



COMING TOGETHER TO ADVOCATE FOR OLDER ADULTS

NC Coalition on Aging
October Update – October 12, 2018

Coalition's Holds Successful Annual Meeting/Luncheon: Over 110 Coalition members and friends attended the Coalition's annual meeting and luncheon at the NC State University Club on September 28. A highlight of the event included hearing from Howard Bedlin, Vice-President for Public Policy and Advocacy with the National Council on Aging, who provided an update on issues impacting older adults and their families and offered his perspective on emerging issues. He also shared remarks about the national Leadership Council on Aging and talked about the benefits of bringing aging organizations and groups together to speak with a unified voice on issues. Also at the meeting, Coalition President Mary Bethel spoke briefly about the "State of the Coalition," and three long-time aging advocates – Bob Jackson, Lou Wilson, and Bill Lamb – were honored with Pioneer Awards. To see pictures of the three Pioneer Award recipients and information about their accomplishments, click [here](#). Unfortunately, many Coalition members, particularly those from southeastern North Carolina, were unable to attend the meeting due to hurricane recovery efforts. Therefore, special effort is being made to post information from the meeting on the Coalition's [website](#), and Mr. Bedlin has agreed to make copies of his remarks available and these will be sent to Coalition members when they are received. Special thanks is extended to the 16 organizations who helped to [sponsor](#) the meeting and luncheon this year.



John Thoma, Transitions LifeCare, and some of the attendees.



Speaker, Howard Bedlin, and Mary Bethel

Hurricane Recovery: Materials from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention note that older adults are at increased risk of disease and death during disasters due to a higher prevalence of chronic conditions, physical disability, cognitive impairment, and other functional limitations. Potential limitations in mobility and barriers to transportation access can further exacerbate the challenges older adults face during emergencies. Many agencies or organizations have mobilized since Hurricane Florence

to help older adults impacted by the storm. It is heartwarming to see the continuing cooperation and collaboration taking place to help those in need.

The Coalition has shared information and updates numerous times since the storm relative to recovery resources and services. Additional information received in the last week is provided below.

Many Fatalities Older Adults – Hurricane Florence was especially lethal for older North Carolinians. In an [article](#) by Tommy Goldsmith for NC Health News he notes that's the takeaway from a state-compiled list of the adults who died as a result of the catastrophic storm. It shows that two out of three North Carolinians who died during or as a result of Florence were 60 or older, and nearly half were 70 or older. The median age of adults who died during or as a result of the storm was 67, while the statewide median age is 38.3. Thirty-nine deaths in the state have been attributed to the storm.

Recovery Aid – Assistance for the victims of Florence will come from four main sources: private insurance, the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA), nonprofits and the state. On Wednesday, Gov. Roy Cooper asked state legislators for \$750 million toward a proposed long-term \$1.5 billion Hurricane Florence recovery effort, with an early focus on housing, farms, business and schools. The Governor unveiled his [request](#) while providing new estimates for the scope of last month's storm. His office calculates damage from Florence in North Carolina will be nearly \$13 billion, or about equal to the damage caused by the state's two most devastating hurricanes of the past 20 years -- Floyd in 1999 and Matthew two years ago. The request would cover what the federal government and private insurance won't, Cooper's budget office said, and wouldn't require any tax increases. It was reported last Thursday that three weeks after Hurricane Florence hit North Carolina, more than \$210 million in state and federal recovery funds have already been provided to affected residents. The total includes more than \$82 million in state and Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) grants to homeowners and renters, more than \$66 million in advance payments and claims paid to National Flood Insurance Program policyholders and nearly \$62 million in U.S. Small Business Administration low-interest disaster loans approved for homeowners, renters and business owners. More than 22,000 North Carolina homeowners and renters also have received housing assistance, including grants for repairs, while another 14,000 have received financial rental assistance. FEMA inspectors have completed nearly 72,000 home inspections as part of the process of determining whether applicants are eligible for assistance. More than \$54 million in food assistance has been issued through the Disaster Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program. Nearly 185,000 people have received a supplement to their existing food stamp benefits, and more than 180,000 people who weren't already receiving food stamps got a benefit through the program. FEMA and the state have opened 11 Disaster Recovery Centers across southeastern North Carolina, serving more than 5,000 people. The centers serve as one-stop shops for hurricane survivors who need one-on-one help. (WRAL NEWS, 10/04/18 and (Gary D. Robertson, THE ASSOCIATED PRESS, 10/10/18))

Congressional Action – On October 3, the U.S. Senate overwhelmingly approved legislation granting North Carolina's request for \$1.14 billion in hurricane recovery assistance. The House passed the same bill the previous week. (Emma Dumain, McCLATCHY DC, 10/03/18)

State Legislative Action - The General Assembly approved legislation on Oct. 2 ([House Bill 4](#) and [Senate Bill 2](#)), which was quickly signed by Gov. Cooper, that makes available an initial round of support for Hurricane Florence recovery. The legislation would:

- Allow school systems in counties hard hit by the storm to waive up to 20 school days and make sure teachers and other school employees, who normally wouldn't be paid on days school doesn't meet, get paid.
- Start up the state's disaster recovery fund, with \$50 million in it to cover initial matching costs on federal recovery dollars and \$6.5 million to make sure educators get paid. The money will come from the state's "rainy day" reserve fund, which has been built up to \$2 billion.
- Extends the voter registration deadline from Oct. 12 to Oct. 15 in the counties impacted by the storm. The state will set aside \$400,000 for the State Board of Elections and Ethics Enforcement to communicate changes to voters.
- Empower local boards of election to move early voting sites if facilities or roads to them have been damaged.
- Allow the governor to waive Division of Motor Vehicles fees for duplicate driver's licenses and other official documents.
- Allow the governor to waive building inspector fees for homeowners repairing storm or flood damage.

The legislature will come back into session on Oct. 15 to take up larger funding measures. (News and Observer, 10/3/18)

Disaster Recovery Fund for Seniors – Hurricane Florence has left many people in our state in great need for help. We are fortunate that many opportunities to make donations to assist those impacted by the storm have become available. The Coalition is aware that a number of Coalition members have established disaster assistance funds to benefit their constituents or staff of local agencies impacted by the storm. Knowing that there is a great need to help many of our state's older citizens, several aging organizations and groups including the NC Association on Aging, the NC Association of Area Agencies on Aging, AARP NC, and the Coalition on Aging have partnered to establish the NC Disaster Recovery Fund for Seniors. The purpose of this Fund is to help address the unmet needs and the long-term recovery of older North Carolinians. Funds are being collected to help older adults who many need assistance with housing, food, clothing, transportation, home repairs, medications, and other needs. The NC Association on Aging (NCAOA) is administering the fund and all donations collected will go to help seniors needing assistance. On-line donations can be made at www.ncaoa.org (designate for Disaster Recovery for Seniors) or checks can be made payable to and mailed to NCAOA at PO Box 10341, Raleigh, NC 27605. In the memo line note "Disaster Fund."

