

Wishes for the New Year

By Michelle DiBuduo, Executive Director of Valley Caregiver Resource Center



Michelle DiBuduo

What moves you? What are the triggers that make you react to a situation? Or sometimes do you feel callous to all the disparity that surrounds you through the news and social media?

Just recently, I shocked myself. Let me explain. In my years with *Valley Caregiver Resource Center*, I have heard, experienced, and been personally touched by the difficult situations that face our seniors and caregivers: A bedridden woman left

at home with no one to care for her because her roommate and caregiver suddenly passed away, neighbors don't know what to do; a mother being cared for in a long-term care facility comes to see her son who is standing on the other side of the window due to COVID but cannot hear or see him well because her hearing aids and glasses are lost, their once-a-week visit is almost futile; a woman threatens suicide because she is so distraught over taking care of her husband with dementia. She sees no other options to her desolate life.

I know these issues are happening every day and I share them with you through our newsletter.

I experience them within my own family. But sometimes, I am moved to tears. I heard her voice. A woman whose physical health was declining for unknown reasons. A tad forgetful. I watch her closely. I watch her husband and family closely as they try to care for her. I strongly urge them to get a caregiver but this time not only for the family but for her. She needs interaction, she needs purpose and motivation. Unfortunately, our day program is closed for now. (I will continue to update you on this situation.) Many times we acknowledge how we help the caregiver but so many times we don't recognize the emotional needs of the person who needs assistance.

Fast forward. Hallelujah, they find a caregiver. VCRC helps with the providing the respite. The woman is so happy and has found a friend that she immediately connects with. I talk with her on the phone and the cadence in her voice has changed, she has someone and something to look forward to outside of her loving family. She has hope and isn't that what we all deserve?

I cried and wondered why this time I was so moved. I'll never completely know but I am so grateful because hopefully now, the last part of her journey in this world will have purpose and joy. Could we wish for anything more?

That is what I wish for each of you this upcoming year: a life full of love, purpose, and joy, that you can experience and help others experience, too!

Self Care During The Holidays

by Charity Tokash, Education Development Coordinator



The holidays can bring happiness, friends, family, gratefulness, and much more. However, they can also bring stress, financial strain, guilt, and worry. Taking care of yourself during these times is very important.

Self-care can promote your health and increase your ability to take care of your loved one. Self-care can be done in many ways and will look different for each one of us. By taking a few extra minutes in the bathtub, writing a letter or in a

journal, taking a walk, doing some stretches, the creative ideas for self-care are endless. Make sure you take time for yourself this holiday season.

Donate Today!

Valley Caregiver Resource Center (VCRC) gratefully accepts donations; donated funds go towards services provided by VCRC, HICAP, OASIS and the Ombudsman Program. Services will not be denied if a client will not or cannot contribute to the cost of the services. The Fresno-Madera Ombudsman Program does not receive donations when Long Term Care Facilities sponsor or donate to VCRC. Your generosity in donating to VCRC will be greatly appreciated and can be done by forwarding your gift to VCRC at 5363 N. Fresno St., Fresno, CA 93710. VCRC is a 501(c)(3) private non-profit organization; all gifts are tax deductible in accordance with existing IRS regulations. Donations can also be made online through our website at: www.valleycrc.org.

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Are You Ready to Go Paperless?

Please visit our website to sign up for the future digital newsletters so you can stay informed and so we can stay in touch with our local caregivers.
www.valleycrc.org

New Year's Resolutions for Caregivers

By Charity Tokash, VCRC Education & Development Coordinator

With 2022 right around the corner, the time and tried tradition of New Year's resolutions. The new year is a perfect time to start fresh and establish some new habits. It may be hard to change some habits; however, it is never too late to try and create a healthier, happier lifestyle.

TIPS FROM CHARITY:

1. When planning your New Year's resolution think about the goals you would like to achieve, and what is realistically possible.
2. Take that goal and break it down into steps. A lot of the time, someone will jump into a resolution with both feet and it becomes overwhelming. When this happens, it can be too much or it is just not a realistic plan.
3. Do not jump into it with both feet, step into it one step at a time and make a plan.
4. A good example of jumping into a new year's resolution is when someone states they are going to start going to the gym and they have never been to the gym before. If that person started going to the gym 6 to 7 days a week, they have jumped in with both feet.

