

The SMP SCOOP



PROTECT DETECT REPORT

SPRING 2025

The Senior Medicare Patrol (SMP) Scoop is prepared by the GWAAR SMP Team to help Medicare beneficiaries and their advocates prevent, detect, and report health care fraud, abuse, and errors.

Please feel free to share this publication with others who may benefit from its contents.

TO CONTACT WI SMP

Call: (888) 818-2611

E-mail: smp-wi@gwaar.org

Website: www.smpwi.org

Facebook:

@WisconsinSeniorMedicarePatrol

To subscribe, please send us an e-mail.



A New Resource From Wisconsin Senior Medicare Patrol

By Ingrid Kundinger, Wisconsin SMP Program Director

Wisconsin SMP

SCAM SPOTLIGHT

One of the pillars of the Senior Medicare Patrol (SMP) mission is education. Our goal is to educate Wisconsin Medicare beneficiaries, their family members, and caregivers about Medicare fraud, and we do this in various ways.

- Presentations
- One-on-one discussions at senior expos and resource fairs
- Telephone conversations with people who call our toll-free helpline with concerns
- Our team of volunteers sharing SMP information with their friends and communities
- Articles and advertisements in many Aging and Disability Resource Center and Senior Center newsletters across the state as well as other publications

- Social media posts
- This newsletter
- Our website

Speaking of our website, did you know we have one? If you have access to a computer, have you ever visited our site? If not, we encourage you to check it out. There's a new focus that we hope will help us share information ... the **Scam Spotlight!**

The Scam Spotlight is a monthly focus on something we think is important for you to know and share with others. Often it will be related to Medicare-related fraud and scams, but will also cover other types of scams impacting older people.

Visit our website, smpwi.org, and you'll notice a banner on the home page that will take you to the **Scam Spotlight** information.

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Lifelong Exercise Promotes Brain Health in Older Adults

Resourced from the National Institute on Aging <https://www.nia.nih.gov/news>



Individuals who maintain a regimen of physical activity throughout their lives may prevent brain deterioration during middle and older adulthood. NIA researchers made the discovery by measuring cardiorespiratory fitness in 125 cognitively unimpaired adults, ranging in age from 22 to 94, and by examining their brains. Specifically, they assessed the white matter of the brain, which is composed of myelin, a fatty layer of insulation that surrounds neurons. The study suggests lifelong exercise could be a therapeutic strategy for promoting brain health and reducing the risk of developing neurodegenerative conditions, such as Alzheimer's and Parkinson's disease. The findings were published in *Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences*.

Myelin, which tends to decrease as humans grow older, has two major functions: protect neurons from insults and harm such as toxic byproducts generated by the brain, and accelerate the communication between different neurons and regions of the brain. Other studies have shown aerobic exercise may preserve and enhance cerebral myelination throughout the adult lifespan, but how it worked remained unknown.

In this study, the research team tracked cardiovascular fitness levels by measuring maximum oxygen consumption. While running on a treadmill, participants breathed through a mask that was connected to equipment that monitored oxygen and carbon dioxide concentrations. Oxygen consumption was calculated every 30 seconds. The highest value, termed VO₂max, was expressed in milliliters per kilogram of body weight per minute (mL/kg/min). This method is considered the most accurate way to measure cardiovascular fitness.

To examine myelin content, the researchers used MRI to scan different regions of participants' brains. They analyzed those images using mathematical and physics modeling to extract information on myelin content, called myelin water fraction. The participants were divided into four age groups: 22 to 39 years, 40 to 59 years, 60 to 79 years, and 80 to 94 years.

The scientists saw a strong correlation between cardiovascular fitness and myelin content, with even small improvements in VO₂max leading to large boosts in myelin. Participants 40 and older experienced the greatest myelin increase, suggesting if young adults maintain good cardiovascular health throughout their lives, it will pay off later when they reach midlife and beyond by protecting their brain myelin.

The research suggests cardiovascular fitness may be crucial for the production and maintenance of myelin. The authors emphasize study participants were not professional athletes – just average people who exercised regularly – and that workout length and intensity were varied.