Recovery Information and Resources – As recovery from Hurricane Florence continues and as new problems caused by Hurricane Michael become known, it may be helpful to refer back to the e-mail from the Coalition dated September 21 which provided a comprehensive listing of helpful resources. The NC Department of Health and Human Services has provided timely press releases on important recovery issues. To see these, click [here](#). Additional resources that have recently been announced are:

- Back@Home North Carolina program - This is a \$12 million initiative to help families who are in unsafe or unstable living arrangements to transition to safe and sustainable longer-term housing. This program is for individuals and families who are not eligible for Individual Assistance through FEMA or who may be receiving limited FEMA assistance and still need help securing housing or other supportive services. Services include helping finding housing, rent and utility assistance, move-in supplies, and, if needed, help accessing other resources like job training and placement and child care. The program is being administered by the NC Department of Health and Human Services in partnership with other state agencies and non-profits. For information, go to www.backathome.org.
- The NC Department of Transportation has received \$1.7 million to support transportation during hurricane recovery. This funding is available to support any displaced person's transportation needs including shopping, work, and medical appointments. To find out more, reach out to the local transit providers in the 28 counties for which a disaster declaration has been received.
- The Stafford Act has been revised to include a FEMA policy update which makes houses of worship, like other community, volunteer and private, nonprofit organization, eligible to apply for potential funding to help with certain disaster-related costs under FEMA's Public Assistance grant program. Small Business Administration (SBA) loans are a critical part of the application process for potential funding as FEMA may only provide Public Assistance for eligible permanent work costs that a SBA disaster loan will not cover. Questions on this should be directed to public.assistance@ncdps.gov.
- Thread Capital, a new nonprofit subsidiary of the NC Rural Center, is offering Hurricane Florence Rapid Recovery Loans to small businesses and family farms. These rapid recovery loans help small businesses close the gap between when the disaster strikes and when federal loans, insurance payouts, and other disaster relief funds are approved. Eligibility for funding is contingent on the pursuit of other funding sources, including the SBA Physical and Economic Injury Disaster Loans. Application for loans can be made at threadcap.org/Florence.
- Legal aid organizations are quickly mobilizing to help older adults impacted by recent disasters. Several resources are available to legal aid programs looking to help older adults during and after a disaster. A Practice Tip is available which summarizes information about legal services and disaster assistance for older adults.

Upcoming Elections: Although Hurricane Florence resulted in many candidates for office temporarily suspending their campaigns for the November mid-term election, campaigning is back in full swing now. Absentee voting has already begun and early voting starts on October 17 and extends through October 25. This past weekend the Under the Dome section in News and Observer provided a good summary of information about voting in the state including details about how to register, early voting, and absentee voting. To view the summary, click [here](#). The Insider reported on October 9 that the first few weeks of absentee voting have seen a big increase in participation over the same period in 2014 -- particularly among registered Democrats and unaffiliated voters. Catawba College political science professor Michael Bitzer posted the latest data Monday on his Old North State Politics blog, and he found that mail-in ballot requests from registered Democrats is up 189 percent (nearly double) the number requested by this point in the 2014 cycle. Requests from unaffiliated voters are up 210 percent from this point in 2014, and requests from registered Republicans are up 105 percent.

According to data kept by the N.C. State Board of Elections and Ethics Enforcement, there are a total of 7,005,682 **registered voters** in the state. Of those, 2,664,789 are registered Democrats, 2,092,166 are registered Republicans, and 2,211,421 are registered as unaffiliated. There are 522 registered Green Party voters, 352 registered Constitution Party voters and 36,432 registered Libertarians. Mecklenburg County has the most registered voters in the state at 732,510. Tyrrell County has the fewest registered voters, with 2,419 registered voters. (THE INSIDER, 9/14/18)

Election officials have reported that last week two state election offices reported residents receiving phone calls from callers impersonating an organization that provides voter registration assistance. The callers asked the recipients if they wanted to register to vote or request an absentee ballot over the phone, the information said. (MORGANTON NEWS HERALD, 10/02/18)

Investment in Home Delivered Meals: Blue Cross and Blue Shield of North Carolina announced in September a significant investment of \$2.6 million in three nonprofits fighting hunger across the state: Food Bank of Central and Eastern NC, Meals on Wheels of NC, and MANNA Food Bank. The funds will support food assistance programs and increase access to healthy foods in underserved communities across more than 65 of North Carolina's counties. \$1.2 million of the Blue Cross NC funds will be allocated to support day-to-day functions of Meals on Wheels providers across the 40 most economically distressed (Tier 1) counties in the state. Over a 3-year period, the investment of \$30,000 per county (\$10,000 per year) has the potential to deliver almost 200,000 meals across the state. (Blue Cross NC Press Release)

Adult Care Home Star Rating Report: The workgroup charged with studying the North Carolina Star Rating Certificate Program for Adult Care Homes has issued its report. The study was called for as part of bi-partisan legislation (House Bill 657) pertaining to improving adult care home regulations that was passed in the 2017 legislative session. According to an [article](#) published Wednesday by Carolina Public Press which reviewed the report, the report noted that the star-review system is oriented toward measuring compliance with state statutes and regulations and does little to assess the quality of care at facilities, and it needs to be updated to reflect changes in laws and rules. The report also notes that the current system has limitations in communicating useful information to and from consumers. "Rating calculations and procedures are complex and difficult to decipher," the report said. "The rating system does not include consumer input. Facility ratings can be difficult to understand by a consumer if they aren't familiar with the licensing 'jargon' or industry language." The report offered a short set of recommendations for the NC Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS) administrators and lawmakers. These focused on the need for gathering data that the workgroup did not have available. Assessing consumer needs in evaluating adult care homes and the usefulness of the existing star rating system for that purpose needs to be further explored. The workgroup also called on DHHS to further study ways it can improve transparency and timeliness of the release of its data. The workgroup suggested that DHHS examine what sources of additional funding might be needed to address these needs. While DHHS administrators will be able to review the work group's final report and potentially make additional recommendations of their own, DHHS spokesman Cobey Culton said substantive reforms will require legislative action. "Any changes to the program, including elimination or stay of the program, will require action by the General Assembly and/or rulemaking," he said. (Frank Taylor, CAROLINA PUBLIC PRESS, 10/10/18)

Senior Tar Heel Legislature Sets Legislative Priorities: The NC Senior Tar Heel Legislature (STHL) convened in Chapel Hill on October 2-3 for its fall meeting. This meeting marked the 25th anniversary of the STHL and was celebrated with a recognition ceremony on the 2nd. Among those recognized were Dorothy Crawford (the Coalition's first Pioneer Award recipient), delegate from Macon County, and Rachel Deal, delegate from Avery County. Both were charter members of the Senior Legislature and are still active today. Mary Bethel, Executive Director of the Coalition, was the featured speaker for the evening program. She served as staff support for the STHL from its inception in 1993 to 2005. While at the meeting, STHL delegates and alternates selected their legislative priorities for the 2019 legislative session. They are as follows:

- Increase Home and Community Care Block Grant funding by \$7 million in recurring funding.
- Maintain the current General Purpose funding for Senior Centers and increase the funding by a recurring \$350,000.
- Increase funding for Project C.A.R.E. (Caregiver Alternative to Running on Empty) in 2019-2020 by \$500,000, and in future years increase funding by 10 percent annually for expected growth.
- Make available \$7 million in recurring funds to meet the growing need for Adult Protective Services and conduct a comprehensive evaluation/review of these services to ensure this protection is adequate.
- Enact legislation which establishes either a mandatory standardized hours per patient day or minimum staff-to-patient ratio for direct patient care in nursing homes, including enforcement of standards and consequences to ensure quality care in homes in the state, regardless of whether they are for-profit or non-profit organizations.