5. The best thing is to make a plan and start slow, one step at a time. Start with going for one day a week, for maybe for just a half-hour.
6. See how you feel after that and build up from there. Take your time. Going to the gym is not a sprint; it can be a healthy commitment when done right.
7. There are many New Year's resolutions that people make every year. Take time to think about yours and make it a successful one. Whether it is going to the gym, reading a book, taking a class, saving money, eating healthier, or even spending more time with friends and family, take the time to make a plan.
8. What has to happen so your plan will be successful? What support do you need? Who can be in your support system? When are you planning to put your plan into action? Where are you going to be doing your resolution?
9. Most importantly remember why you are doing it.

Do Not be a Victim of Identity Theft!

By Senior Medicare Patrol

Identity theft occurs when fraudsters steal your personal information and often Medicare beneficiaries fall prey. All they require to steal your identity is your Medicare number.

These fraudsters use your number to get medical treatment, medical equipment, prescription drugs, surgery, or other services and then bill Medicare for it under your identity. Medical identity theft can also affect beneficiaries' medical and health insurance records. Every time a fraudster uses a beneficiary's identity to receive or bill for care/supplies, a record is then created with incorrect medical information about them.

Most beneficiaries do not even realize their number has been compromised until it is too late!

If you fear, you may have been victimized by a fraudster contact HICAP! Our registered HICAP counselors are also trained Senior Medicare Patrol Liaisons and can assist you in preventing, detecting, and reporting Medicare fraud. Our office is open Monday thru Friday 8am – 5pm, give us a call at (559) 224-9117 for immediate assistance.



How COVID has affected the Long-Term Care Ombudsman Program

By Susan Bussean, Ombudsman Program Manager

Ombudsman facility visits ceased in March 2020 and did not resume until late October 2020. During this time, resident right violations were occurring due to COVID infection control and safety measures, but Ombudsman Representatives were not able to offer in person assistance. Residents were alone, isolated and secluded in their rooms...it was a dark time for them.

Other factors that contributed to the ordeal was that State licensing agencies were not visiting facilities and there was a lot of confusion around visitation status. When visits were allowed again, state issued visitation guidelines were often being ignored and/or improvised by many facilities and residents were being denied their family and Ombudsman visits.

Phase I reentry plan was initiated in late October 2020 and staff Ombudsmen were finally permitted to visit facilities. However, our Ombudsman Team included 47 volunteers, who were not allowed to enter their assigned facilities, so the responsibility of covering over 250 facilities fell on just 7 staff members.

After successfully progressing through Phase I requirements and implementation, Phase II was implemented in April 2020! Ombudsmen status had been elevated to "Essential Workers" so they were able to receive COVID vaccines for their protection, and the protection of our fragile residents.

Volunteers were now able to return to their assigned facilities, following very strict protocol. However, the PPE and weekly testing requirements, coupled with the

concerns about catching COVID, proved to be too much for many of our volunteers and many were not comfortable with conducting facility visits. The result is that we dropped from 47 volunteers to only 14 volunteers.

Our residents needed us now more than ever, so a very aggressive training schedule was developed and implemented and our radio and TV advertising budget was increased. With the help of our media partner Nexstar Media Group, Inc. and our The Fulton Group, a very successful advertising campaign brought many calls from interested volunteers!

AS A RESULT, OUR VOLUNTEER
WORKFORCE HAS BEEN REBUILT TO
OUR PRE-PANDEMIC LEVEL!

As a result, our volunteer workforce has been rebuilt to our pre-pandemic level!