Reference: Faulkner ME, et al. [Evidence of association between higher cardiorespiratory fitness and higher cerebral myelination in aging.](#)

Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences. 2024. Epub Aug. 19. doi: 10.1073/pnas.2402813121

Feeding Your Body, Feeding Your Brain

Resourced from: <https://www.eatright.org>



Being healthy means taking care of your brain as well as your body. This is especially important as we age because the risk of dementia increases over time. While Alzheimer's disease is the most common cause of dementia for adults, affecting more than 6 million Americans ages 65 and older, it isn't the only type.

Other illnesses and conditions, such as Parkinson's disease, alcoholism, stroke, multiple sclerosis (MS), amyotrophic lateral sclerosis (ALS), and traumatic head injury, also can cause dementia. Additionally, diabetes, high blood pressure, and heart disease can increase risk of dementia, so managing these conditions is important.

Making healthful lifestyle choices, including getting regular physical activity, socializing, limiting alcohol intake, and not smoking, can help to reduce your risk for dementia. Scientific evidence has shown that eating patterns such as the Mediterranean diet and the MIND diet may be beneficial to your body as well as your brain, helping to protect against cognitive decline. Certain nutrients are especially important for brain health and may help maintain and improve cognitive function, including:

1. **Omega-3 fatty acids** – About 60% of the brain is composed of polyunsaturated fatty acids. The most abundant type is DHA (docosahexaenoic acid), an omega-3 fatty acid. Some research suggests diets rich in omega-3s, combined with a low saturated fat intake, may lower the risk of cognitive decline.
2. **B vitamins** – B vitamins, including B6, B12, and folate, are known for their role in metabolizing homocysteine, one of the amino acids in protein. High levels of this amino acid are considered a risk factor for cognitive impairment, such as dementia and Alzheimer's disease. B vitamins are involved in many other



aspects of brain function, and deficiencies may affect mental health and lead to cognitive decline. However, research on B vitamin supplementation and cognitive function remains unclear.

3. **Antioxidants and Phytonutrients** – The brain is particularly susceptible to damage caused by free radicals, which are substances that attack healthy cells. Vitamins C and E, as well as the mineral selenium and phytonutrients such as lycopene, are antioxidants and are known to help minimize damage caused by chronic stress and free radicals. Other well-known phytonutrients – such as anthocyanins, which give certain fruits and vegetables their color – are thought to have a positive effect on brain function.
4. **Vitamin D** – Vitamin D is found in nearly every cell in the body, so it's no surprise this vitamin is present in brain cells. Vitamin D is believed to have protective effects against cognitive decline, and research has suggested that low blood levels of vitamin D may affect brain health.
5. **Choline** – Choline is an essential nutrient required for fat transport and metabolism. It is necessary for normal brain and nervous system function, muscle control, and other functions.

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Safe Travel Tips for Older Adults

Resourced from Donnya Currie, Senior Editor at NCOA ncoa.org



Travel is good for us. Exploring new lands improves brain function and boosts mental health. Connecting with people is essential to our overall well-being. And even a simple change of scenery can ease stress and bring calm.¹

In general, traveling, going to new places, and meeting up with family and old and new friends is really vital for our mental health,” said Kathleen Cameron, former Senior Director of NCOA's Center for Healthy Aging.

When planning a trip, and while you're on the road to adventure, follow these tips to help everything go as smoothly as possible.

1. Follow public health guidance

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention has a wealth of travel guidance, including current travel health notices, a Travel Health Checklist, food and water safety tips, what to do about motion sickness, and more, at cdc.gov/travel.

2. Choose a hotel that meets your needs

While most hotels can accommodate a guest's mobility, some places that are off the beaten path or historical haven't been updated. This can mean [falls hazards](#) on stairs or uneven floors, or accessibility issues at the entrance to the hotel and to the rooms.

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Feeding Your Body, Feeding Your Brain

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Focusing on an overall healthy eating pattern that includes these nutrients from foods is important for good health. Get these nutrients from a variety of fruits, vegetables, whole grains, protein food, and healthy fats, including:

- Berries, including strawberries and blueberries, citrus fruits, grapes, and watermelon
- Dark, leafy greens such as spinach, kale, collard greens, and broccoli
- Whole-wheat bread, oats, quinoa, and other whole grains

- Seafood including shellfish and fish such as salmon, mackerel, tuna, sardines, and herring
- Nuts and seeds such as chia, flaxseed, walnuts, and almonds
- Beans and lentils, including chickpeas, black beans, and lima beans
- Whole eggs, skinless chicken, and turkey
- Sources of unsaturated fat such as avocados and olive oil

Remember: While making healthful food choices is a vital part of a healthy lifestyle, other important factors that contribute to overall health include getting enough sleep, managing stress, staying hydrated, and adding regular physical activity to your daily routine.