Coalition's First Board of Directors Elected: As part of the Coalition on Aging's transition to becoming a 501(c)3 organization, Coalition members elected the Coalition's first Board of Directors at the annual meeting and luncheon on the 28th. Those elected to the Board are:

- Tracy Colvard, Vice President of Government Relations and Public Policy with the Association for Home and Hospice Care of North Carolina
- Charmaine Fuller Cooper, Associate State Director for Advocacy with AARP North Carolina
- Martha Fowler, First Vice President of the State Employees Association of North Carolina
- Frances Messer, Executive Director of the NC Assisted Living Association
- Ray Riordan, Vice President of Operations at The Carolinas Center
- Janice Tyler, Director of the Orange County Department on Aging
- Chad Walker, Director of Community and Government Affairs for Transitions LifeCare



New Board Member (from left to right) Tracy Colvard, Charmaine Fuller Cooper, Martha Fowler, Frances Messer, Ray Riordan, and Janice Tyler. Chad Walker was absent.

Complete profiles of Board members are posted on the Coalition's web site and can be viewed by clicking [here](#).

Coalition's Executive Committee Established: The new by-laws for the Coalition stipulate that the Executive Committee of the Coalition is to be comprised of the Chair, the Chair-Elect, the Immediate Past Chair, the Secretary, the Treasurer, and the Executive Director who shall be ex-officio with voice but without vote. At the first meeting of the Board of Directors which was held following the Coalition's annual meeting/luncheon on September 28, Tracy Colvard was elected by the Board as the Chair, Charmaine Fuller Copper was elected as Chair-Elect, and Chad Walker was elected to the combined position of Secretary/Treasurer. The Board also voted to name Mary Bethel, Coalition President for the past three years, to the newly created position of Executive Director. To complete the Executive Committee composition, the Board selected Bill Lamb, President of the Coalition from 2012 to 2015 to fil the Immediate Past Chair slot since Mary Bethel is now in the Executive Director position.

Developing Coalition's Legislative Agenda: Time is of essence in developing the Coalition's legislative agenda for the next legislative session. On October 5, Tracy Colvard, the new Board Chair for the Coalition, shared information in an e-mail to members about the process and schedule for the identification of legislative priorities. The process will begin by having Leslie Jones, Planner with the NC Division of Aging and Adult Services, share with Coalition members at the October 26 Coalition meeting the top issues/needs identified from the listening sessions and from other input received for the development of the State Aging Services Plan for 2019-2013. The meeting will take place at 10:00 a.m. in Room 104 of the Brown Building on the Dix campus (usual meeting place). As shared in the e-mail, Coalition members will also have the opportunity to submit issues for consideration for the legislative agenda. A Policy Committee will be established to help direct efforts to develop a draft agenda prior to the Coalitions December 7 meeting which will be shared with members. At the December meeting, the draft agenda will be discussed and the legislative agenda for the biennium will be finalized.

Other News and Updates

The **Lifespan Respite Program is now accepting new applications** from referring agents. This is an application-based program that reimburses eligible family caregivers who are caring for

individuals of any age for up to \$500 in respite care services in a calendar year. Funding is limited, and applications are accepted only when funds are available. Applicants must be referred to the program by a local professional organization. The professional organization (referring agency) will complete the online application on behalf of the family caregiver. To find out more about the program and to make an application, click [here](#).

State Treasurer Dale Folwell has announced that he wants to **change how health-care providers are reimbursed by the State Health Plan** in an initiative that could save members up to \$60 million initially. He is proposing that the Plan will shift on Jan. 1, 2020, from a commercial-based payment model to a reference-based government pricing model based on a percentage of Medicare rates. Medicare provides a standard reimbursement measurement "that is transparent and adjusts for provider differences," Folwell said. The proposal is expected to draw pushback from health care providers, such as hospitals and the N.C. Healthcare Association, and from Blue Cross Blue Shield N.C., which is the third-party administrator of the Plan. The Plan is North Carolina's largest purchaser of medical and pharmaceutical services at \$3.2 billion in 2017. It represents more than 720,000 teachers, state employees, current and former lawmakers, state university and community college personnel and their dependents, and non-Medicare retirees and their dependents. (Insider 10/8/18)

At least two **flu-related deaths** have been reported in North Carolina in the past several weeks. State health officials are urging the public to get vaccinated before the flu season becomes serious.

The parent company of Davis Regional Medical Center and Lake Norman Regional Medical Center will pay \$260 million to settle criminal and civil lawsuits that alleged the company paid **kickbacks to doctors who ordered unnecessary tests and admitted patients** who did not need the care. Health Management Associates planned to defraud the federal government by billing insurance programs like Medicare and Medicaid for inpatient services that were unnecessary, the U.S. Department of Justice claimed. HMA, based in Florida, was bought by Community Health Systems of Tennessee in 2014. (Ryan Revock, THE STATESVILLE RECORD & LANDMARK, 9/27/18)

Twenty-nine states have laws requiring companies to **give employees time off to vote**, according to the Voter Participation Center, a national organization focused on increasing voting among unmarried women, people of color, and people in their 20s and 30s. North Carolina is not one of them. Several House Democrats filed a bill in 2001 to require companies to give workers time off to vote when work schedules conflicted with voting hours. That bill never got a committee hearing. At the same time, the legislature was expanding the early voting schedule to include more days and Saturday hours. (Lynn Bonner, THE NEWS & OBSERVER, 9/26/18)

Election advocacy, civil rights and other organizations often critical of North Carolina Republican policies have formed campaigns to oppose all six constitutional referendums on the November ballot, calling the amendments misleading power grabs that would hurt the public and justice. The North Carolina NAACP, Democracy North Carolina, ACLU of North Carolina and North Carolina Voters for Clean Elections have unveiled their **"By The People" campaign**, which includes community events, grassroots organizing and paid advertising. A [summary](#) of

the six amendments compiled by the NC Center for Nonprofits has been shared previously with Coalition members. (Gary D. Robertson, THE ASSOCIATED PRESS, 9/24/18)

The effort by all five living former governors to fight two constitutional amendments now has a name, a website and a political action committee. The **Five Governors Committee** was created last month and is raising money for ads opposing the two amendments that would limit the power of the governor, stripping the executive branch of its control over the elections and ethics board and appointments to judicial vacancies. The Committee has hired two prominent campaign consultants: Paul Shumaker, who's worked on countless Republican campaigns, and longtime Democratic consultant Tim McKay -- whose resume includes managing Secretary of State Elaine Marshall's 2002 U.S. Senate campaign. Roger Knight, an attorney who frequently represents Republicans, is helping with election law compliance, and his wife, Kathy Knight, is the committee's treasurer. The group's website, thefivegovernors.com, features the slogan "united to defend the North Carolina Constitution." (Insider 10/5/18)