Maybe YOU are considering becoming a volunteer for the Fresno-Madera Long Term Care Ombudsman Program? Here are some considerations that might answer your questions:

- Volunteers will never be assigned to a facility that is above their "comfort zone"
- Every effort is made to assign facilities that are geographically convenient for the volunteer
- New volunteer Ombudsmen are escorted to their first facility visits by a staff member for a "polite hand-off"

- Volunteers are in control of their visitation schedule and amount of hours they serve each month
- The EXCEPTION to this is the monthly Case Review Meeting (last Wednesday of each month, with adjustments made for November and December)
- Attendance at the monthly Case Review Meeting helps fulfill the 18-hr annual training requirement
- The meeting provides a great opportunity to network, learn from other and form friendships
- A Volunteer's passion to help and willingness to try is all that's needed... we can train them to do the rest!
- Volunteers receive awesome support, guidance and coaching provided by our Program Staff

Our traditional 36-hr classroom training continues to be the preferred training method, but a new option is now available. Our new online training platform launched in September 2021 and allows trainees to complete the majority of their 36-hr training in the comfort of their own home, and then attend 2 days of classroom training.

Our next Ombudsman Training Class will be on March 21-March 26, 2022

If you would like more information, have any questions or would like to register, please call Susan Bussean, Program Manager, at 559-224-9177, Ext. 401, or email to sbussean@valleycrc.org.

Home Care Heroes: The Meaningful Impact of Caregiving

Provided by: Home Instead Senior Care

Over the last 18 months, we've seen firsthand how important it is to extend a caring hand to those in our lives, especially older adults. And at a time when distance and safety measures kept many families apart, professional caregivers rose to the challenge to ensure our aging loved ones never lost this feeling of connection. Through these unprecedented circumstances, caregivers have served as a pillar of

strength in households and communities, offering compassionate care, companionship and even hope to older adults.

Like first responders tending to patients outside the home, caregivers act as in-home care heroes, providing much-needed support to the aging population and often serving the needs of others before themselves. And while the pandemic brought attention to the valuable role that caregivers play in our society, the demand for their services will only increase as this segment of

the population continues to expand at a rapid pace.

According to a recent report from Home Instead and the Global Coalition on Aging, the number of adults 65 and older will more than double to 1.5 billion by 2050. "Caregivers are essential to the fabric of our society, enabling our loved ones to age safely and with dignity in their own homes," says Lakelyn Hogan, Ph.D., gerontologist and caregiver advocate at Home Instead.

Keeping you and your loved one safe during COVID-19. We are offering our Caregiver Education Classes either online or by phone. **To register, please call us at (559) 224-9154 or (800) 541-8614.** Pre-Registration is required. Once registered, you will then receive a confirmation email containing information about joining the training.

JANUARY Classes

Caregiver Skills Series - Part 1 (1/11 - 2-3:30)

VCRC CAREGIVERS ONLY. Register on Tuesday, January 11, 2022 2:00 PM - 3:30 PM PST at:

<https://attendee.gototraining.com/r/8538619704204621313>

Caregiver Skills Series - Part 1 is an hour and a half virtual class presented by Valley Caregiver Resource Center for VCRC caregivers only. This is a three-part series, with each of the three classes focusing on coping skills and practical skills. Part one in this series will focus on the benefits and impact of caregiving, the need for self-care, caregiver rights, and community care options.

Powerful Tools for Caregivers (1/12, 1/19, 1/26, 2/2, 2/9, 2/16 - 2-3:30)

VCRC CAREGIVERS ONLY. Register on Wednesday, January 12, 2022 2:00 PM - 3:30 PM PST at:

<https://attendee.gototraining.com/r/807911804724657409>

Powerful Tools for Caregivers is an hour and a half virtual class presented by Valley Caregiver Resource Center for VCRC caregivers only. A six-week series is designed for caregivers to learn clear and practical tools to prevent caregiver burnout. This class teaches self-care skills, enabling caregivers to reduce personal stress, change negative thinking, better communicate with health care providers, and make difficult caregiving decisions.