Safe Travel Tips for Older Adults

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Before booking a hotel, call ahead to make sure the hotel has elevators, and ask if the elevator is wheelchair accessible if you need it. If not, ask if they can accommodate a first-floor request. Even if you're traveling with a tour company, don't hesitate to call a hotel directly if you have concerns about accessibility.

3. Don't publicize your trip on social media

It's natural to want to share your excitement about an upcoming trip, but think twice before posting details on social media. There are many reported cases of thieves using social media to target homes when the owner announces they're going on a long trip.

Facebook's default privacy setting isn't particularly private. You may think only your closest friends can see your post, but unless you have [strict privacy settings enabled](#), anyone who is friends with your friends, and even some people who aren't acquainted with you at all, can see your post. You also might want to consider asking a trusted friend or family member to house sit while you're away.

4. Know the TSA rules

While you're trying to figure out where to pack your sunhat and flip flops, don't forget about your prescriptions. If you are one of the nearly 9 in 10 older adults who takes at least one medication,² always pack it in your carry-on where you can access it easily, and it can't be lost by an airline.

"Carry your medications with you on your person and not in your luggage," Cameron advised.

If your medication is a liquid and requires that you also have syringes, pumps, freezer packs, or IV bags, the TSA will allow you to carry it all on the plane. Before you pack, [check the TSA's rules](#), so you know how to pack them. It's also a good idea to have a backup plan in case something goes wrong. Make sure to take a [list of your medications](#), doctors, and the location of a pharmacy covered by your insurance (or Medicare) at your destination.

Bonus: If you're 75 or older, TSA usually allows you to go through the security pre-check line, which

means you don't have to remove your shoes or separate laptops or liquids from your carry-on. For those younger than 75 who can't – or don't want to – stand in long security lines, the TSA Precheck or Global Entry program are options. [TSA Precheck](#) is for flights between U.S. airports, and [Global Entry](#) is for international flights. Each program has a non-refundable application fee, and you have to apply for the program well in advance of your travel. If approved, your status lasts for five years.

5. Stay healthy en route to, and on, the plane

Busy airports and tight spaces while getting on an airplane can be a fall risk. The airline will help if you call ahead and ask about priority boarding.

You'll also want to talk with the airline if you have a [chronic condition](#) that has dietary restrictions, such as diabetes, high cholesterol, or hypertension, and you're taking a long flight that overlaps when you know you should eat. A representative can tell you if they can accommodate your dietary needs. If they can't, pack food for yourself.

Airplane air can pose challenges. A plane cabin at high altitudes typically has much less humidity than a normal environment,² which can put you at higher risk of dehydration and respiratory diseases. Be sure to drink lots of water on the plane.

"On really long airplane trips, be sure you walk in the aisle to prevent blood clots, particularly for those at high risk," Cameron said. That includes people who've had surgeries or recent hospitalizations, cancer, or have a family history of blood clots.

It's also good to take steps to protect your immune system, which naturally weakens with age. Pack anti-bacterial wipes in your carry-on so you can disinfect your seat, seatbelt, tray, and armrest. Before your trip, talk to your doctor to make sure you're up to date on all of your [immunizations](#), including the flu and COVID-19.

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Safe Travel Tips for Older Adults

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6. Don't be a target for theft

Older adults are [targets for theft and fraud](#).

Whether you're traveling alone or with a group, take precautions to protect yourself both inside and outside of your hotel room.

Check with your hotel to see if it has a safe in your room for your passport, jewelry, or excess cash. And always double-check to make sure the code works before placing your belongings inside. Keep anything you consider valuable inside the safe.

Consider also investing in pick-pocket proof travel clothes. Many companies design fashionable pants and jackets that come with deep inside zipper and magnetically sealed pockets that help keep your valuables safe from pick pocketers. If you're traveling internationally, consider using cash for most purchases.



Credit card fraud is prevalent in tourist destinations. Unless you plan to monitor your transaction history via a mobile app, cash will reduce your risk.