A three-judge panel had some sharp words for lawyers representing the North Carolina General Assembly in the **gerrymandering lawsuit** against the state's current congressional map. The judges asserted in their September 12 order allowing a temporary stay that attorneys for the Republican-led legislature had made "baseless ... attacks against the motives and integrity of this court" in recent legal filings. Judge James Wynn Jr., of the Fourth U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals, and U.S. District Judges Earl Britt and William Osteen Jr., delivered the reprimand in an order responding to the Republican legislators' pending U.S. Supreme Court appeal. It delayed further action on the object of that appeal -- the local panel's Aug. 27 order that put North Carolina's current congressional map in limbo. This decision assures the Nov. 6 general election will go ahead as scheduled in all of North Carolina's 13 races for seats in the U.S. House of Representatives. The judges set stipulations that required Republican lawmakers to request a Supreme Court appeal by Oct. 1 and Republican legislative defendants have formally petitioned the U.S. Supreme Court to hear their appeal of this ruling. If justices accept the case, they would likely rule fully by next summer. (Taft Wireback, THE GREENSBORO NEWS & RECORD, 9/13/18 and 10/4/18)

The federal Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS) recently spent several years crafting a **new approach to checking on staffing at nursing homes**. Instead of relying on the homes to self-report staffing numbers, CMS checked through years of paycheck records, revealing, in the cases of hundreds of nursing homes nationally, much lower levels of staffing than those seen under the former method. In the most recent CMS surveys, 77 facilities, or 18 percent of North Carolina's 422 homes, earned the lowest slot in the federal five-star rating on staffing. Thirty-eight were downgraded to that level under the new method of reporting; many of those downgraded didn't report data at all. Nursing homes receive an overall rating from CMS, based on their ratings in specific categories such as staffing. About 42 percent of North Carolina homes received one or two stars. (Thomas Goldsmith, NC HEALTH NEWS, 9/10/18)

The **NC Rural Center is hosting a series of Zero Barriers Regional Policy Roundtables** this fall. These day-long sessions will feature in-depth discussions about each of the Center's three top policy issues: broadband, health, and small business development. Suggestions of policies that may make a difference will be presented, followed by discussion on what is good, what is

bad, and what is missing. This feedback will shape specific policy recommendations for the NC General Assembly to consider when it convenes for the 2019 session. Roundtables still to come are October 17 in Columbia, October 22 in Henderson, October 23 in Dobson, and October 24 in Troy. Each event will run from 9:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. and breakfast and lunch will be provided. Registration is free but required. For more information, click [here](#).

The **sale of Wilson County's public home health agency** was finalized over Labor Day weekend, and now the agency has a new name and a new location. LHC Group and LifePoint Health will share ownership as the home health provider, serving patients and families in Wilson County and the surrounding region. The deal went into effect Sept. 1. In early August, county commissioners unanimously approved the contract to sell the county's nearly 50-year-old home health agency for \$2 million. LHC Group and LifePoint Health formed their partnership in January 2017. Together, they currently operate 31 home health and 14 hospice locations in 10 states as part of the joint venture partnership, according to company officials. (Olivia Neeley, THE WILSON TIMES, 9/05/18)

Operation Medicine Drop (OMD) is a partnership of many agencies and the NC Department of Insurance which provides safe disposal of medications without endangering the environment and eliminating the risk of these drugs getting into the hands of children or others from medicine cabinets of family and friends. The first OMD takeback event was held in 2010 and since that time, OMD has collected nearly 130 million pills, supported over 3300 events, and houses more than 250 drop box locations. If interested in holding a takeback event in your community, click [here](#) for information. If you have questions or need additional information, contact Lisa Blackmon at the NC Department of Insurance at (919) 647-0080 or e-mail her at lisa.blackmon@ncdoi.gov.

The Health Access Project of the NC Justice Center has produced a series of **factsheets on how Medicaid expansion helps our communities and state**. Go [here](#) to read the latest factsheets. They cover the importance of Medicaid expansion for [rural communities](#), [communities of color](#), and [people who use substances](#).

Medicare Advantage customers with Blue Cross and Blue Shield of N.C. will pay on average about 30 percent less in premium costs for 2019 than they did in 2018. The rate reduction could range between \$200 to \$675 next year. The insurer currently covers more than 72,000 Medicare Advantage enrollees statewide. Blue Cross said several factors led to the rate reduction, including improved efforts to better manage care, reduced medical expenses and improved health outcomes for Medicare Advantage customers. The insurer also said Medicare Advantage enrollees for 2019 will receive a free membership to an exercise center. The plans also cover hearing exams and hearing aids. (Richard Craver, WINSTON-SALEM JOURNAL, 10/03/18) Insider 10/4/18

Due to the impact of Hurricane Florence in the state, the **NC Division of Aging and Adult Services is extending the deadline for receipt of nominations for the four Awards they present** annually to November 1. The Awards recognize individuals, organizations, programs and communities that have made significant contributions in support of the Division's efforts to enhance resources, services and opportunities for our state's older citizens. To find out more

about the Awards, contact Mary Edwards at the NC Division of Aging and Adult Services at (919) 855-3437 or Mary.Edwards@dhhs.nc.gov.

On September 28, the **President signed an Appropriations “minibus” funding bill** which included the Department of Defense, Labor, Health and Human Services and Education Appropriations bills for fiscal year 2019, as well as a short-term Continuing Resolution to temporarily fund remaining government programs until December 7, 2018. With the completion of this package, Congress approved 75% of all annual discretionary funding prior to the end of the fiscal year on September 30 – a critical step in returning to the regular federal funding process, and an achievement that has not occurred in over two decades. There were no cuts in funding for aging services. Nutrition services even received a slight increase and there was a \$5 million increase for Aging Network Support funds for the new Care Corps Grants. There is also an increase in the funding for the National Family Caregiver Support Program which includes \$300,000 each to begin implementation of the RAISE Family Caregiver Act and the Grandparents Raising Grandchildren Act. (House Committee on Appropriations Press Release, 9/28/18)

On September 17, CMS announced a [proposed rule](#) to **relieve burden on health care providers by removing unnecessary, obsolete, or excessively burdensome Medicare compliance requirements for health care facilities**. Collectively, these updates should save health care providers an estimated \$1.12 billion annually. Taking into account policies across rules finalized in 2017 and 2018, as well as this and other proposed rules, savings are estimated at \$5.2 billion. CMS developed the proposed rule in response to President Trump’s charge to federal agencies to “cut the red tape” and reduce burdensome regulations. In addition, feedback from Requests for Information the agency issued seeking stakeholder input on regulatory burdens helped inform this proposed rule. (Medicare Learning Network Connects, 9/20/18)

Congress has not yet passed the **2018 Farm Bill**. The Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) makes up more than 80 percent of the Bill, and major differences in the way the House and Senate attempt to reform the program has stalled passage and put critical agricultural programs in danger of lapsing. The major disagreement stopping the House and Senate from finishing the bill stems from a work requirement for food stamp recipients. See this [story](#) in the Washington Examiner for more details.