Grief: What To Know (1/13 - 10-11)

OPEN TO ALL. Register on Thursday, January 13, 2022 10:00 AM - 11:00 AM PST at:

<https://attendee.gototraining.com/r/872059375257742337>

Grief – “What To Know” is an hour and a half virtual class presented by Valley Caregiver Resource Center. A Guest speaker from Hinds Hospice will be talking about the many aspects of grief. Caregivers can face grief throughout their caregiving journey. Whether it is the loss of the relationship you had with your loved one before the illness, the fear of the grief process in the future, or the loss of independence and freedom, you will have to process grief within your journey of caregiving.

Cuidados de Hospicio (1/20 - 1:30 - 3)

OPEN TO ALL. Register on Thursday, January 20, 2022 1:30 PM - 2:30 PM PST at:

<https://attendee.gototraining.com/r/4021552158905933313>

Cuidados de Hospicio es una clase virtual de una hora y media presentada por Valley Caregiver Resource Center. Los cuidados de hospicio se centran en la calidad de vida de las personas y sus cuidadores que padecen de una enfermedad avanzada o que limita su vida. Asimismo, los servicios ofrecen una atención compasiva a las personas que se encuentran en las últimas fases de una enfermedad incurable para que puedan vivir de la forma más cómoda posible. Cuidados de Hospicio es una oportunidad para que los proveedores de cuidados de hospicio informen sobre los servicios que ofrecen y una plataforma para que los cuidadores hagan preguntas.

Life Care Placement Options:

Dr. Bill Dailey – Geriatrics Professor (1/25 - 2-3)

OPEN TO ALL. Register on Tuesday, January 25, 2022 2:00 PM - 3:00 PM PST at:

<https://attendee.gototraining.com/r/2358371497104238081>

Dr. Bill Dailey will be our guest speaker for an hour and a half virtual class presented by Valley Caregiver Resource Center. Have you ever thought about what happens when your loved one needs more care than you can provide? Have you ever thought about the different housing challenges that you may face when it comes to a time when your loved one needs more help? Dr. Bill Dailey will be talking about challenges that may face and provide tips to setting up a plan for your loved one's late-life caregiving options.

Adult Coloring for Self-Care (1/27 - 1:30-2:30)

VCRC Caregivers only. Register on Thursday, January 27, 2022 1:30 PM - 2:30 PM PST at:

<https://attendee.gototraining.com/r/747904721272975361>

Self-Care Coloring is a one-hour virtual class presented by Valley Caregiver Resource Center (VCRC) for VCRC caregivers only. Coloring can be a non-demanding activity that can give a sense of accomplishment. It aids in relaxation, promotes positivity, and enables caregivers to manage complex emotions. This class offers an opportunity for VCRC caregivers to have some self-care time and conversation with other caregivers.

Part of a Statewide System of Caregiver Resource Centers serving family caregivers, contracted through the California Department of Health Care Services, and grants from various Area Agencies on Aging in Fresno-Madera, Kern, Kings-Tulare, and Merced. VCRC educational classes are not open to providers, volunteers or for patients.

FEBRUARY Classes

Respite vs Home Health (2/8 – 2-3:30)

Open to all. Register on Tuesday, February 8, 2022 2:00 PM - 3:30 PM PST at:

<https://attendee.gototraining.com/r/3032590927745050113>

Respite vs Home Health is an hour and a half virtual class presented by Valley Caregiver Resource Center. We will have two different speakers to answer questions about the services they provide and the differences between respite care and home health care. This will be a wonderful opportunity to ask questions.

Caregiver Skills Series – Part 2 (2/10 – 1-2:30)

VCRC caregivers only. Register on Thursday, February 10, 2022 1:00 PM - 2:30 PM PST at:

<https://attendee.gototraining.com/r/7957713626391806210>

Caregiver Skills Series – Part 2 is an hour and a half virtual class presented by Valley Caregiver Resource Center for VCRC caregivers only. This is the second in a three-part series focusing on coping skills and practical skills. In Part 2 we will talk about emotions related to caregiving, unhelpful thought patterns common with caregivers, danger signs, and helpful tips.