Getting foreign currency is easier than ever. Check with your home bank to see if you can use your debit card to withdraw cash from ATMs at your destination. Some banks will even let you withdraw without additional fees. Plus, you may get a better conversion rate doing it this way.

If you opt for the credit card route, call the credit card issuer before your trip to let them know where and when you're traveling. They can tell you if there is a foreign transaction fee for using your card abroad and how the conversion rate is applied to charges. Alerting the company allows it to more easily track potential fraudulent activity and issue a refund quickly if you get hit. However, most credit card companies will deactivate your card in the case of

fraud and will only mail a replacement to your account address. So take a back-up card just in case.

7. Keep important documents on hand

Before leaving home, make copies of your important documents, like your passport, driver's license, Medicare card, and itinerary. Pack an extra set with you, and make sure to leave copies with people you trust at home (or have access to scanned versions). If you lose your ID or it's stolen, this will make it easier to get replacements.

Also, always make sure to carry emergency contact information and identification on you while out and about. If a medical emergency happens, the people providing assistance will need to know your emergency contact and a health care provider at home.

Now that you're equipped with these smart travel tips, enjoy your trip and make wonderful new memories!

Happy travels!

¹ WebMD. How Travel Affects Mental Health. Found on the internet at <https://www.webmd.com/mental-health/how-travel-affects-mental-health>

² Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. Prescription Medication Use, Coverage and Nonadherence Among Adults Age 65 and Older: United States, 2021-2022. National Health Statistics Report Number 209. September 2024. Found on the internet at <https://www.cdc.gov/nchs/data/nhsr/nhsr209.pdf>

³ National Research Council U.S. Committee on Air Quality in Passenger Cabins of Commercial Aircraft. The Airliner Cabin and the Health of Passengers and Crew. Environmental Control. 2002. Found on the internet at <https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/books/NBK207472/>



Celebrate the Senior Nutrition Program

2025 · A PLACE AT THE TABLE

Resourced from acl.gov/snp/celebrate

Nutrition is a vital component of our health and well-being, especially as we age. But in communities throughout the U.S., older adults sometimes lack access to the high-quality, nutritious food they need to remain healthy and independent.

Funded by the Older Americans Act, the national Senior Nutrition Program has provided nutrition services to older Americans since 1972. The Administration for Community Living (ACL), part of the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, provides grants to states to enable a network of local programs that deliver nutrition services to older adults. These programs promote healthy eating, foster meaningful social connections, and support overall health. They also act as a gateway to other home and community-based services like falls prevention programs, chronic disease management resources, and more.

This March, SMP is proud to celebrate the anniversary of the national Senior Nutrition Program with others across the country.

To learn more about the Senior Nutrition Program and services in your area, contact your local [ADRC](#) or [Tribal ADRC](#). To volunteer, contact your [County or Tribal Aging Program](#).



FLIP THE SCRIPT ON AGING: MAY 2025

Older Americans Month 2025

Resourced from acl.gov

In 1963, President John F. Kennedy and the National Council of Senior Citizens declared May as Senior Citizens Month to draw awareness to relevant issues of the time. The country lacked effective resources for healthy aging, with only 17 million Americans living past the age of 65, compared to the 55 million today. Plus, one in three older Americans lived in poverty, a staggering number.

Two years later, President Kennedy renamed it Older Americans Month, and it has remained a national month of recognition to this day with every president since honoring it in a formal proclamation.

Every May, the Administration for Community Living leads the nation's observance of Older Americans Month (OAM), a time to recognize older Americans' contributions, highlight aging trends, and reaffirm the commitment to serving older adults. The 2025 theme, Flip the Script on Aging, focuses on transforming how society perceives, talks about, and approaches aging. It encourages individuals and communities to challenge stereotypes and have meaningful conversations that can help dispel misconceptions. We will explore strategies that help us to reframe and reshape the narrative to honor older adults' rich experiences and foster age-friendly communities. This year, join us in promoting the importance of viewing aging not as a limitation but as a journey filled with purpose, exploration, and connection.

Older Americans are the backbone of our nation and our communities. Without them, we wouldn't be where we are today. But with an increase in isolation and loneliness amongst older adults, many feel left out or underappreciated.