Diabetes self-management training (DSMT) provides people with diabetes the skills to improve their quality of life, but not many people access the program. Sens. Susan Collins (R-ME) and Jeanne Shaheen (D-NH) are looking to change that. They have introduced **legislation (S. 3366) to remove barriers to DSMT for Medicare beneficiaries**. The bill is a companion to a House bill introduced by Reps. Tom Reed (R-NY) and Diana DeGette (D-CO). (NCOA Week, 8/28/18)

ACL's Administration on Aging is announcing \$1.5 million in funding over three years to help older Americans age in place by promoting access to home modifications as well as financial literacy for caregivers. ACL is funding a \$250,000 per year cooperative agreement with the [University of Southern California's Leonard Davis School of Gerontology](#) to address barriers to home modification access and service delivery. (ACL News and Events, 10/2/18)

The **2018 HCBS Conference materials** have been published on the National Association of State United for Aging and Disabilities' (NASUAD's) website. Every intensive and session is listed, along with a link to a PDF of all slides and/or handouts from that session. [Click here](#) to access the 2018 Conference Materials.

The CDC has published new estimates of the **number of Americans with Alzheimer's Disease** online in *Alzheimer's & Dementia: The Journal of the Alzheimer's Association*. This is the first study to forecast by race and ethnicity and reveals disparities along both lines. It is predicted that by 2060, the burden from Alzheimer's disease and related dementias (ADRD) will double. [Click here](#) to read the full study.

The National Center on Elder Abuse (NCEA) has published three **New #LGBT Elder Justice Fact Sheets** created in collaboration with SAGE USA. [LGBT Older People Built the LGBT Community](#) provides steps LGBT organizations and professionals can take in support of LGBT older people. [Paying it Back: Promoting Justice for LGBT Communities of All Ages](#) provides information and steps to promote justice and prevent and address social isolation and LGBT specific elder abuse. Finally, [LGBT Older People: Our Right to a Peaceful Life](#) provides steps LGBT older people can take to feel empowered and advocate for themselves.

CMS has recently released the **technical specifications for eight quality measures** that states can consider when **using a Managed Long-term Services and Supports (MLTSS) delivery system**. In the past, states have used quality measures for MLTSS programs that are unique to their state. This new measure set gives states the ability to use some common measures. [Click here](#) to read the technical specifications.

Across the States 2018 is a reference book which provides data and analysis on long term care services and supports (LTSS) in each state. The report compiles comparable state-level and national data from a large number of studies and data sources. Topics covered include: age demographics and projections; living arrangements, income, and poverty; disability rates; costs of care; private long-term care insurance; Medicaid long-term services and supports (LTSS); family caregivers; home and community-based services (HCBS); and nursing facilities. Additionally, each state has its own four-page document with state specific data and rankings. This publication is intended to be used as a tool to help policy makers, administrators, and stakeholders make informed decisions about LTSS public policies and programs. This is the 10th edition of AARP's flagship publication *Across the States*. [Click here](#) to read more.

Managing paid work and family caregiving can be stressful for workers when their needs are not being met by existing workplace policies. Read the new paper by AARP Public Policy Institute's Lynn Friss Feinberg to learn what is known about **Paid Family Leave and Paid Sick Days laws** in early-adopter states. As of June 2018, 6 states and the District of Columbia have paid family leave programs. Additionally, 10 states and the District of Columbia have paid sick days laws that cover family caregivers of ill family members. Research shows the value of these workplace leave policies for workers, families, employers, and the economy as a whole. [Click here](#) to read the paper.

There are changes in **Medicare Open Enrollment notifications in 2018**. The [Medicare's Open Enrollment Period \(OEP\)](#) started October 15th and ends December 7th. This is the time of year

where Medicare recipients can [re-evaluate](#) their coverage to make sure they are still enrolled in the best plan for their needs. With the changes occurring this year, it is important to stay abreast of all the notices provided. To read more about the notifications changes, click [here](#). (NCOA Week, 10/2/18)

Every year, the [National Institute of Senior Centers](#) (NISC) honors outstanding efforts made by senior centers across the nation to offer innovative, creative, and replicable programs for older adults with **NISC Programs of Excellence Awards**. In 2018, NISC is offering \$100 awards for winners of each category, and a \$300 award for the top social isolation prevention campaign. The \$300 award will rotate through different categories over the next few years. Apply for the 2018 **general awards here**, and for the **social isolation campaign award here**. Applications are due Nov. 16. (NCOA Week, 10/9/18)

Webinar Opportunity: **Falls and Brain Injuries Among Older Adults, Part 1: Connection, Prevention, and Resources** - This online training is part one in a two-part collaborative series with the National Council on Aging and the [National Association of State Head Injury Administrators](#) (NASHA) exploring the connection between falls and traumatic brain injuries (TBI) in older adults. Learn about risk factors for falls and TBI, fall and brain injury detection assessments, and prevention and education resources. Part one will also include falls and TBI 101, as well as strategies for service providers working with older adults and with individuals with TBI. Oct. 19 @ 12 p.m. To register, click [here](#). (NCOA Week, 10/9/18)

Webinar Opportunity: **Home Safety & Modification Webinar, Part 1: Creating Better Homes for Aging in Place** - Join the National Council on Aging and the University of Southern California Leonard Davis School of Gerontology for this two-part webinar series about the role of home safety and home modification in preventing falls among older adults. Presenters will share the fundamentals of home safety and modification, funding sources, and practical resources to keep older adults safe in their homes. This webinar is intended for professionals in aging, housing, disability, and health care sectors. Nov. 1 @ 2 p.m. To register, click [here](#). (NCOA Week, 10/9/18)

The Institute for Healthcare Improvement and the Democracy Collaborative is offering a **series of 6 free calls on Portfolio 4 (Communities of Solution)**, one of the four portfolios of health described in the Pathways to Population Health (P2PH) framework. This series, which begins on October 16 from 2:00 to 3:00 p.m., dives into actionable steps health care organizations can take toward becoming an “Anchor Institution.” Learn more at www.pathways2pophealth.org.

The U.S. Department of Transportation’s Federal Transit Administration (FTA) has announced the availability of \$6.3 million in **competitive grant funds for transit coordination projects that improve access to healthcare**. [View Notice of Funding Opportunity \(Federal Register\)](#). Applications due: November 13, 2018.

