



Ocean County Office of Senior Services

September/October 2018 Newsletter



Freeholder Chairman
Joseph H. Vicari

**A Message From
Joseph Vicari:
Freeholder Chairman**

ADVOCACY IS SO IMPORTANT

The Ocean County Office of Senior Services has had a very busy summer working on issues of concern to the older adults in this county and we believe advocacy is the answer; we thank you!

I was alarmed to learn back in the spring that certain programs under the Older Americans Act were at risk under the 2018 Federal budget review; agencies and individual advocates were encouraged to write to local legislators and alert them to the significant funding cuts that had been proposed. For example, State Health Insurance Assistance Program (SHIP) was once again at risk.

The good news is the Senate rejected the House proposal to eliminate the SHIP program and provided level funding for SHIP in FY18. In addition, Congress actually increased Older Americans Act funding for other vital in home and community based services for older adults and their caregivers; please say thank you and let congressional delegates know we appreciate these increases here in Ocean County!



The One-Stop Center
1027 Hooper Ave., Bldg. 2, First Floor
(732) 929-2091 • 1-877-222-3737 • 1-800-668-4899



Ocean County Office of Senior Services
 The One-Stop Center
 P.O. Box 2191
 1027 Hooper Ave., Bldg. 2, First Floor
 Toms River, New Jersey 08754-2191

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Ocean County
 Office of Senior Services
 Joseph H. Vicari
 Freeholder Chairman

Maria La Face, Director

www.ocean.nj.us

“Making it Easier For Seniors To Choose Services”
Printed by the Ocean County Printing & Graphic Arts Department Freeholder John P. Kelly, Liaison

NEW MEDICARE CARDS – WHAT'S IMPORTANT?

In earlier newsletters, we alerted you to the new Medicare cards that are headed your way. Medicare is mailing millions of new cards with the new numbers. Everyone who receives this benefit will get one; your benefits will stay exactly the same.

So here are some thoughts from the US Department of Health and Human Services that may answer your questions:

- ✓ **Something is different?** Yes, Social Security numbers have been removed.
- ✓ **What do I have to do?** Nothing they will arrive automatically by mail. Remember Medicare will never call you for personal information so beware of scams.
- ✓ **When will they come?** If you haven't received one yet check the Medicare.gov website/new card to see when the cards are expected in our area.....you can even sign up for an email about it.
- ✓ **My friend got one – where is mine?** It takes about a month for everyone within a mailing area to get their cards.
- ✓ **My new card is here, so now what?** When your new card arrives, destroy the old one. You can use your new card right away so bring it to your next appointment.
- ✓ **Any questions?** SHIP counselors are available in the Ocean County Office of Senior Services every day from 8:30 am to 5:00 pm; call **732-929-2091** or **1-800-668-4899** and someone will be glad to assist you.



MESSAGE FROM JACKIE ROHAN

It is with excitement and anticipation that I share with you my retirement from the county which was effective August 1st. I will miss you! I have been with Ocean County serving in the Office of Senior Services for almost 18 years. I have learned so much both professionally and personally; it is now time to take those lessons and apply them to my own life.

The staff at Ocean County Office of Senior Services leave no stone unturned to get answers for the over 6,500 callers who contact them each

year. I know I will be calling them. You can do the same by calling **732-929-2091** or **1-800-668-4899**.

Freeholder Vicari has asked me to announce the exciting news that he has appointed Maria La Face as the new Director of Senior Services effective August 1st; Maria joins the county with extensive experience in both senior and disability concerns. She spent 14 years as an attorney with Ocean-Monmouth Legal Services, and her last three years with Ocean County Board of Social Services. Welcome her; she will work hard for you.



PROPERTY TAX REIMBURSEMENT (PTR) DEADLINE

As stated earlier, Freeholder Vicari has been a staunch supporter of older adults in this community and wants to remind you that the deadline for filing the Property Tax Reimbursement program applications is **October 31**. For information about the “Senior Freeze” program, or to obtain an application, contact the Property Tax Reimbursement Hotline at **1-800-882-6597** from 8:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. weekdays. Information is also available on the Division of Taxation’s Web site at www.state.nj.us/treasury/taxation or call the Ocean County Office of Senior Services at **732-929-2091** or **1-800-668-4899**.

REVISED 2018 OCEAN COUNTY SENIOR SERVICES RESOURCE DIRECTORY AVAILABLE

OCEAN COUNTY
OFFICE OF SENIOR SERVICES

2018
RESOURCE DIRECTORY



BUILDING 2, 1ST FLOOR
1027 HOOPER AVENUE
P.O. BOX 2191
TOMS RIVER, NEW JERSEY 08754-2191

732-929-2091 1-800-668-4899
1-877-222-3737 (In State Only)
www.co.ocean.nj.us
Aging & Disability Resource Connection (ADRC)

A revised resource book for 2018 is available at the Ocean County Office of Senior Services. The 72-page directory includes information on benefits, consumer protection, education, health services, housing, legal services, nutrition, outreach, recreation, social services, transportation and volunteer programs.