SMP Partnership With Great Lakes Inter-Tribal Council

Working to enhance the quality of life for all Native people



Who We Are

By Ryan Bunker, Tribal Technical Assistance Center (TTAC) Program Specialist Great Lakes Inter-Tribal Council, Inc.

Since coming into this role in July 2024, I've come to know the Great Lakes Inter-Tribal Council (GLITC) more and would like to share with you who we are and what our mission is, to enhance the quality of life for all Native people.

From the GLITC website, "GLITC had its beginnings in the early 1960s as the consequences of the federal experiment of Termination began to play out with the Menominee tribe. Beginning as an association of the leaders of the other ten tribes located in Wisconsin, GLITC was incorporated in 1965 with the purpose of providing a mechanism through which the tribes could work through the challenges of governance and services to their constituents. Through intertribal unity, the tribes could better develop and implement programs, seek outside assistance, and gain leverage in dealing with federal, state, and local government.

GLITC's strength lies in the resolve of the tribes to be independent and self-governing, yet to come together in a unified forum to discuss and resolve those issues that require intertribal unity and attention. As independent governments, the tribes operated widely varied government service systems and addressed their communities' needs in numerous ways. GLITC supplements the member tribes' own efforts through development and operation of health and human service programs, education programs, and economic development programs in the reservation communities it serves. Intergovernmental relations and policy decisions find an intertribal discussion forum through GLITC. However, through long-standing custom, public comment and policy implementation is reserved for the member tribes through their own elected representatives."

Today, GLITC manages approximately 45 programs in the areas of education, epidemiology, family health, nutrition education, aging, disability services, elder services, vocational rehabilitation, and economic development.

If you'd like to learn more about GLITC, check out our website at www.glitc.org



Data Privacy Tips

By Tiffany Schultz, BBB SW WI Regional Director

The possibility of a cyberattack has gone from being science fiction to a common threat. Personal information is stored or shared on the internet and can be accessed by cell phones, tablets, laptops, and/or any other device connects to Wi-Fi or an internet provider. This makes it easy for you to access your information. It also makes it easy for conartists to scam you to get your information.

Although it may seem like there is nothing you can do to stop a cyberattack, there are some best practices that you can do to help guard against losing your personal information to cyber thieves.

Share with care. Posts on social media could last for a lifetime. Consider who will see the post, how readers perceive it, and what information it might reveal about you.

Manage privacy settings. Check the privacy and security settings on web services and apps and set them to your comfort level. Each device, application, or browser will have different features to limit how and with whom you share information.

Personal info is like money: value and protect it. Personal information, such as your purchase history, IP address, and/or your location has tremendous value to businesses – just like money. Make informed decisions about whether or not to share data with certain businesses by considering the amount of personal information they are asking for and weighing it against the benefits you may receive in return.

Make your passwords long and strong. Use long passwords with a combination of upper-and lower-case letters, numbers and symbols – eight characters for most accounts and 12 characters for email and financial accounts. Don't use the same password for multiple accounts, especially email and financial. Consider using a password manager to store passwords.

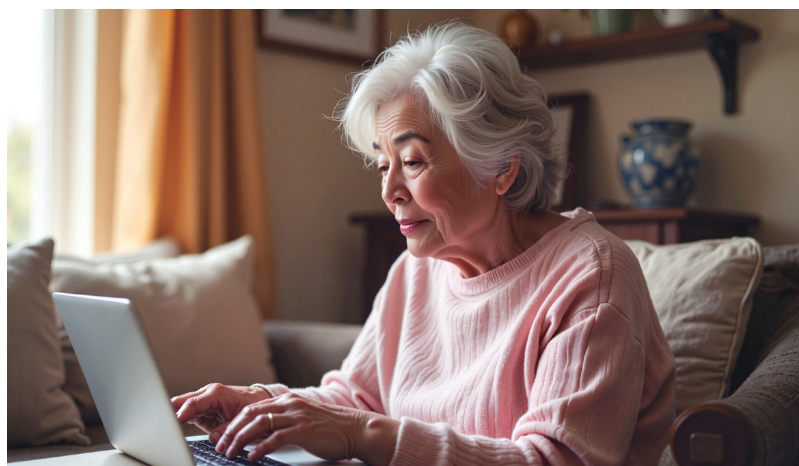


Keep tabs on apps. Many apps ask for access to personal information, such as geographic location, and your contacts list and photo album, before using their services. Be thoughtful about who gets that information and be wary of apps that require access to information that is not required or relevant to the services they offer. Delete unused apps on your internet-connected devices and keep others secure by performing updates.