The Dr. is in: Dementia Behaviors – Steven Grossman M.D., C.M.D. – (2/17 – 2-3:30)

OPEN TO ALL. Register on Thursday, February 17, 2022 2:00 PM - 3:30 PM PST at:

<https://attendee.gototraining.com/r/1745146374504070914>

The Dr. is in – Dr. Steven Grossman is an hour and a half virtual class presented by Valley Caregiver Resource Center. Dr. Steven Grossman will join us to talk about dementia behaviors. This will be an opportunity to ask questions and to get some answers about the daily struggles you face in dealing with dementia behaviors.

Powerful Tools for Caregivers (2/18, 2/25, 3/4, 3/11, 3/18, 3/25 – 1:30-3)

VCRC CAREGIVERS ONLY. Register for Powerful Tools for Caregivers on Friday, February 18, 2022 1:30 PM - 3:00 PM PST at:

<https://attendee.gototraining.com/r/7206617442248972034>

Powerful Tools for Caregivers is an hour and a half virtual class presented by Valley Caregiver Resource Center for VCRC caregivers only. A six-week series designed for caregivers to learn clear and practical tools to prevent caregiver burnout. These classes teach self-care skills, enabling caregivers to reduce personal stress, change negative thinking, better communicate with health care providers, and make difficult caregiving decisions.

Caregiver Self-Care Poetry (2/22 – 1-2)

VCRC CAREGIVERS ONLY. Register for Caregiver Poetry for Self-Care on Tuesday, February 22, 2022 1:00 PM - 2:00 PM PST at:

<https://attendee.gototraining.com/r/4944532796797601538>

Caregiver Self-Care Poetry is a one-hour virtual class presented by Valley Caregiver Resource Center. Writing gives a platform to express your fears, challenges, and thoughts in a safe space. This Poetry class is an opportunity for some self-care and to have some fun while learning how poetry can help.

Caregiver Bingo (2/24 – 1-2)

VCRC CAREGIVERS ONLY. Register for Caregiver Bingo on Thursday, February 24, 2022 1:00 PM - 2:00 PM PST at:

<https://attendee.gototraining.com/r/219962118570667009>

Caregiver bingo is a one-hour virtual class presented by Valley Caregiver Resource Center. Bingo can be a fun and motivating way to remember to take care of yourself. This bingo class is an opportunity for some self-care and to have some fun while learning about different topics.

For more information on these events and our programs, visit:

www.valleycrgc.org

Like us on Facebook:

www.facebook.com/ValleyCrgc/



OUR MISSION

Valley Caregiver Resource Center offers a comprehensive array of services designed to assist elders and their families master the challenges that accompany the aging process. As long-standing advocates and collaborators in preserving the health and quality of life of others, our aim is to promote personal and community well-being.

Keeping you and your loved one safe during COVID-19. We are offering our Caregiver Education Classes either online or by phone. **To register, please call us at (559) 224-9154 or (800) 541-8614.** Pre-Registration is required. Once registered, you will then receive a confirmation email containing information about joining the training.

MARCH Classes

Silver Alert System – Presented by Detective John Overstreet (3/3 – 2-3)

Register on Thursday, March 3, 2022 2:00 PM - 3:00 PM PST at:

<https://attendee.gototraining.com/r/890081470369228034>

Silver Alert System is a one-hour virtual class presented by Valley Caregiver Resource Center. Our guest speakers Detective John Overstreet and Sargent Martin Van Overbeek of the Fresno Police Department's Family Justice Bureau – Elder Abuse Unit. Det. Overstreet and Sgt Overbeek will explain what the Silver Alert System is, when to call for assistance, things you should know and have on hand when your loved one goes missing, and preventive measures to help prevent your loved one from wandering off.

Medicare Fraud – What You Need To Know (3/9 – 2-3:30)

OPEN TO ALL. Register on Wednesday, March 9, 2022 2:00 PM - 3:30 PM PST at:

<https://attendee.gototraining.com/r/7708139880050876417>

Medicare Fraud – What You Need To Know is a one-hour virtual class presented the Health Insurance Counseling and Advocacy Program (HICAP). Are you a Medicare beneficiary and feel you may have been a victim of Medicare fraud, or fear you may potentially be one? Join HICAP for a brief presentation to learn more about Medicare fraud and ways to protect yourself. You will learn about the Senior Medicare Patrol Program, Current Medicare Fraud trends, and how to report, detect, and prevent Medicare fraud.