Please call for a copy of this newly revised Resource Directory for 2018, **732-929-2091** or **1-800-668-4899**. In addition, the 2018 Resource Directory is viewable on

our website at www.co.ocean.nj.us, click on “Senior Services”; on the right side of the webpage you will see “Consumer Resource Directory” and a variety of information and links to many important services.

TAKE CONTROL OF YOUR HEALTH AND DIABETES SELF-MANAGEMENT WORKSHOPS

In the past eight years, the Office of Senior Services has given over 2,000 seniors the opportunity to participate in the Chronic Disease and Diabetes Self-Management workshops.

These participants have learned how to make healthier food choices, create an exercise program to meet their needs, manage their emotions and stress, think more positively about their life, communicate clearly with their family, friends and health care providers, experience less pain and fatigue, and have a better overall quality of life.

The six-week program, created by Stanford University, provides the tools to manage your health along with a safe environment to share feelings and solutions to problems. Participants motivate and support each other to set new goals and try new ways to adjust to the changes brought about by their health conditions. There are six to eight topics each week. Snacks are provided during the break of the 2 and ½-hour class, providing examples of portions and healthy choices for participants to follow. The classes are interactive; giving an opportunity to practice new skills and to help others by sharing what has worked for them. The sessions are focused on finding solutions to the problems, rather than the problem itself.

Participants learn that by managing their symptoms and utilizing the newly learned skills, they can enjoy an active life with chronic conditions. Breaking down tasks into small steps and succeeding in the goals they set out to accomplish empowers their belief in themselves.

The participants receive a resource book “Living a Healthy Life with Chronic Conditions” to augment the workshop information and can be used as a continuing reference. If you are looking for a way to manage your health contact **Louanne** at **732-281-8391** for a workshop near you in Ocean County.

MEDICARE PART D: OPEN ENROLLMENT IS COMING!

Last year over 9,000 Medicare recipients met with State Health Insurance Assistance Program (SHIP) counselors for assistance in Medicare A, B, C or D information. Do you know the difference? Medicare A primarily pays for a stay in the hospital, or a skilled nursing facility, B is for doctor's services and outpatient services such as lab tests, C pays for the Medicare Advantage or managed care alternative to traditional Medicare and D of course is the prescription drug plan.

Soon Ocean County's Medicare beneficiaries will once again need to make a decision about their prescription drug coverage. Medicare Part D open enrollment period begins on **October 15th** and runs through **December 7th**. During this time, people with Medicare can sign up for a prescription drug plan or switch their current Medicare Part D plan in order to have the best coverage beginning January of 2019. And yes it's best to check each year for changes. Open enrollment is also the perfect time to review your Medicare Advantage plan with a SHIP Counselor to be notified of any changes.

Our Senior Services Information and Assistance staff are certified State Health Insurance Assistance Program (SHIP) counselors and there are additional counselors located throughout Ocean County. These counselors are available to help seniors and other Medicare beneficiaries with the annual drug plan enrollment process and answer any questions.

For example, what if you cannot afford a Medicare Part D plan? There is federal assistance available for people with Medicare who have limited income and resources. If you qualify, you can receive assistance with premiums, deductibles and prescription co-payments. Please call **732-929-2091** or **1-800-668-4899** and ask to speak to one of our SHIP staff.

MEDICARE PART D DAYS AT THE COUNTY CONNECTION

Ocean County Office of Senior Services will have representatives available for **one-on-one** assistance in comparing *only* the Medicare Prescription Drug Plans for 2019 on the Medicare Plan Finder. For an appointment, you **must** call the County Connection directly at **732-288-7777** to register. **Registration is required.**

SEPTEMBER IS EMERGENCY PREPAREDNESS MONTH

In Ocean County, we know from experience how important it is for all of us to be prepared for a weather emergency. Preparations include creating or updating a disaster supply kit and having a battery powered radio for example. In the event of a hurricane, the National Weather Service can usually provide up to five days of advanced warning; being prepared in advance could save a life. In the event of an evacuation, like those we saw during both Hurricane Irene in 2011 and Super Storm Sandy in 2012, it is recommended that essential items be brought along including prescription drugs and any special dietary foods.

“Emergency Preparedness Disaster Tips” is an excellent guide that includes special considerations for seniors, those who have pets and caregivers of older adults or children. If you would like a copy, call our office at **732-929-2091** or **1-800-668-4899**. You can never be too prepared in case of emergency.