Lock down your login. For your online accounts, use the strongest authentication tools available. Your usernames and passwords are not enough; consider two-factor authentication for key accounts like email, banking, and social media.

Don't click on unfamiliar links. Whether at home or at work, don't click on links from unfamiliar sources or unexpected correspondence. One false click can infect an entire computer.

Pay attention to internet-connected devices. Smart thermostats, voice control systems, cars, and even refrigerators are just the beginning of the growing list of devices that watch our homes and track our locations. Read the privacy policy and understand what data is being collected and how it will be used.





What's the "Scoop"?

By Ingrid Kundinger, SMP Program Director



Signs of spring will be popping out before we know it! Do you have a favorite springtime flavor of ice cream? Maybe something with lemon or berries? My choice? Vanilla. Boring, I know. This "scoop" does not promise fresh berries, but, as always, it is important!

Here's the scoop: It continues to be important for you to check your Medicare Summary Notices every single time you get them, either in the mail or via your Medicare.gov account online.

Here's why this continues to be so important: the fraudsters never stop and are always dreaming up new ways to take advantage of Medicare and Medicare beneficiaries. The latest scam that we have been warned about is related to neurological testing.

Please take the time to review your statements and if you see something that looks suspicious, call us at **(888) 818-2611**, so that we can report it as suspected fraud and work with you to make sure that your Medicare account is safe going forward.

In other news, the Wisconsin Department of Health Services recently updated their online resources for Aging and Disability Resource Centers (ADRCs) across the state. We often talk about the importance of ADRCs for older people looking for support and resources, so we wanted to share these links.

Aging and Disability Resource Centers: provides information about how ADRCs can help older people and people with disabilities

ADRC: Find Local Resources: allows you to search your county or tribal nation for specific resources in your area

Remember that your Senior Medicare Patrol team is here to help in any way that we can. Please contact us by calling toll-free, (888) 818-2611 or visiting our website, <https://www.smpwi.org>, for more information about how you can protect yourself from Medicare-related fraud and scams.

Here's the Scoop on how you can reach us:

Call: (888) 818-2611

E-mail: smp-wi@gwaar.org

Website: www.smpwi.org

Facebook: @WisconsinSeniorMedicarePatrol



Telehealth Company Pays \$386,000 to Resolve Allegations of Overbilling for Medicare Time

Resourced from: [justice.gov](https://www.justice.gov) - DOJ Press Release dated January 3, 2025



Louisville, KY – U.S. Attorney Michael A. Bennett of the Western District of Kentucky announced today that CompreCare Health LLC, and its affiliates, doing business as Meditelectcare LLC, agreed to pay \$358,514 to resolve allegations that Meditelectcare billed Medicare for telehealth psychotherapy sessions that did not meet the minimum time requirements. CompreCare Health is a Connecticut business and provided services in at least 17 states including Kentucky.

"I commend the outstanding effort of the attorneys and investigators who worked on this case on behalf of the United States," said U.S. Attorney Bennett.

"Those who bill Medicare for timed services must do so accurately as we take these matters very seriously and will vigorously pursue claims that Medicare is being overcharged."

The United States alleged that, between January 1, 2017, and November 30, 2022, Meditelectcare submitted and caused the submission of claims to Medicare for telehealth psychotherapy sessions that did not meet the minimum time requirements for payments and relied on false time records in support of these same telehealth services. The allegations arose from a whistleblower suit filed in federal court in Bowling Green, Kentucky. *United States ex rel. Laura Cole and Tiffany Saylor v. MedOptions of Kentucky, et al.*, 1:19-cv-171-GNS (WDKY).

The U.S. was represented by Assistant U.S. Attorneys A. Matthew Weyand and William F. Campbell. The case was investigated by Auditor Phil Bezehertrny and Federal Investigator Cristal Fox from the United States Attorney's Office, as well as special agents from the Defense Criminal Investigative Service and the Office of Inspector for the Department of Health and Human Services.



