



## COMING TOGETHER TO ADVOCATE FOR OLDER ADULTS

### **NC Coalition on Aging Update for September 2016**

**Politics and Policy** – In most Presidential election cycles, supportive care services for either long-term care or at the end of life are not a part of the political discourse. Why is this and what can we do about changing the nature of the discourse about policy issues that matter? Come to the September 23, 2016, annual meeting and luncheon of the NC Coalition on Aging and hear keynote speaker Dr. Robert B. Friedland, Associate Professor in the Department of Health Systems Administration and Director of the Health Policy and Management Program at Georgetown University, talk about “Politics, Policy, and People: The Future of Supportive Care.”



Dr. Robert B. Friedland

In his presentation, Dr. Friedland will explore the source of anger in the electorate, the disconnect between politics and policy, as well as what citizens can do to help our political leaders lead with a more realistic assessment of how to fulfill the vision they lay out in their campaigns. Information about the annual meeting and registration for this can be found at [www.nccoalitiononaging.org](http://www.nccoalitiononaging.org).

Scholarships to the meeting are available for students and for those for whom the registration cost is a challenge. To request a scholarship, contact Mary Bethel, Coalition President, at [mmbethel72@gmail.com](mailto:mmbethel72@gmail.com).

**Dot Crawford Named Recipient of Pioneer Award** – Dorothy Rose (Dot) Crawford from Franklin, NC who at 98+ years of age is an incredible visible and effective advocate for older North Carolinians has been named the recipient of the Coalition on Aging’s Pioneer Award for 2016. The Award was established this year by the Coalition to recognize individuals who have made long-time outstanding contributions to the field of aging in North Carolina. Dot worked for almost 30 years as Director of the Macon County Department of Social Services. Since retiring in 1984, she has been a professional volunteer for issues important to older adults in North Carolina.

Not only has she left her stamp on public policy in the state, she has been a mentor to scores of young adults who have entered the field of aging.



Dot Crawford

The Award will be presented to Dot at the Coalition's annual meeting and luncheon on September 23.

**Legislative Priorities for 2017** - Do you have an issue you want the Coalition to consider for its 2017 legislative agenda? If so, issues for consideration need to be submitted by September 30. A form for submission is attached to this *Update*. The following information is requested for each issue being proposed: the problem which needs legislative action, the proposed legislative action, and the rationale for including this in the Coalition's 2017 legislative agenda. Submissions will be shared with Coalition members at the October 28 monthly Coalition meeting. At that time, each person submitting a proposed issue will be given three minutes to speak on the issue. Coalition members will vote on the legislative agenda at the December 9 Coalition meeting. After that, the Coalition's agenda will be shared with relevant agency officials and with members of the General Assembly.

**New Legislator** – Holly Granger has been appointed by Gov. Pat McCrory to fill the remainder of the term of Rep. Rick Catlin (R-New Hanover) who resigned last month. She is running for the seat in the November election and has no Democrat rival.

**Debate for Candidates for Governor** – A debate between the candidates for Governor is scheduled for October 30. Thirty TV stations and statewide radio will air the debate which will be moderated by Chuck Todd with NBC.

**Where Do Candidates Stand on Aging Issues?** – It is less than two months before the November elections and because older adults vote at a higher rate than other age groups, many candidates will be seeking out increased opportunities to reach senior voters. When these opportunities arise, this is a good chance to ask candidates their position on issues which impact older adults and their families.

Many groups and organizations, including the National Council on Aging (NCOA), have developed sample questions for their constituent members to ask candidates. Click [here](#) to view NCOA's questions and read about additional tips and best practices on how non-profit organizations can work with political candidates. A local office on aging in our state has shared

questions they have developed to ask candidates for federal, state, and local offices. A copy of these are attached to this *Update*.

**Redistricting Simulation Project Produces Plan** – Retired state judges and justices have completed a project of Duke University and Common Cause North Carolina where they experimented with drawing the state’s congressional districts without regard to voters’ party registration. The plan they produced includes six likely Republican districts, four likely Democratic districts, and three toss-ups. The plan that was developed is very different from the plan for districts that state legislators approved this year which is facing litigation amid claims of partial gerrymandering. Bob Hall, Executive Director of Common Cause North Carolina, says they will use the plan that was developed to help the public understand there is a better way to draw districts. To read more about this, click [here](#).

**Voter I.D. Not Required for Upcoming Election** – On August 31, a divided U.S. Supreme Court refused to block a lower court ruling that threw out controversial 2013 voting law changes. Among other things, the ruling means that North Carolina residents will not need to show photo IDs in elections this fall. To read more about the ruling, click [here](#).

**Community Care of North Carolina (CCNC) Data Shows Cost Savings** – The summer issue of the NC Medical Journal, as a part of an issue devoted to value-based care, contained an article on the 2015 performance measures of CCNC. In the article, CCNC noted that the state’s Medicaid results are beating expectations with total costs 5% below benchmarks, emergency room visits 7% below, inpatient hospital admissions 26% below, and hospital readmissions 51% below. CCNC was started 18 years ago as an alternative to corporate managed care. It uses an intensive case-management approach which is widely supported by doctors and hospitals in the state. The data released is very timely because the state is seeking permission from the federal government to phase out CCNC’s approach to administering Medicaid and to change to a managed care system. To read more on this, click [here](#).