Caregiver Skills Series – Part 3 (3/15 – 2-3:30)

VCRC CAREGIVERS ONLY. Register on Tuesday, March 15, 2022 2:00 PM - 3:30 PM PDT at:

<https://attendee.gototraining.com/r/844125182845313025>

Caregiver Skills Series – Part 3 is an hour and a half virtual class presented by Valley Caregiver Resource Center for VCRC caregivers only. This three-part series focuses on coping skills and practical skills. The third installment will address communication techniques and tips.

Elder Law Seminar by Kevin D. Gunner, Attorney at Law (3/17 – 2-3:30)

OPEN TO ALL. Register on Thursday, March 17, 2022 2:00 PM - 3:30 PM PDT at:

<https://attendee.gototraining.com/r/8063692253659749121>

Elder Law Seminar is an hour and a half virtual class presented by Valley Caregiver Resource Center, conducted by Elder Law Attorney Kevin D. Gunner. In this virtual class, we will review issues relevant to family caregiving situations such as Durable Power of Attorney, health care and finances, trusts, conservatorships, Medical planning for long-term care, and other legal matters.

Caregiver Book Club (3/22 - 2-3)

VCRC CAREGIVERS ONLY. Must register by 2/15/2022 at:

<https://attendee.gototraining.com/r/6292497768568445697>

Caregiver Book Club is a one-hour virtual class presented by Valley Caregiver Resource Center. We will be reviewing *Chicken Soup for the Soul, Living with Alzheimer's and Other Dementias; 101 stories of Caregiving, Coping, and Compassion*. This is an easy read and you can skip around to different stories. Once registered for this class we will mail you the book. During the class, we will be talking about the book's impact on you. Did you learn anything? Did you take any tips from the book? Take time to join caregivers and discuss the material.

Caregiver Self-Care Scavenger Hunt (3/24 1-2)

VCRC CAREGIVERS ONLY. Register on Thursday, March 24, 2022 1:00 PM - 2:00 PM PDT at:

<https://attendee.gototraining.com/r/7150367526884909569>

Caregiver Self-Care Scavenger Hunt is a one-hour virtual class presented by Valley Caregiver Resource Center for VCRC caregivers only. Take time for yourself to have some fun by taking part in a scavenger hunt. We will see who can find what in their own home. Everyone has something unique, special, or quirky! This class is an opportunity for self-care in the comfort of your own home.

For more information on these events or our programs, visit:

www.valleycrc.org

UPCOMING EVENTS

valley CAREGIVER RESOURCE CENTER

Caregiver Resource Program | Ombudsman | HICAP  Quarter 1 • 2022

April 22, 2022



HICAP Volunteer Recognition Luncheon

Recognizing our dedicated volunteers

April 29, 2022

9th Annual Fundraising Golf Tournament at Eagle Springs

Get your team together!



May 2022



Ombudsman Volunteer Recognition Luncheon

Recognizing our dedicated volunteers

June 2022

Elder Abuse Awareness



Know Abuse, Report Abuse

August 10, 2022

Thank You

Donor Appreciation At Fort Washington

Honoring our community partners

October 21, 2022

26th Annual Celebration of Care



Dinner ~ Live & Silent Auction

For more information on these events and our programs, visit:
www.valleycrc.org • Like us on Facebook: www.facebook.com/ValleyCRC/

MEDICARE

Download your new digital **MEDICARE AND YOU 2022** handbook today!

<https://www.medicare.gov/forms-help-resources/medicare-you-handbook/download-medicare-you-in-different-formats>



For Questions:
Call 559-224-9177

VOLUNTEER



Volunteer for HICAP and help Medicare beneficiaries regarding their plans.

HICAP Volunteer Training
Monday, April 11 – Thursday, April 14

To Register:
Call Laura at 559-224-9117

HICAP

The Health Insurance Counseling and Advocacy Program (HICAP) provides free assistance with understanding Medicare and your health insurance options.