National Volunteer Week is an opportunity to recognize the impact of volunteer service and the power of volunteers to tackle society's greatest challenges, to build stronger communities and be a force that transforms the world. As National Volunteer Week begins on April 20, SMP wants to take a moment to express our heartfelt thanks to our amazing team!

Your passion and commitment have been the driving force behind the program's growth and success year after year. We deeply appreciate the interest you've shown and the countless hours you've dedicated to communities across the state. We are truly fortunate to have you and are incredibly grateful for your unwavering support.



We Are All Aging

By the GWAAR Legal Services Team

Ageism negatively affects many Americans daily. Ageism is the discrimination of a person solely because of their age. Negative stereotypes and harmful prejudice about age fuel this discrimination. That discrimination affects how people see themselves and their place in society. Those views dramatically impact mental, social, and physical well-being. Ageism comes in many forms and shows up in many places. People experience ageism throughout their everyday experiences. Ageism is found in media, medical care, policies, and societal norms. Many people are at risk of experiencing the negative impact that ageism has on their daily lives.

Employment is an area of daily life where ageism frequently manifests. People are discriminated against when they are overlooked for jobs or promotions because of their age. This discrimination and prejudice can affect finances, job security, and a person's feeling of purpose and belonging. This type of discrimination is less obvious because employers don't usually say they won't hire or promote a person due to their age. The work environment isn't the only place where ageism is present.

Ageist stereotypes are also present in medical care and medical care policies. This type of discrimination can result in very dangerous outcomes. We have most recently seen the dangers of medical ageism during COVID-19. Policies prescribed that critical life-saving ventilators were to be prioritized by age. This left many older people without life-saving medical care because they were older. Ageism is an important topic that should be critically acknowledged and addressed to prevent dangerous policies from being enforced. While medical ageism is obviously dangerous, not all dangers of ageism are as easy to spot.

The dangers of ageism in media are less obvious. Negative age stereotypes are represented in movies, television, and commercials. When these negative ideas and characterizations bombard an individual, it affects how they see themselves, their abilities, and their place in society. These ageist stereotypes



are hard to ignore and affect a person's mental and physical health. The negative stereotypes represented in media affect not only the age group being negatively represented but also how other people perceive that age group and their abilities. The media perpetuates ageism and the negative effects it has on certain age groups.

Ageism affects us all because everyone is aging. Eliminating ageist ideas is essential to everyone's well-being. To help eliminate ageism, you should be vigilant in identifying harmful ageist stereotypes, prejudice, and discrimination within yourself and society. Once you begin to take notice of ageism, you can reframe how you speak about people, their age, and their place in society. If we only look at a person's age to determine who they are and their capabilities, we ignore all the other aspects that make that person who they are and what they bring to the table. We have to reprogram our thinking and judgment to push out ageist stereotypes, prejudice, and discrimination.

One way to reprogram our thinking is to reframe how we talk about a person's age. You can start reframing how you talk about age by removing ageist terms from your vocabulary. Some words you can eliminate are "elderly and senior" because of their negative associations. Then replace those words with terms like "older person" or be more inclusive by saying "we or us." The most important thing you can do to combat ageism, and its dangerous and harmful effects, is to be aware of it and educate yourself on ways to reframe the way you talk and think about age.

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We Are All Aging

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Ageism advocacy and information:

Ageism reframing [Quick-Start-Guide 24.pdf](#)

Best Practices for reframing ageism [RAI-Communication-Best-Practices-Guide.pdf](#)

Administration for Community Living [Let's Rethink How We Talk About Aging | ACL Administration for Community Living](#)

Ageism Information [Ageism.org | Comprehensive Ageism Information & Education](#)

Finding Success, Happiness, and Deep Purpose in the Second Half of Life

By Arthur C. Brooks

The roadmap for finding purpose, meaning, and success as we age, from bestselling author, Harvard professor, and the *Atlantic's* happiness columnist Arthur Brooks.

Many of us assume that the more successful we are, the less susceptible we become to the sense of professional and social irrelevance that often accompanies aging.

But the truth is, the greater our achievements and our attachment to them, the more we notice our decline, and the more painful it is when it occurs.

