community, it has done its job.

The film is available for caregivers to borrow by dropping by the AOP office at 30 W. State St., Binghamton. Copies will be available soon at libraries and video stores. It is also available on DVD. Funding for the video was provided by the Community Foundation for South Central New York, the Hoyt Foundation and WBNG-TV.

## Real Choices Seminars: Prepare for the Long Term



*Real Questions, Real Needs...Real Choices*

Action for Older Persons, Inc. is proud to offer an eight-part seminar series to help disabled and/or older persons find and receive services to assist them with living as safely, comfortably and independently as possible. The intention is to use the series to reach out into the community to make people more aware of the many choices that are available to them so that they may make educated choices for themselves. Action for Older Persons is looking for community groups and organizations that would be interested in hosting all or part of the series. The series includes the following titles.

- Paying for Long-Term Care: Understanding Your Choices
- Facility and Community Options: Understanding Levels of Long-Term Care
- Help at Home: Choices in Home Care
- What You Should Know About Staying at Home: Safety, Security Modifications and Repairs
- When You're the One Providing Care: Understanding Support Services
- Healthy Choices for Living Well
- Advance Health Care Planning: Making Your Wishes Known
- Adults with Disabilities: Understanding Support Services

Each seminar includes a presentation by AOP staff and/or local service providers, an Elder Services Guide, a booklet on the topic with a concise, large print summary of the material and CARE Volunteers to answer one-to-one questions.

If you know of a group that would be interested in hosting the series, contact Mary Vivona, Program Coordinator at Action for Older Persons, 722-1251 or [mcvivona@stny.rr.com](mailto:mcvivona@stny.rr.com).

The Real Choices program is a free and confidential service. Real Choices is made possible by generous support from: Broome County CASA and the NYS Department of Health Real Choice Systems Change Grant.

# **Multi-Media Awareness Campaign**

## **Outcomes We Can Build On**

The Multimedia Awareness Campaign, coordinated on behalf of the Aging Futures Partnership, gained momentum early with an unprecedented number of callers responding to the April 2004 phone bank on WBNG-TV promoting the Elder Service Guide and the Senior Resource Line (SRL).

Robbie Smolinsky, Communications Specialist at Action for Older Persons, Inc. (AOP), called 200 seniors and caregivers to learn about their experience using the Elder Services Guide. A copy of the Guide had been mailed to them after their call to the phone bank. The feedback from local seniors shaped the campaign for the next several months.

Seniors were using the Guide most frequently to seek financial assistance, transportation, caregiver services and help around the house. It is no coincidence that the next few months of the campaign offered coordinated information about these important topics. Partnership members were recruited to talk about these four areas, and commercials featuring information about related services ran concurrently.

Media activities included 52 weekly Senior Connections segments featured on WBNG Action News at Noon, 16 commercials promoting the SRL airing on one network and nine cable channels, and four Community Corner shows on Time Warner featuring information on Aging Futures. Viewership of the Senior Connections interviews is estimated at 11,000.

The campaign also resulted in the development of a new educational video for caregivers entitled, "Now That Your Loved One is Home: What Do You Do?"

When the campaign began, 38% of seniors had reported they did not know about our local central access number. During the campaign period, impact on the SRL call volume was sizeable. From February 16, 2004 - February 11, 2005, there was a 28% increase in calls to the SRL for general information, and 2,798 new callers. (Callers were considered new if they had not called in the last two years.) This was also an increase in the number of calls received from persons less than 60 years of age as compared to the prior year.



What made the phone ring? Resources. A Senior Connections show featuring information about a "yellow handout" on financial benefits resulted in 95 calls to the SRL immediately after the noon news segment. A Successful Aging Article that ran in the Press & Sun Bulletin resulted in nearly 150 calls for the Senior Housing Guide.

Commercials that aired on Bravo, Hallmark, Fox News, History Channel, TBS, Oxygen, AMC, MSNBC and TV Land also assisted us in promoting issues that impact seniors. In August, the campaign featured information on transportation. Calls to the SRL about transportation increased by 43% over the same period the previous year. In September, the campaign featured information about caregiving and the number of calls about that topic increased by 51% over the previous year.

Because of the campaign, seniors can confidently access services and can support family and friends when they have a need. We accomplished our goal of helping seniors know there is one primary number to call when they have a question about senior issues.