A celebration of appreciation and recognition is being held for HICAP volunteers on April 29th, 2022. Our Volunteers are so valuable and we could not do this job without them.

RECOGNIZING OUR 2021
Celebration of Care SPONSORS



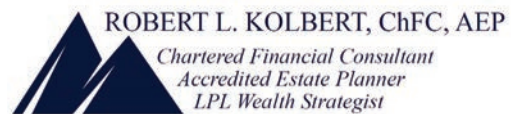
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Mrs. Scott's Where the Heart is Homes

Michael Muharreb

Pacifica Senior Living Fresno

Preferred Landscaping & Maintenance

Stephen Grossman, MD

Trinity Fruit Company

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valley
CAREGIVER
RESOURCE CENTER

GOLF TOURNAMENT



EAGLE SPRINGS
GOLF & COUNTRY CLUB
21722 Fairway Oaks Ln, Friant, CA 93626

FRIDAY
APRIL 29, 2022

GREAT FOOD • PRIZES • AWARDS

11AM SHOTGUN START

ALL PLAYERS WILL RECEIVE:

Range Balls with Cart • Closest to the Pin Contest • Team Photo
Long Drive Contest • Goodie Bag • Beverages & Meals

ADD A SUPER TICKET FOR \$30

(1) 50/50 Ticket • (2) Mulligans
(25) Raffle Prize Tickets



DEADLINE TO REGISTER:
APRIL 15, 2021

CONTACT:

(559) 224-9154 or mdibuduo@valleycrc.org

<https://valleycrc.org/2022-golf-tournament/>



Need Help Paying for Your Prescriptions?

Call HICAP! The Health Insurance
Counseling and Advocacy Program
(559) 224-9117 • (800) 434-0222

- You may qualify for **Extra Help** with your Part D Premiums and Co-Pays
- To qualify you must be a Medicare Beneficiary or close to becoming eligible
- Please contact your local HICAP and schedule a **free and confidential** appointment to receive up to date income requirements

HICAP
Health Insurance
Counseling and
Advocacy Program



Free Service to Medicare Beneficiaries

A Program of Valley Caregiver Resource Center

5363 N. Fresno St., Fresno, California 93710



SHIP
State Health Insurance
Assistance Program



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Is Your 2022 Medicare Part B Increase Really Due to Covering a New Prescription Drug?

By Jennifer Webb, HICAP Program Manager

Medicare Part B covers doctor visits and other outpatient services, such as lab tests and diagnostic screenings. So, you are probably wondering how Part B is involved with a drug increase, and why not Part D (Prescription Drug Coverage)?

The Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS) provided the following reasons for the historically high premium increase:

1. Rising prices to deliver health care to Medicare enrollees and the increased use of the health care system.
2. Added expenses of COVID-19 care.
3. Congress had previously taken action in 2021 to lower the expected Part B premium increase during the pandemic. However, CMS was directed to pay back that reduced premium over time and that payback is beginning now!

4. CMS is setting aside money in its reserves in the event it decides that Medicare will cover, Aduhelm, a new Alzheimer’s drug that was approved by the U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA) earlier this year. CMS officials stated the fact that they are setting aside money to cover the use of that drug “in no way implies what the coverage determination will be” but that they have to plan for the possibility that Medicare will cover this high-cost drug, whose price has been estimated at \$56,000 a year.

Again, you ask.....why is Part B covering a prescription drug not Part D?

While Medicare Part D provides prescription drug coverage, some medicines are administered in a doctor’s office — as with Aduhelm, which is delivered intravenously — and therefore covered under Part B. And by

law, CMS is required to set each year’s Part B premium at 25% of the estimated costs that will be incurred by that part of the program. Therefore, in its calculation for 2022, CMS had to account for the possibility of covering Aduhelm.

Have more questions about your Medicare coverage? Give HICAP a call and speak with one of our registered counselors. Your appointment is free, confidential, and unbiased, call today at (559) 224-9117 Monday thru Friday 8am – 5pm.



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