Among patients ages 65 years and older, the rate of opioid-related hospitalizations increased 34 percent while the rate of non-opioid-related hospitalizations decreased 17 percent between 2010 and 2015. (Source: AHRQ, Healthcare Cost and Utilization Project Statistical

Brief #244: **Opioid-Related Inpatient Stays and Emergency Department Visits Among Patients Aged 65 Years and Older, 2010 and 2015.**)

Learn more about **4 vaccines for Seniors** covered by Medicare that help prevent illness in the winter and beyond – influenza vaccine, shingles vaccine, pneumococcal vaccine, and hepatitis B vaccine – by clicking [here](#). (NCOA Week, 10/2/18)

In a large **clinical trial to determine the risks and benefits of daily low-dose aspirin in healthy older adults** without previous cardiovascular events, aspirin did not prolong healthy, independent living (life free of dementia or persistent physical disability). Risk of dying from a range of causes, including cancer and heart disease, varied and will require further analysis and additional follow-up of study participants. These initial findings from the ASPirin in Reducing Events in the Elderly (ASPREE) trial, partially supported by the National Institutes of Health, were published online on September 16, 2018 in three papers in The New England Journal of Medicine. (National Institutes of Health News Release, 9/16/18)

The **deadline for renewing the Farm Bill passed on September 30**. Many of the programs important in the life of older adults, like SNAP and most nutrition services, will continue uninterrupted for now. Negotiations to reach a compromise between the House and Senate bills continue, but with the House now out of session until Nov. 13, the 39 programs with authorizations that did expire will have to wait until the post-election lame duck session to be renewed or temporarily extended. To read more about this, click [here](#). (NCOA Week, 10/2/18)

The **2020 Republican National Convention** will be held Aug. 24-27 in Charlotte. This gives organizers less than two years to raise \$70 million for the event and prepare the city for tens of thousands of visitors. The convention will take place at the Spectrum Center in uptown Charlotte. Other events tied to the convention are expected to be held throughout the region, possibly at venues such as the Charlotte Motor Speedway.

The **2020 Democratic National Convention** is scheduled for July 13-16. The DNC has narrowed its choices for host city to Miami Beach, Milwaukee or Houston, according to national media reports.

Veterans Administration (VA) Secretary Robert Wilkie received an update on hurricane recovery efforts on October 1, during a **tour of VA facilities** impacted by Florence in Fayetteville and Wilmington. Afterward, the Fayetteville native, returning to his hometown for the first time post-hurricane, praised the efforts of local leaders and VA staff. (Drew Brooks, THE FAYETTEVILLE OBSERVER)

Check out this [blog post](#) of **5 Tips for Caregivers at the Doctor** from My Medicare Matters.

Home Safety Checklist for Alzheimer's Disease – This is a room-by-room checklist that highlights potential hazards in the home and suggests changes to help keep a person with Alzheimer's disease safe. Examples include covering unused electrical outlets with childproof plugs, placing light switches at the top and the bottom of stairs, and keeping all medications (prescription and over-the-counter) locked. The National Institute on Aging

suggests re-evaluating home safety periodically as behavior and abilities change. [Click here](#) to read more.

On October 10, the Trump administration published its [proposed changes](#) to the “**public charge**” **rule**, which would penalize immigrants seeking permanent status for using certain public benefits. According to the Department of Homeland Security (DHS) "public charge" applies only to those entering the country with a visa or hoping to acquire a green card. Numerous news outlets are reporting that due to the proposed rule, many legal immigrants are fearful to seek any public benefits. [A report](#) from the Fiscal Policy Institute estimates that 24 million people will feel a "[chilling effect](#)," meaning they will be too frightened to accept benefits—even if they are not directly impacted by the rule. The publishing of the rule in the federal register will kick off a 60-day public comment period. It is anticipated that many health and human service advocacy groups will be asking DHS to back away from the proposed changes as there is concern about the impact of the rule on the health and well-being of legal older adult immigrants who are aging and their families, as well as the impact on the 1 in 4 direct care workers who are immigrants caring for older adults and people with disabilities. Read more on this issue [here](#).

The FAA Reauthorization Act of 2018 was signed into law by President Trump on October 5. The bill not only extends funding for the federal agency, but also includes several efforts to **protect the rights of air travelers with disabilities**. Specific initiatives include enhanced disability training for TSA officers and the creation of a committee to advise in the development of a bill of rights for airline passengers with disabilities. The bill also includes plans to review best practices and conduct studies on how to improve the overall travel experience for passengers with disabilities. [Click here](#) to read the full bill.

People in the News

Rep. Josh Dobson (R McDowell) has been recognized by the Southeastern Association of Aging Agencies on Aging for his legislative leadership in addressing issues impacting older adults. He serves as co-chair of the House Health Committee and the Health and Human Services Appropriations Committee. His is also co-chair of the Joint Legislative Oversight Committee on Health and Human Services and is co-chair of the Aging Subcommittee of the Oversight Committee.

Hugh Tilson Jr. has been named director of the North Carolina Health Education Centers (NC AHEC), according to a news release. Kevin FitzGerald has served in the role on an interim basis since May 2018. Over the course of more than 20 years, Tilson served in roles of increasing responsibility at the North Carolina Hospital Association. He first joined the organization in 1996 as director of legal and regulatory affairs, eventually becoming the group's executive vice president and chief operating officer. In addition, he spent a year as interim president of the organization. Most recently, Tilson has operated Tilson Solutions, offering strategic planning, public affairs, and other consulting services to a range of clients. He has also worked with Cansler Collaborative Resources as a consultant. (NEWS RELEASE, 9/27/18)

On September 21, Gov. Roy Cooper appointed **John Adcock** to finish the term of Republican Rep. Linda Hunt Williams, R-Wake, who resigned last month when her husband took a job in Louisiana. Adcock is a candidate in the November election for the seat, House District 37. He is an attorney and business owner from Fuquay-Varina and a former candidate for Wake County commissioner.

Leah Burns is the new Director of Government Relations for the North Carolina Healthcare Association. Prior to this position she was the Deputy Chief of Staff for House Speaker Tim Moore. She also worked previously in the administration of Gov. Pat McCrory as a legislative liaison and policy assistant.

Samuel Gunter, Interim Executive Director of the NC Housing Coalition, has been named Executive Director of the Coalition. He worked previously as the Director of Policy and Advocacy for the Coalition.

Former state **Rep. Richard Morgan** (R Moore County), who served 16 years in the General Assembly died on October 10 at Duke University Medical Center. He was 66 years old. He served two years as Co-Speaker of the NC House of Representatives from 2003-2005.