Another positive outcome of the campaign is that Aging Futures Partnership members also became more confident and media savvy. Many organizations requested a second time slot on Senior Connections so they could build on their first experience and take their message to the next level. Partners now know to design a message that has a clear call to action. This campaign was supported by The Community Foundation for South Central New York, the Stewart W. and Willma C. Hoyt Foundation, and Community Partnership for Older Adults, a national program of The Robert Wood Johnson Foundation.

This fall, Aging Futures will roll out our next social marketing campaign. Stay Connected Stay Well is a campaign designed to encourage the elderly to maintain social connections that will assist them in remaining independent.

The Aging Futures Partnership welcomes the opportunity to discuss their media experience with other community coalitions. For information contact Shelli Cordisco at AOP, (607) 722-1251.

### **RWJF Website Offers Tools and Resources**

If you haven't visited The Robert Wood Johnson Foundation website, we recommend you try it as a powerful resource on health and health care for all Americans. [www.rwjf.org](http://www.rwjf.org)

This web site offers more on the strategy behind the work they support and the lessons learned. There are interactive stories that share the impact of the work. You can also find e-mail services to keep you informed about the issues you care about.

From this site you can link to Community Partnerships for Older Adults at [www.cpfoa.org](http://www.cpfoa.org). We encourage you to check out the resources and tools posted to the site. They are very helpful to organizations planning senior services. Partnership members are registered (call Joan for the password, 778-6145).

## **Trust in the Lives of Older Women™** **New Women's Group Encourages Social Connections**

As women age and their roles are redefined, the trusting relationships they have enjoyed all their lives may begin to diminish. Roles such as mother, sister, wife or employed person can become lost, and along with them, the trusting connections they provided. A new program, Trust in the Lives of Older Women, addresses these changes. It is based on scientific research that says a direct benefit to women's health, both physical and mental, includes the connections they make with other women.

Broome County Council of Churches (BC3), an Aging Futures partner, and the AF Social Connections Workgroup think that this program is worth exploring. Some workgroup members met with Ron Hofsess, EdD, founder of the program, and came back with a plan.

"BC3 applied for a United Way Venture Grant on behalf of the Partnership," explains Joanne Kays, BC3's Faith In Action Director. "If received, the funds will allow ten women to attend a facilitators' training to learn how to lead a Trust group. Then ten (10) Trust groups of 10-15 women each will be formed throughout the county." Kays explained that the groups will meet weekly, providing a chance for mental stimulation and social interaction in a positive environment. She emphasized that Trust groups are neither cause-nor disease-focused.

A steering committee is now planning a conference for September 22 at 1 PM at Traditions at the Glen. At the conference, the broader community will learn about the concept, why it is important, and how to begin a Trust group. The target audience for the September conference is potential facilitators and referral sources.

Aging Futures is lending financial support based on the strategic plan directive for agencies and neighborhoods to keep older adults socially connected. All women over 60 who are interested in a new opportunity to share, build new friendships and develop a new community of support can call Joanne Kays at Council of Churches at 607-724-9130 ext 304 for more information.

## **Save the Date**

### **Training for Mental Health**

**Save the date for September 20 at 2 PM at the Johnson City Senior Center** (note the change in location).

Linda Humphrey, coordinator of Family Ties at UHS, will offer a one-hour training to front line staff who work directly with elder clients who may have mental health challenges or exhibit disruptive behaviors. She will give practical suggestions on how to set limits and manage time with clients, and address ways staff can manage frustration when dealing with challenging clients.

Guests of the Partnership are welcome to attend the training and also are welcome to stay for the Partnership meeting to follow immediately.

**Contact the Aging Futures staff if you can suggest a person or business to add to our mailing list, to correct your information, or to be taken off our list. Contact Joan at 778-6145 or e-mail [jsprague@co.broome.ny.us](mailto:jsprague@co.broome.ny.us)**

**Aging Futures**  
c/o Broome County Office for Aging  
PO Box 1766  
Binghamton, NY 13902-1766  
Phone: (607) 778-2411 • Fax: (607) 778-2316

PRSR STD  
U.S. POSTAGE PAID  
PERMIT NO. 122  
BINGHAMTON, NY

*The Aging Futures Partnership is supported by funding from Community Partnerships for Older Adults, a national program of The Robert Wood Johnson Foundation.*