



Caregiver Resource Program | Ombudsman | HICAP | OASIS \sim

Quarter 3 • 2022

A Hard Truth to Confront

By Michelle DiBuduo, Executive Director of VCRC



Michelle DiBuduo

alley Caregiver Resource Center mourns the loss of a family caregiver gone too soon. The challenges and hurdles behind the scenes for family caregivers is often more difficult than we can understand. But, we work to better our understanding and provide the resources and guidance that is sometimes the difference between life and death.

As many in the community heard in June, a husband and wife were found perished in their vehicle in Northwest Fresno. A wife diagnosed with Alzheimer's and a husband out of options, two lives were taken. However deemed a murder-suicide.

what it truly was, was a caregiver reaching their limit. Too often their struggles and challenges are hidden and without the proper resources and avenues of help, those hurdles are never brought to light.

Our mission at the Valley Caregiver Resource Center is to advocate for and empower our family caregivers so they know they are not alone.

With the re-opening of OASIS, our adult day care, we hope to offer another life support to our family caregivers to not only give themselves an opportunity to pursue their own needs and goals, but to provide their loved ones with a safe and enriching environment that has been difficult to come by during the COVID-19 pandemic.



Now 6) pen

OASIS

Adult Day Program

- Julv 11, 2022 ——

OASIS is an innovative day program for people in early to mid stages of Alzheimer's disease and/or other related dementias. Participants enjoy engaging activities and creating new friendships with other people.

FNROLL MOW License #107208896 Contact Meghan Velasquez (559) 224-9121 or mvelasquez@valleycrc.org

What Exactly IS an Ombudsman?





mbudsmen are resident ADVOCATES, resident centric and resident driven! Ombudsmen do not work for the facility or state licensing, but for the resident.

The Fresno-Madera Long Term Care Ombudsman Program is mandated by federal and state Older Americans Acts. Every state has a State Ombudsman, who is responsible for the individual programs that serve residents of long-term care facilities. There are 35 individual Ombudsman Programs cover all counties in California.

The mission of Certified Ombudsman Representatives is to advocate for the dignity, quality of life and quality of care of residents in long-term care facilities. Ombudsman services are available to the residents of Skilled Nursing Facilities and Residential Care Facilities for the Elderly (commonly called Assisted Living Facilities).

Our goal is to resolve issues and complaints to the satisfaction of the resident. If a resident lacks capacity, we work with their responsible party, legal agent or conservator to resolve problems or concerns in the best interest of the resident.

Continued on pg 9

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.



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This newsletter has been created by Valley Caregiver Resource Center with financial assistance, in part, through a grant from the Fresno-Madera, Kern, Kings/Tulare, and Merced Area Agencies on Aging, Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services, the Federal Medicare Agency, and the California Department of Aging. The Center also receives funding from the California Department of Health Care Services in the nine county service areas along with private donations. The conclusions and opinions expressed may not be those of any of these agencies or departments and this brochure may not be based upon or inclusive of all raw data.

Our Newsletter is Now 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

Spotlight: Health Insurance and Advocacy Program (HICAP)

By Jennifer Webb, HICAP Program Manager

magine turning 65 and needing to make important life-altering decisions about your healthcare benefits and being bombarded with mailers, phone calls, emails, and insurance agents all stating that they can "help." What should you do? Contact HICAP!

Day after day, HICAP receives calls from frustrated and overwhelmed beneficiaries desperately seeking assistance from someone they can trust. Too often, HICAP receives these calls after a beneficiary has been coerced into changes they were not aware they were even making, and now cannot see their doctor of choice. This can really happen, but it does not have to happen to you.

Too often, HICAP receives these calls after a beneficiary has been coerced into changes they were not aware they were even making, and now cannot see their doctor of choice.

Your local HICAP is one of four programs located at Valley Caregiver Resource Center, and is happy to provide free, confidential, and unbiased counseling services to the 172,000 Medicare beneficiaries located in both Fresno and Madera counties.

All HICAP counselors are trained and registered with the California Department of Aging and are equipped to provide one on one counseling appointments via phone, virtual appointment, or in person. HICAP counselors meet beneficiaries where they are at in their Medicare journey and empower them with information to make decisions for themselves.

Below are just a few of the most common issues addressed at HICAP:

- How to sign up for Medicare now that they are almost 65
- Explanation of all the different parts to Medicare—do they need A, B, C, D
- Questions on prescription drug coverage, co-pays, or eligibility rules
- Help with filing an appeal or challenging a denial

- Long-term care insurance policies
- Have they fallen victim to Medicare Fraud

HICAP counseling is provided to:

- Persons 65 years of age or older and are eligible for Medicare
- Persons younger than age 65 years of age with a disability and are eligible for Medicare
- Persons soon to be eligible for Medicare

When HICAP receives a call, the beneficiary is quickly assessed and scheduled for an appointment. HICAP is able to work with the family and friends of beneficiaries who have received permission to speak on the beneficiary's behalf or have provided documents stating such.