Former state Rep. Marie Colton died on September 25 at an Asheville retirement community at age 95 after a period of declining health. Colton was a Democrat elected to the state House in 1978 and served there for 16 years. In 1991, she became the first woman elected speaker pro tempore -- the chamber's No. 2-ranked official. While in the General Assembly, she pushed bills to decrease corporal punishment in schools, toughen billboard restrictions and require public art in state buildings. (THE ASSOCIATED PRESS, 9/25/18)

The **N.C. Association of County Commissioners has announced the members of its 2018-2019 Board of Directors**. The Board of Directors, led by its Executive Committee, makes policy decisions to guide the NCACC and its staff through the year. The Board's Executive Committee consists of five executive officers including Larry Phillips, NCACC President and Surry County Commissioner, Kevin Austin, president-elect and Yadkin County Commissioner, Ronnie Smith, first vice president and Martin County Commissioner, and Frank Williams, second vice president and Brunswick County Commissioner. The executive officers are selected by delegates from the 100 counties during NCACC's annual conference, which convenes each August. In addition to the five executive officers, the NCACC Board of Directors includes 18 district directors who serve for a two-year term. District directors are chosen by commissioners from their respective district during a caucus, which occurs at NCACC's annual conference. (NEWS RELEASE, 9/19/18)

The **State Employees Association of North Carolina, or SEANC, elected its officers for 2018-2020** in September in Greensboro. The new officers who will serve two-year terms are: President: James "Jimmy" Davis of Forest City (District 4), a retired probation parole officer with 29.5 years of state service. He served as first vice president prior to the election; First vice president: **Martha Fowler** of Mebane, who is retired from state government after 33 years and is currently Insurance Board of Trustees chairwoman (she is on the Coalition's Board of Directors); Second vice president: Kirk Montgomery of Burlington, the LIMS manager at the State Lab of

Public Health and the current SEANC treasurer; General Treasurer: Chevella Thomas of Durham, a retired accountant with N.C. Central University's Division of Administration and Finance and the current SEANC second vice president; and Statewide EMPAC Chairman: Mark Dearmon of Raleigh, who is retired from N.C. State University Communications. Outgoing President Stanley Drewery of Grifton will continue to serve on SEANC's Executive Committee as the Immediate Past President. (NEWS RELEASE, 9/11/18)

The Administration for Community Living (ACL) has announced that **Julie Hocker** is the new Commissioner of the Administration on Disabilities. Hocker joins ACL from the Charles Koch Foundation.

Upcoming Meetings/Events Through November and Meetings/Events New (In Bold) to the Calendar

NC Senior Games State Finals Events Cancelled in September Due to Hurricane Florence Have Been Rescheduled. Click [here](#) to get the revised schedule.

October is Residents Rights Month. The theme for this year's Residents' Rights Month is "[Speak Up: Know Your Rights and How to Use Them.](#)"

October is Talk About Your Medicines Month.

October is National Disability Employment Awareness Month.

October 15-16, 2018 – Association for Home and Hospice Care of North Carolina 2018 Leadership Conference - Holiday Inn Resort, Wrightsville Beach, NC

October 16, 2018 – (Cancelled Due to Hurricane Florence) 2018 Foundation Fair for Nonprofits Offered by the North Carolina Center for Nonprofits, the NC Network of Grantmakers and QENO scheduled for the Warwick Center at UNC Wilmington.

October 17-19, 2018 – (Cancelled Due to Hurricane Florence) 2018 Social Services Institute scheduled for Metro Convention Center in Hickory.

October 18, 2018 - Caring Conversations on Advance Directives Workshop - 6:00 - 7:30 p.m. at Capitol Financial Solutions in Raleigh. Register at caringconversations.eventbrite.com.

October 20, 2018 - Triangle Festival of Hope/26th Annual Walk to DE-feet Dementia - Sponsored by Dementia Alliance of North Carolina - 8:30 a.m. to 2:00 p.m. at Knightdale Station Park, Knightdale, NC

October 20, 2018 - Evening with Friends (of Residents in Long Term Care) - with Casablanca Orchestra - Glenaire Retirement Community Ballroom, 4000 Glenaire Circle, Cary, NC. Go to www.brownpapertickets.com/event/3591762 for tickets. Call 919-782-1530 for information.

October 22-24, 2018 - 2018 Consumer Voice Conference - at Crowne Plaza Old Town Alexandria, Alexandria, Virginia

October 24-25, 2018 - NC Affordable Housing Conference - Raleigh Convention Center, Raleigh. For information [click here](#).

October 26, 2018 - NC Coalition on Aging Monthly Meeting - Brown Building on Dix campus (801 Biggs Drive) at 10:00 a.m.

October 30, 2018 – 10th Annual Caregiver Summit - 2018 at McKimmon Conference Center (1101 Gorman St.) in Raleigh from 8:00 am to 3:30 pm - Info. & Registration [Click Here](#).

November 1 and 2, 2018 (Rescheduled Dates) – LeadingAge NC’s Caregiver Support Seminars - November 1 at Arbor Acres in Winston Salem and November 2 at Carol Woods in Chapel Hill (Topics: The Timeline of Dementia: Recognizing Changes and Adapting Support in Every Stage, Life Lessons from Near Death Experiences, and Ethics and You. For details and registration contact Leslie at leslie.roseboro@leadingage.org.

November 7, 2018 - Chatham County Senior Education Conference - Chatham County Agriculture and Conference Center from 8:30 a.m. to 3:00 p.m.

November 7, 2018 and 1st Wednesday of Each Month (Except January) of 2019 – Webinar Series: Moving Mountains, SNF Provider Training, Tools and Insight to Conquer 2019 Industry Changes . Contact Leslie at LeadingAge NC at leslie.roseboro@leadingage.org.

November 12-14, 2018 - AARP Livable Communities National Conference. Learn more at AARP.org/Livable2018.

November 14, 2018 – 2018 Conference: Navigating the Future by Planning for the Unexpected (Discover Best Practices, Updates Regarding End of Life Issues, and Explore the National POLST Care Continuum Toolkit and the MOST Form): Offered Jointly by The Carolinas Center and NC Partnership for Compassionate Care at Novant Health, Forsyth Medical Center in Winston Salem from 9:00 a.m. to 3:15 p.m.

November 14-18, 2018 - Gerontological Society of America Annual Scientific Meeting in Boston, Massachusetts

November 15, 2018 - Caring Conversations on Caring for a Loved One with Alzheimer's/Dementia - 7:30 p.m. at Capitol Financial Solutions in Raleigh. Register at caringconversations.eventbrite.com.

November 27, 2018 - Giving Tuesday - one-day annual movement focused on charitable giving.

November 27-28, 2018 (Rescheduled Date) – NC Conference for NC’s Nonprofits (Power Play: Disruption for Good) at Sheraton Imperial Hotel at Research Triangle Park.

November 27-29, 2018 (**Rescheduled Date**) – NC Senior Living Association 57th Convention and Trade Show at Sheraton Greensboro Hotel at Four Seasons/ Joseph S. Koury Convention Center, Greensboro.

December 3-4, 2018 – Remarkable Integration: Human Services and Health Care Partnerships Conference offered by Northwest AHEC and Piedmont Regional Council AAA at Greensboro Coliseum Complex in Greensboro (Caregiver Expo offered co-currently).

December 12, 2018 (**Reschedule Date**) - Caregiver Summit at Campbell University, Leon Levine Hall of Medical Sciences (4350 U.S. 421 S) in Lillington from 8:00 am to 3:30 pm - Info. & Registration [Click Here](#).

April 15-18, 2019 – 2019 ASA Aging in America Conference in New Orleans, Louisiana.

April 30-May 2, 2019 – 2019 National Lifespan Respite Conference: Buffalo, NY at the Adams Mark Hotel.

May 6-9, 2018 – 2019 LeadingAge North Carolina Annual Conference in Myrtle Beach, SC. Proposals to be a Presenter Due November 30. Submit online by [clicking here](#).

