



Information Memorandum

Oregon Department of Human Services

Originating Cluster:

Seniors and People with Disabilities

Authorized by: Catherine Cooper
Signature

IM Number: SPD-IM-04-060

Date: 7/15/04

Subject: Newsletter articles from SUA In-Home & Community Supports Unit to all Oregon Senior Centers was mailed out on 6/17/04

Applies to (check all that apply):

- All DHS employees
- Area Agencies on Aging
- Children Adults and Families
- Community Human Services
- Other (please specify): _____
- County DD Program Managers
- County Mental Health Directors
- Health Services
- Seniors and People with Disabilities

Message: The SPD Office of In-Home & Community Supports started a project to provide AAA's, Nutrition Programs and seniors with legal, nutrition and health promotion resources and information that can be used as inserts for their local newsletters. We recently sent out in DRAFT form newsletter inserts on both Nutrition and Legal Services to all Oregon Senior Centers. A survey asking if the centers are interested in receiving future inserts for their newsletters was also included. We hope to collect data from the survey to help us with future educational articles. (See 2 attachments).
We welcome your input.

If you have any questions about this policy, contact:

Contact(s):	Judy Bowen, OAA Program Coordinator Janay Haas, Legal Services Developer		
Phone:	503-945-6401 or 503-945-8999	Fax:	503-947-4245
E-mail:	judy.bowen@state.or.us janay.haas@state.or.us		

Date: June 24, 2004
To: All Oregon Senior Centers
From: State Unit on Aging, Seniors & People with Disabilities Division
Re: Regular News That Elders Can Use and Attached Survey

Many seniors, including homebound elders, look to their senior centers for information they can apply in their own lives—diet, health care, legal questions. A number of Oregon senior centers disseminate timely information through newsletters that go to center visitors and those who receive Meals on Wheels. We are writing to let you know that, within the next two months, we can offer some help on some of those issues on a regular basis, if you are interested.

We will be able to submit (in hard-copy or by email) a full page of information four times per year that can be inserted in your newsletter, if you have one; or distribute onsite and to homebound seniors as a separate document. Using the resources of the Attorney General's consumer protection office and elder law specialists, nutrition and health experts, we will be able to help you help older Oregonians negotiate their day-to-day lives and know where to go for help with specific issues.

If you are interested, please complete and return the attached survey.

We look forward to working with you on this project to improve the lives of Oregon's elders. Please feel welcome to call or email us with questions and ideas.

Sincerely,

Judy Bowen, State Unit on Aging/Older Americans Act Coordinator
(800) 282-8096 ext 56401 or Judy.bowen@state.or.us

Janay Haas, Legal Services Developer
(800) 282-8096 ext 58999 or Janay.haas@state.or.us

Pam Ruona, Chronic Diseases/Prevention and Health Promotion Coordinator
(800) 282-8096 ext 56412 or Pam.ruona@state.or.us

STATE UNIT ON AGING, SENIORS & PEOPLE WITH DISABILITIES DIVISION
SENIOR CENTER NEWSLETTER/INSERT SURVEY

Senior Center Name: _____

Senior Center Contact: _____

Senior Center Address: _____

Senior Center Phone: _____

Senior Center Fax: _____

Senior Center Email: _____

Senior Center Website: _____

Do you have a newsletter? Yes No

How often is it published? Weekly Monthly Other
(If other, please tell us how often _____)

What is your publication deadline? _____

How many copies of each issue do you distribute? _____

Do copies of your newsletter go to homebound elders via the meal program or some other means? Yes No

If you do not have a newsletter, would your center be willing to distribute copies of our "insert" to visitors to the center? Yes No

Would your center be willing to distribute copies of our insert to homebound elders through the meals program or other means? Yes No
(Please describe other means _____)

Oregon State Unit on Aging

Fraud Schemes Taint Drug Benefit Program

It might come as a phone call or through a door-to-door “representative”, but it’s someone who is trying to steal your money! Phony drug discount-card sellers are urging seniors all over the country to buy worthless cards. The caller or visitor will offer you a medicine discount card that will “save 10 to 25 per cent off the

retail price of most medicines”—which is in fact part of what the Medicare Drug Benefit program is supposed to do. (Look in our next issue for an evaluation of the real program.) What potential customers don’t know is that the program doesn’t use the telephone or door-to-door salesmen—and that the phony discount cards these seniors are

buying are worthless.