**Lifespan Respite Care Supplement Grant** - The North Carolina Department of Health and Human Services has been awarded a one-year Lifespan Respite Care Program Expansion Supplement from the U.S. Administration for Community Living. This one-year grant will provide approximately 150 respite vouchers to family caregivers of people with special needs of any age who do not qualify or are on a waiting list for other publicly-funded respite programs and are determined to be in need of the service. The grant award is the fifth one received by the NC Division of Aging and Adult Services (DAAS) since 2009. The vouchers will be administered by the North Carolina Respite Care Coalition through a contract with DAAS. More detailed information and an online application for the \$500 consumer-directed respite vouchers will be available online at [northcarolinarespitecarecoalition.org](http://northcarolinarespitecarecoalition.org) later this Fall. Membership in the NC Respite Care Coalition is free and members will receive further information as it becomes available directly through email. For more information, contact

Alicia Blater, Lifespan Respite Project Coordinator and Family Caregiver Support Program Consultant at [Alicia.blater@dhhs.nc.gov](mailto:Alicia.blater@dhhs.nc.gov) and [919-855-3413](tel:919-855-3413).

**Medicare Open Enrollment Period Coming Up** - Medicare health and drug plans can make changes each year to things like cost, coverage and what providers and pharmacies are in their networks. The Medicare Open Enrollment Period for 2016 which is **October 15 to December 7** is when all people with Medicare can change their Medicare health plans and prescription drug coverage for the following year to better meet their needs. The Seniors' Health Insurance Information Program (SHIIP) in the NC Department of Insurance is available to help Medicare beneficiaries and their families over the phone or in-person in all 100 counties in North Carolina. For more information about SHIIP and the Medicare Open Enrollment Period, call [1-855-408-1212](tel:1-855-408-1212).

Experts from SHIIP will be available at WRAL TV from 4:00 to 7:00 p.m. on Tuesday, [September 13](#), to answer questions about open enrollment.

**NC Division of Aging and Adult Services (DAAS) Posts Positions** – I response to the NC General Assembly appropriating funding to hire staff to help implement several recommendations from the Alzheimer's State Plan completed this year, the DAAS will be seeking applicants for two new positions until September 19, 2016. To find out more about the positions, click on the links below.

**Dementia Services Coordinator**

<https://www.governmentjobs.com/careers/northcarolina/jobs/1527234>

**No Wrong Door State Coordinator**

<https://www.governmentjobs.com/careers/northcarolina/jobs/1527282>

**Dementia Friendly America Statewide Conference** – The [Senior Information and Networking Group of Wake Forest, N.C.](#) and the Town of Wake Forest will host a Dementia Friendly America Statewide Conference on October 18 from 8:30 a.m. to 3:00 p.m. Dementia Friendly America representative from Minnesota will be present for this one-day event to share their assessment process, sector guides, toolkit, and partnership development ideas. Information about how other states are utilizing these tools and resources will be shared. Representatives from several North Carolina communities will participate in a panel to discuss how they are becoming dementia friendly. The Conference will be held at the Renaissance Centre (405 South Brooks Street) in Wake Forest, N.C. The cost is \$20 which includes lunch and refreshments. To register, click [here](#).

**Resources from the Consumer Financial Protection Bureau** – The Bureau has issued a new [report](#) which examines community networks that work to prevent and respond to elder financial exploitation. The bureau is also offering local organizations free placemats (in English and

Spanish) with simple tips for avoiding common predatory consumer scams. To find out more, click [here](#).

**Twenty Articles That Shaped Geriatrics** – The *Journal of the American Geriatrics Society* (JAGS) has published a guide to some of the most important studies impacting older adult care that were published from 2000 to 2015. [Read](#) the list and see a [visual summary](#) of the list.

**Webinar on Suicide Prevention Among Older Adults** – In recognition of Suicide Prevention Awareness Month, the NCOA Center for Healthy Aging is offering a webinar on September 29, from 3:30 to 5:00 p.m. that will describe the prevalence of and risk factors for suicide among older adults, discuss how suicide is being addressed at the federal level, and share information on behavioral health resources. PEARLS, a national evidence-based program for the treatment of depression, will be featured. Presenters are Phantane J. Sprowls (Administration on Aging/Administration for Community Living), Dr. Richard T. McKeon (Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration), and Lesley Steinman (University of Washington). Click [here](#) for more information.

**Flu Resources** – Through a collaborative campaign between NCOA and Sanofi Pasteur called *Flu + You* materials are available to help educate older adults about influenza and prevention. To learn more, click [here](#).