May 21-22, 2019 – 2019 Conference on Ending Homelessness in North Carolina.

June 17-20, 2019 – National Council on Aging Age+Action Conference (national conference focused on ensuring every person's right to age with their best possible health and economic security) – Renaissance Downtown Hotel, Washington, DC. [Proposals](#) due by November 30, 2018.

Check out the [Calendar](#) on the Coalition's Website for additional activities and events.

Articles/News Stories/Resources

- US Commission on Civil Rights: [An Assessment of Minority Voting Rights Access Across the Country](#)
- Associated Press: [As Unemployment Falls, Employers Are Looking to Migrants to Fill Jobs](#)
- Washington Post: [Medicare for All Comes with Strings and Hard Choices Attached](#) (commentary)
- Associated Press: [Data Show Big Let-Up in ACA Premiums](#)
- San Diego Union-Tribune: [Even In Tight Labor Market, Older Workers Have Trouble](#)
- Parade: [How America Lives: Creative Housing Options for Boomers, Veterans, Millennials and More](#)
- Washington Post: [Design for Living - Modifications Can Remove Obstacles to Aging in Place](#)

North Carolina Related

- NC Child: [What's the right solution for health care in rural North Carolina?](#)
- NC Budget and Tax Center: [A Culture of Health for Everyone](#)
- NC Policy Watch: [Growth in NC's Senior Population Bolsters Push for Paid Family Leave](#)
- News and Observer: [Resolution Reached on November Ballot in NC](#)
- Governing: [A Red State Raises Its Workers' Minimum Wage to \\$15](#)
- News and Observer: [Why Doesn't North Carolina's Opioid Action Plan Consider Medicaid Expansion?](#) (op ed)
- News and Observer: [We Don't Need to Cut State Employee Benefits](#)
- News and Observer: [Passing a NC Voter ID Amendment Would Create a 21st Century Poll Tax](#) (op ed)

NC Health News: (click on story to open)

Special thanks is extended to Rose Hoban and the staff at NC Health News for the excellent stories pertaining to Hurricane Florence. Their coverage put a face on the storm and the many aspects of a disaster of this magnitude.

- **Medicare Advantage to Pay For Community-Based Help**
- **More choice for Medicare Advantage subscribers, or more problems?**
- **Nearly Half of Tar Heels Killed by Hurricane Florence Were 70 or Older**
- **At 103, George Alsberg is one of Hurricane Florence's oldest evacuees**
- **Tough choices on evacuating assisted living residents in disasters**
- **When hurricanes threaten, older people need special assistance**
- **Governor Proposes Mental Health, Housing Funds in Florence Relief Budget**
- **Faith, Neighbors, Governments Team to Aid Recovery of Florence Survivors**
- **Residents of counties hit by Florence can get extra help with food**
- **Florence Adds to Woes of Struggling Water and Sewer Systems**
- **After Florence, medical relief team serves migrant farmworkers**
- **Medical and other supplies fly their way to Florence flooded areas**
- **Pay attention to mental health after Florence**
- **Inside an emergency medical hurricane shelter**
- **Displaced by Florence, floating caskets again trouble Goldsboro cemetery**
- **Keeping safe after Florence**
- **Hurricane Florence highlights need for donors, consumers to be wary**
- **State stands up specialized medical shelters for sicker evacuees**
- **Mobile hospital headed to Florence-affected areas to provide support**
- **Eastern hospitals not taking any chances with Florence**
- **Telephone becomes lifeline for mental health clients during Florence**
- **Florence adds to stress for workers in a tough industry**
- **Florence cuts off access to Wilmington, disrupting water supplies in coastal town**

- **Got meds? Refill necessary prescriptions before Florence arrives**
- **Florence: nasty water, mounting damage**
- **Crews scramble to save imperiled water line near Wilmington**
- **DHHS Takes New Approach to Storm Response**
- **Studying bacteria in Florence's wake**
- **What Newly Reported Stats on Understaffing at NC Nursing Homes Means to Residents**
- **Violence Against Emergency Room Staffers Seen as Increasing**
- **Patrick Kennedy – Fighting for Mental Health Parity**
- **Rural hospital has patients headed to Walmart for their care**
- **Mission and HCA agree to terms of potential sale**
- **Dogwood Health Trust will face challenges serving diverse western N.C. counties**
- **Private equity merger includes 8 NC Rural hospitals, flying under the radar**
- **Tick-borne meat allergy has risen in North Carolina**

NPR Aging Series:

For view any of these stories, go to <https://www.npr.org/sections/aging/> and click on the story.

- **Ticket To Ride: Pot Sellers Put Seniors On The Canna-Bus**
- **To Manage Dementia Well, Start With The Caregivers**
- **More Older Americans Are Turning To Marijuana**
- **Infectious Theory Of Alzheimer's Disease Draws Fresh Interest**
- **Jason Rosenthal: What Does the Loss Of A Loved One Teach Us About Life?**
- **Michelle Knox: Can Talking About Death Take Fear And Stress Out Of The Inevitable?**
- **Lux Narayan: What Do Obituaries Teach Us About Lives Well-Lived?**
- **Emily Levine: How Do We Make Peace With Death When It's Imminent?**
- **Caitlin Doughty: What's Wrong With The Way We Bury The Dead?**
- **For Older Voters, Getting The Right ID Can Be Especially Tough**
- **'Gross Anatomy' Turns Humor On Taboos About The Female Body**
- **What Makes A Human Brain Unique? A Newly Discovered Neuron May Be A Clue**
- **So Far, More Heat Waves Do Not Mean More Heat Deaths**

Dates for 2018 Coalition Meetings: Mark your calendar for all the Coalition's meetings for the rest of the year. The schedule is as follows:

**October 26
December 7**

Meetings are held from 10:00 a.m. to 12:00 noon in room 104 of the Brown Building on the Dix Campus (801 Biggs Drive) unless notified otherwise. For those who can not attend in person but can call in, the call in number is [1-866-215-3402](tel:1-866-215-3402) and the passcode is 5080266#.

Membership Registration and Renewal: Coalition on Aging membership registration/renewal can be done in one of two ways.

Option 1: Go to <http://www.nccoalitiononaging.org/membership.aspx>. And print off a membership registration/renewal form which can be completed and returned along with dues payment (payable to the NC Coalition on Aging) to the address noted on the form.

Option 2: Complete the registration and payment process (PayPal) on-line. Contributions in addition to dues can also be paid in this way.

The Coalition has a hardship provision for those who wish to join the Coalition but are unable to pay the full dues amount. To apply for this hardship provision, please contact Mary Bethel, Coalition Executive Director, at mmbethel72@gmail.com.

Submitting Information for Updates: If you have news or information on activities and events you would like to have included in an *Update* to Coalition members, please send details to Mary Bethel, Coalition Executive Director, at mmbethel72@gmail.com. The Coalition also posts a master calendar of aging related events and activities on its website.

Have questions about the Coalition on Aging or need more information, including information about joining the Coalition or renewing membership, please contact us at mmbethel72@gmail.com or check out our website at <http://www.nccoalitiononaging.org/>.