Such phone calls and visits are also an easy way for crooks to get extensive information about you. This information can be used in “identity theft”—the use of your good credit, or even your assets, to “borrow” money or “purchase” goods that creditors will then believe you are going to pay for.

How do you know if someone is trying to sell you a worthless card? The most important clue is that the Medicare program does not use telephone or door-to-door representatives. All Medicare drug discount program offers will be in writing and delivered by mail.

You may receive fraudulent offers by mail, too, of course. Fortunately, you have time to contact the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid
(cont’d on page 2...)

Contributors to this issue are:

Judy Bowen

OAA Program Coordinator
(503) 945-6401
judy.bowen@state.or.us

Janay Haas

Legal Services Developer
(503) 945-8999
janay.haas@state.or.us

Having Difficulty Chewing? You Can Still Eat Well!

Many older people have trouble eating well. Sometimes they lack access to a convenient food store. Arthritis may make handling food difficult, or the problem can be difficulty in chewing.

Do you have trouble chewing? If so, you may have trouble eating foods like meat, fresh fruits, and vegetables.

What to do? Try other foods.

Instead of:

Fresh Fruit

Raw Vegetables

Meat

Sliced Bread

Try:

Fruit juices; soft canned fruits—applesauce, peaches, pears.

Vegetable juices; creamed/mashed cooked vegetables.

Ground meat; eggs; milk; cheese; yogurt; foods made with milk, like pudding or cream soups.

Cooked cereals; rice; bread pudding.

More information may be found on the FDA website:
<http://www.fda.gov/opacom/catalog/alpha.html>

Your Group Can Get Answers...

"My husband was always a late riser. Now he's in a nursing home where they wake him for breakfast at 6 a.m. Do they have to do that?" "I have an ambulance bill for \$500 that Medicare refuses to pay. Is there a way to get Medicare to pay?" "My landlord says I have to move out if I need to start using a

wheelchair. What can I do?"

You've heard—or maybe even wondered about—these questions or others like these. You might be surprised to learn that all of these questions have answers that involve your legal rights. And that lawyers can often provide not only some answers, but

even some real help to solve the problems behind the questions.

If there is a topic you'd like a lawyer in your community to talk about to your group, there are at least three ways to find a speaker: contact your local legal aid office, your senior center or local area agency on aging office, the local senior services office, or the Oregon State Bar speakers' bureau (800-452-8260 or 503-620-0222). You also can contact the state Legal Services Developer in Salem at 503-945-8999.

(cont'd from page 1...)

Management to find out if the offer is legitimate. You also can—and should—talk with Senior Services staff to see if the discount (even if legitimate) is worth it. The state has information about drug discounts that don't require you to buy a discount card. Furthermore, some low-income elders get a \$600 credit on their discount cards, so that they do not have to pay anything for their prescription medications until after they have used up the credit.

Four Things You Shouldn't Trust – In The Safety of Your Own Home

Think home is a safe place to be if you want to protect yourself from crime? Think again.

According to Oregon's attorney general, thieves—especially people who want to defraud you—target seniors 9 times out of 10! Here's how they find you at home:

--at your front door, offering to sell you home siding, storm windows, burglar alarm systems, vitamins, magazines, vacuum cleaners, and more.

--on television, offering you "free home trials" of medicines, music, magazines, or other (they hope) irresistible bargains.

--on the phone, offering you special sweepstakes deals, vacations, long-distance service, magazines, the opportunity to donate to a "worthy cause".

--via the Internet, offering you all of the above.

Sometimes you may actually get the product advertised, but by then, scammers have information about you that they use to cause more serious havoc—using your credit card or banking information for their own illegal activities, or selling the information to others who will try to offer you their own "free trial periods".

How to protect yourself? Never, never buy anything or give out personal information to callers; don't give out personal information when making Internet purchases unless you are giving it on an established, secure site; resist irresistible TV ads.