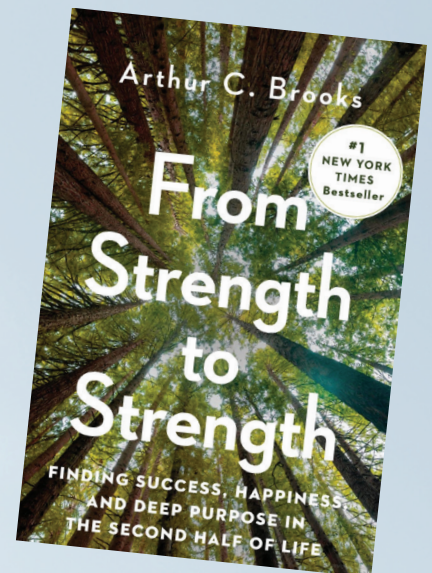
What can we do, starting now, to make our older years a time of happiness, purpose, and yes, success?

At the height of his career at the age of 50, Arthur Brooks embarked on a seven-year journey to discover how to transform his future from one of disappointment over waning abilities into an opportunity for progress.

From Strength to Strength is the result, a practical roadmap for the rest of your life.

Drawing on social science, philosophy, biography, theology, and eastern wisdom, as well as dozens of interviews with everyday men and women, Brooks shows us that true life success is well within our reach. By refocusing on certain priorities and habits that anyone can learn, such as deep wisdom, detachment from empty rewards, connection and service to others, and spiritual progress, we can set ourselves up for increased happiness.

Read this book and you, too, can go from strength to strength. From the website <https://arthurbrooks.com/>





Outreach Activities



Presented at the Caregiver Event in Harrisville



Attended the Caregiving for Aging Adults event in River Falls



Participated in A Day with Lewy – Lewy Body Dementia and the Caregiving Journey event in Waupun



Took part in the GLNAEA Quarterly Meeting in Carter



Volunteers participated in continuing education and training

Supplemental Security Income (SSI)



Supplemental Security Income (SSI) provides services to millions of older adults and people with disabilities. The SSI program exists to provide cash to meet basic needs for food, clothing, and shelter for eligible individuals with little to no income and available resources. These benefits are administered by the Social Security Administration (SSA).

Visit Understanding Supplemental Security Income (SSI) on the home page at www.ssa.gov or call **1(800) 772-1213** to learn more about the program.

Important Resources for Wisconsin Medicare Beneficiaries

- Benefit Specialists at local **Aging and Disability Resource Centers (ADRCs)** and aging units in every county and tribe offer benefits counseling. For contact information, visit www.dhs.wisconsin.gov/benefit-specialists/counties.htm
- Contact **Medicare** directly by calling **(800-633-4227)** or visiting <https://www.medicare.gov>
- The **Medigap Helpline (800-242-1060)** is a toll-free helpline operated by the Wisconsin Board on Aging and Long-Term Care that provides counseling for all Wisconsin Medicare beneficiaries on Medicare, Medicare supplement insurance, employer-based health insurance, Medicare Advantage plans, long-term care insurance, and related topics.
- The **Wisconsin Medigap Part D and Prescription Drug Helpline (855-677-2783)** is a toll-free helpline that answers questions from Wisconsin residents aged 60 and over about Medicare Part D and other prescription drug coverage options.
- **Federal Trade Commission (202-326-2222)** Call to report if you have been targeted by an illegal business practice or scam.
- **Office for the Deaf and Hard of Hearing (video phone: 262-347-3045)** provides outreach and individual counseling in American Sign Language.
- **Judicare Legal Aid (800-472-1638)** provides outreach and benefits counseling to low-income persons living in Northern Wisconsin and Native Americans statewide.
- The **Wisconsin Senior Medicare Patrol (888-818-2611)** has a toll-free helpline for Medicare beneficiaries and their families to call to report suspected Medicare fraud, errors, and abuse.





Preventing Medicare Fraud

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FALSE CLAIMS MAY BE HIDING ON YOUR MSN

The grey bar indicates
date of service and
provider information.

Below that is the service
or item provided.

*Make sure these are
correct!*

May 9, 20XX
ABC DME (555) 555-1234
PO BOX 1, Anytown, MO 55555-0000
Ordered by John J Doe

Quantity, Item/Service Provided &
Billing Code

1 Oxygen Concentrator (E1390-RR)
Rental

Claim for Claim #103348294



www.smpwi.org

888-818-2611



888-818-2611

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