

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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Allegan County
3283 – 122nd Ave
Allegan MI 49010

Contact: Rob Sarro, Administrator
rsarro@allegancounty.org

Contact: Sherry Torres, Senior Services
storres@allegancounty.org

Contact: Midge Stamas,
Communication Consultant
gmstamas@sbcglobal.net

SENIOR SERVICES INCREASING SERVICES TO ALLEGAN COUNTY SENIORS

ALLEGAN COUNTY - The Allegan County Commission on Aging met on April 19, 2011 and recommends implementation of a plan to increase services and spend down the Senior Services Department fund balance. This recommendation will be considered for approval by the County Board of Commissioners at their meeting on April 28, 2011.

As of March 1, 2011 the Senior Services fund balance is approximately \$735,000.00. The goal is to spend down the fund balance and increase services to Allegan County seniors by doing the following:

- Increase current senior services by 10% for the remainder of 2011, and 2012-14 (In-Home Supports, Adult Day Care, Volunteer Transportation and Home Delivered Meals).
- Fund Personal Emergency Response Systems (PERS) at a rate of \$5,000 per year, for 2012-14. This amount will fund approximately 20 “lifelines” to frail seniors with no informal support system in place (friends, family, etc.). PERS is a call button that can be used to call for help in the event of an emergency
- Fund Caregiver Education and Support at a rate of \$5,000 per year, for 2012-14. This amount will fund a yet-to-be-identified caregiver support group to prevent isolation and caregiver burnout. These services will be available for bid beginning in the summer of 2011, and successful bidders will begin services in 2012 through 2014.

In addition to this recommended increase in services, many other activities are also happening at Senior Services. These exciting activities include:

- Senior Services received a Mobility Management Grant through MDOT, to centralize senior transportation throughout the County. Seniors in need of transportation can call Senior Services, and our transportation coordinator will arrange for transportation. This will alleviate having to call many different organizations to see who has rides available.

- The Allegan County Elder Abuse Coalition was established December 15, 2010 as a result of an award of a national grant through the National Center for Elder Abuse Prevention. Sherry Torres and Scott Matice are co-chairs of the Coalition.
- The 2nd Annual “Speak Up! Speak Out! Elder Abuse Awareness Event will be held on Wednesday, June 1, 2011 at Camp Beechpoint, in Allegan. There will be 5 workshops that will repeat over 2 sessions on such things as online computer safety, home repair scams, reverse mortgages, telephone and mail scams, identity theft, and how to recognize and report elder abuse. The day will end with a keynote address from Mr. Chayo Reyes, a nationally known speaker on the topic of elder abuse. The event is free, but you must register to reserve your spot. Lunch is included, and free transportation can be arranged as well.

For more information about or to register for the June 1st event, contact those listed above or Senior Services @ 269-673-3333.

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