**N.C. State University Free Mini-Conference on Aging and the Environment** – This conference which is designed to connect NC State University researchers, community partners, and the public around creating environments that support healthy aging will take place on November 11 from 1:00 to 7:00 p.m. in the Duke Energy Hall at the James B. Hunt, Jr. Library on the NC State University Centennial Campus (1070 Partners Way in Raleigh). Talks will feature international and local researchers' work on ways to design adaptive environments that optimize aging. Community partners will share information on current resources and initiatives happening now to support aging in the environment. To find out more and to register, click [here](#).

**New President at North Carolina Health Care Facilities Association (NCHCFA)** – On July 1, the NCHCFA's Board of Directors announced the appointment of Adam Sholar as President and General Counsel. Before joining the Association in late 2015, Adam served as Legislative Counsel and Director of Government Affairs for the North Carolina Department of Health and Human Services. Craig Souza will remain as the Association's Chief Executive Officer (CEO). He had been President and Chief Executive Officer of NCHCFA since 1977.

**Hold the Date for October Meeting** – The Coalition is pleased that Secretary of the N.C. Department of Health and Human Services, Rick Brajer, will join us for the Coalition's monthly meeting on October 28. Secretary Brajer will give very brief remarks but he wants to spend most of his time at the meeting hearing from Coalition members about the needs of older adults and their family caregivers and about what is working well as well as where challenges exist in providing programs and services for our state's older residents. Time at the meeting will also be

devoted to hearing presentations about issues for consideration for the Coalition's 2017 legislative agenda.

### **Other News and Resources of Interest:**

- From *NBC News* – September 8, 2016 – [Community Uses Music to Help the Mind](#)
- From *Huffington Post* – September 10, 2016 – [The 7 Hard Truths About Aging Everyone Should Know](#)
- From *Medical News Today* – August 22, 2016 – [Family, Not Friends, Lowers Death Risk In Old Age](#)
- From *Medical News Today* – August 31, 2016 – [Moderate Drinking May Reduce Frailty, Cardiovascular Disease for Seniors](#)
- From *NPR* – September 10, 2016 – [Seeing a Mother's Alzheimer's as a Time of Healing and Magic](#)
- From *NPR* – August 31, 2016 – [Test of Experimental Alzheimer's Drug Finds Progress Against Brain Plaques](#)
- From *NPR* – August 31, 2016 – [Audits of Some Medicare Advantage Plans Reveal Pervasive Overcharging](#)
- From *The New York Times* – September 6, 2016 – [Researchers Confront an Epidemic of Loneliness](#)
- From *The New York Times* – August 29, 2016 – [The Decline of Tube Feeding for Dementia Patients](#)
- From *WebMD* – September 6, 2016 – [Could Good Sex Be Bad for An Older Man's Heart?](#)

### **New Events for Calendar**

- Now Through October 27, 2016 – **2017 State Health Plan Options and Medicare Outreach Events** Scheduled Throughout the State – To find out more go to [www.shpnc.org](http://www.shpnc.org) or call 1-855-859-0966
- September 12, 2016 – **Joint Legislative Program Evaluation Oversight Committee**, 1:00 p.m. in room 544 Legislative Office Building, Raleigh, NC (includes update on overnight respite pilot program)
- September 27, 2016 – **Joint Legislative Oversight Committee on Health and Human Services**, 8:30 a.m. in room 643 Legislative Office Building, Raleigh, NC
- October 4-5, 2016 – **NC Senior Tar Heel Legislature Meeting**, Sheraton in Chapel Hill, NC
- October 11, 2016 – **Joint Legislative Oversight Committee on Health and Human Services**, 8:30 a.m. in room 643 Legislative Office Building, Raleigh, NC
- October 11, 2016 – **Joint Legislative Oversight Committee on Medicaid and NC Health Choice**, 1:00 p.m. in room 643 of Legislative Office Building, Raleigh, NC
- October 26, 2016 – 9:00 a.m., **The Value of Closing the Health Insurance Coverage Gap**, Sponsored by Care4Carolina, Campbell University, Buies Creek, NC

- October 22, 2016 – 6:00 – 9:00 p.m. – **Friends of Residents in Long Term Care Halloween Party and Fundraiser** (food and drinks, live music, tricks and treats, games and prizes, and silent auction – costumes are optional) at the Advocates for Justice Building (1312 Annapolis Drive), Raleigh, NC. Tickets \$30 in advance (<http://forlhc.eventbrite.com>) and \$40 at the door.
- May 15-18, 2017 - **LeadingAge NC 61<sup>st</sup> Annual Trade Show and Conference**, Pinehurst, NC

**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 President, at [mmbethel72@gmail.com](mailto:mmbethel72@gmail.com).

**Coalition on Aging Membership** – Are you interested in getting more involved in being an advocate for older North Carolinians? If yes, consider becoming a member of the Coalition on Aging. Membership in the Coalition is open to any agency, organization, group, or individual who is interested in aging in North Carolina. To renew your membership or to sign up for the first time, go to <http://www.nccoalitiononaging.org/membership.aspx>.

**Have questions about the Coalition on Aging or need more information? Check out our website at <http://www.nccoalitiononaging.org/>.**