

Caring Together

The Senior Resource Center

One Number to Call for Older Adults and Their Families

- Information about programs, services, and benefits
- Help accessing programs, services and benefits
- Support through the changes in your life
- In-home assistance with personal and household chores
- Delivered meals
- Transportation within Champaign County
- Special help for Grandparents Raising Grandchildren
- Special programs for those caring for an older parent or spouse

Most services provided at no cost to you.

352-5100

Be in the Know: Were You Admitted?

If you have Medicare, you may know that, in order to have Medicare pay for any part of a nursing home stay, you must be admitted to a hospital for at least three nights within a certain amount of time before the nursing home admission.

Please note the word admitted. Hospitals are sometimes putting people in regular rooms under observation. If your record says **observation** instead of **admission**, Medicare will not pay for any related nursing home stay.

To the patient, there is usually no discernable difference between the care received in an admission or in an observation. And, **no one is likely to tell you that you were not admitted but are under observation.** You

may go through the emergency room, be evaluated, be taken to a room, etc. and yet not be admitted. The Medicare claims for this kind of observation care have gone up by over 30% in the last 4 years.

Why? Hospitals are under pressure to avoid over-utilization of Medicare.

What can you do? Ask if you (or your family member) have been admitted, especially if there is any chance whatsoever that rehab care in a nursing home may follow. You need to be your own advocate.

Check out this Medicare website for more information:

<http://www.medicare.gov/Publications/Pubs/pdf/11435.pdf>



According to the IRS...

“Persons who are 65 or older are entitled to a larger standard deduction; however, many senior citizens do not take this higher deduction.”

The IRS provides several pamphlets for older tax payers. Check their web site at <http://www.irs.gov/individuals/retirees/index.html>

"When it comes to staying young, a mind-lift beats a face-lift any day."

Marty Bucella

Affordable Care Act & Medicare



There are several things in the Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act that can affect those of us with Medicare in 2011:

- Access to a new Physician Compare Website
- Changes in Medicare Preventive Benefits (many can be free)
- Changes in the Medicare Advantage Program
- Changes in Medicare Part D
- Changes in the Low-Income Subsidy

To view a printer friendly description of the changes provided by the federal Administration on Aging, go to:

http://www.aoa.gov/AoARoot/Press_Room/News/2011/docs/Medicare_1_01_11.pdf



The Administration on Aging has an e-newsletter to which you can subscribe:

http://www.aoa.gov/AoARoot/Press_Room/Enews/index.aspx

It has a lot of information about health care reform and other topics. Some of the information is rather detailed and technical, but much of it useful for those interested in issues related to aging.

And, since we're all aging....

Senior Citizens Assessment Freeze

If you are 65 with a total household maximum income of less than \$55,000 (and meet certain other qualifications), you can choose to freeze the equalized assessed value (EAV) of your homes to prevent any increase



in that value due to inflation. You must file form PTAX-340, Senior Citizens Assessment Freeze Homestead Exemption Application and Affidavit with the chief county assessment office each year.

For more information, in Champaign County contact the County Assessor's office at 384-3760 or check their web site at:

<http://www.co.champaign.il.us/ccao/contacts.htm>

Senior Citizens Homestead Exemption

If you are 65 years of age or older during the assessment year and are the owner or a lessee with an ownership interest in the property with a single-family residence, who is liable for the



payment of the property taxes, you may be eligible for this benefit. The amount of the exemption is a \$3,500 reduction in the EAV of the property.

For more information, in Champaign County contact the County Assessor's office at 384-3760 or check their web site at: <http://www.co.champaign.il.us/ccao/contacts.htm>

Driving: Warning Signs

Part 1 of 2



We are a very mobile society.

Most of us are used to getting in the car and going wherever we want to go when we want to go. However, if you are seeing any or a combination of the following driving behaviors, **it may be time to consider a change in driving habits.**

- Signaling incorrectly or not at all
- Driving too slowly or too fast for safety
- Frequent complaints about other drivers
- Hitting curbs or otherwise misjudging distance; damage to car, garage, or mailbox
- Hitting the wrong pedal
- Trouble with turns, especially left turns
- Running traffic lights
- Problems reading signs or not seeing signs
- Problems staying awake during normal daily activities or events
- Health problems or medications that could affect alertness or driving ability

- Not using rearview mirrors
- Confusion with thinking; getting lost in familiar places
- Problems with flexibility or range of motion that make turning, pedal use, etc. difficult
- Accidents, near misses, tickets, or warnings



Does that mean we must stop driving altogether?

Not at all. Some things that may keep you - and the others on the road - safe are:

- Not driving at night
- Not driving on highways
- Driving only in town - to the grocery store, bank, or doctor
- Not driving during rush hour
- 55 Alive or other driver improvement course (you may get insurance discount benefits!)
- Change of medication - some can affect your reaction time - talk to your doctor!!

There are, of course, some alternatives when it's not safe (or financially smart) for you to drive:

- Walking
- Carpooling
- Taxis
- MTD Buses and paratransit vans
- Rides from family
- Senior Transportation program (352-5100)

It's tougher in rural areas, we know, but there are options. (Senior Transportation staff can help you find them.)

Be smart. Take responsibility for yourself. Think how you would feel if you hurt or killed someone with your car. Think how your family would feel if you hurt or killed yourself.

The Stevick Senior Center in Champaign has a Rules of the Road Class on Tuesday February 1 from 10:00 - noon. Call Debbie at 359-6500 for more information or to register.

Family Service Celebrates a Century of Care (1911-2011)

The first in a series of articles highlighting our ten decades

United Charities (as Family Service was originally named) faced a very challenging first decade that included:

- World War I (1914-1918) second deadliest conflict in history to this day.
- Flu Pandemic (1918-1920) 3% of the world's population died from influenza and 28% were infected.
- Poverty for farmers (1 in 4 American farmers lost their farms in the 1920's) laborers, and immigrants.

United Charities was the first inclusive private agency through which charity and welfare funds could be chan-

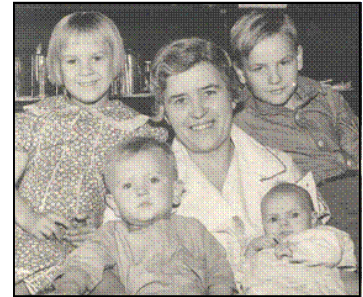
neled. Organized social work was just beginning to be recognized as the best means of preserving basic family strengths.

United Charities tackled local health & social issues by:

- Adding a nurse to the staff in 1918 in response to the flu & tuberculosis outbreaks. She also coordinated a well-baby clinic to provide free preventive care to the community's youngest population.
- Counseling returning soldiers and their families dealing with post-traumatic stress and read-

justment issues.

- Creating a job counseling program to help unemployed workers and displaced farmers to secure a means of supporting themselves and their families.



A century and full circle later, Family Service offers services for many of the same issues today.

Senior Transportation

352-5100

If you are 60 or older, we can provide rides throughout Champaign County so you can go to medical appointments, the grocery store, financial or legal appointments, and many personal "quality of life" needs. You can get up to 2 rides per week and we may be able to get a volunteer who can provide you with assistance getting into the car, down the curb, or with carrying light packages. *No fee with MTD Dash Pass.* Call for more information or to register.

A service of the Senior Resource Center
at Family Service

One number to call for older adults and their families.

A Newsletter from the staff at



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Champaign, IL 61820

Phone: 217-352-5100

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Check out our web site

www.famservcc.org