During appointments, HICAP counselors screen all beneficiaries for programs that they may qualify for, whether it is low-income assistance or plan-coverage options. The counselor will assist the beneficiary with all of their concerns and questions. After the appointment, the counselor will provide all new clients with a blue HICAP folder containing their appointment information, documents needing further attention, contact information, and a client survey.

HICAP provides assistance with all things Medicare, including Medicare fraud. Your counselors also serve as trained liaisons for the nationally recognized Senior Medicare Patrol Program. Our counselors can help to prevent, detect, and report Medicare fraud. Together VCRC and HICAP host an annual free shredding event for seniors and caregivers in both Fresno and Madera counties. During the event, participants are able to securely destroy their outdated personal documents and receive community resources. This event helps to save beneficiaries from potential fraudsters.

Have you heard the term, "Medi-Medi?" This refers to a beneficiary who is both a Medicare and Medi-Cal recipient. HICAP

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Spotlight: (Cont.)

works diligently to provide inclusive counseling services to our diverse beneficiaries. HICAP has collaborated with the Fresno County Department of Social Services Outreach Unit to provide an on-site Medi-Cal Eligibility Worker at VCRC on the 2nd Wednesday of every month. These workers are able to assist our Medi-Medi beneficiaries with their applications, general relief, and casework. This is a true benefit to all of our four programs here at VCRC.

How often do our beneficiaries contact HICAP?

It just depends on what their needs are and we are happy to help as often as needed. Some are once a year for Annual Open Enrollment and others can be daily, weekly, or monthly depending on the issue at hand. Our team is empathetic and we understand the importance of every phone call to HICAP. Give us a call at (559) 224-9117 for assistance with all things Medicare.

HICAP values all outreach opportunities and is able to provide in-person or virtual presentations upon request. HICAP shares a monthly digital newsletter with both clients and community partners. If you are interested in receiving this newsletter please email HICAP Program Manager, Jennifer Webb at jwebb@valleycrc.org and she will happily subscribe you.

Are you interested in making a difference in the lives of many? Contact our HICAP Volunteer Coordinator, Laura Robinson at Irobinson@valleycrc.org to inquire about our Volunteer Program. We are always accepting applications! HICAP's next Volunteer training and orientation dates: January 9th – 12th



CHECKLIST

of items to bring to an Annual Open Enrollment Appointment

1. Medicare Card 2. List of Current Medications

Open Enrollment is on:
October 15th thru December 7th

But, schedule your appointment NOW with HICAP to get assistance: (559) 224-9117

We Failed

By Donna Hurley

ur seniors are a division of the country that worked the hardest but are quickly forgotten about. While the world revolves at a blink of an eye, we are very aware of the challenges that impact Fresno County, the state, and the nation. For these challenges such as homelessness, gun violence and drug use we see politicians act quickly and resourcefully to implement services. While these challenges deserve our attention and support, we fail to recognize the problems that reside in silence.

These problems include the long-term care challenges experienced by the senior population. Medicare enrollment increased from 3.3 million in 2020 to 3.8 million in 2021 representing the dramatic need for social programs that support long term care needs for our most vulnerable population (Freed, M., 2021).

With Medicare being one of the only areas of financial support for the elderly population there are very few options for funding to support care needs. Care costs within the Central Valley can expand from \$22 an hour for in-home care to assisted living costs averaging \$4,000 a month leaving many fixed income seniors with little to no options for support. For many seniors this means relying on family members and friends to fill the need for care due to the lack of available social programs. While the need for social programs to support the equitable needs of seniors have been visible for years. it truly hit home recently when an elderly Fresno couple ended their lives following a long search for affordable care options.

On the morning of May 28th, 2022, an elderly couple were found shot within their vehicle in Northwest Fresno. After a Fresno

PD investigation it was identified that the couple had been involved in a murder suicide (Tellez, M., 2022). For many the situation was viewed as another senseless act of violence but for those in the long-term care sector there was a far more tragic series of events that led up to the fatal morning's events.

The elderly couple had been impacted by a fixed income as well as a dementia diagnosis which required two levels of care to meet both of their needs. The couple had bounced in and out of a local emergency room as well as spoke with multiple long-term care advisors, toured multiple communities but could not locate a living situation that met their fixed income or allowed for the couple who had been married for decades to remain together. Following an exhausting process, the couple ended their lives in what can only be identified as a lack of options. The story failed to gain traction due to the lack of attention our society provides to seniors who feel lost and without a voice. The story is a call to action for our community to work together to provide additional social programs and affordable care options for those who can no longer care for themselves.

Reference:

Freed, M., Biniek, J., Damico, A., & Neuman, T. (2021, June 24). Medicare Advantage in 2021: Enrollment Update and key trends. KFF. Retrieved June 24, 2022, from https://www.kff.org/medicare/issue-brief/medicare-advantage-in-2021-enrollment-update-and-key-trends/

Tellez, M. (2022, June 1). Two bodies found inside car in northwest Fresno identified. KMPH. Retrieved June 24, 2022, from https://kmph.com/news/local/two-bodies-found-in-fresno-detectives-investigating-body-homicide-sheriffs-police-dead-car-vanness-bullard-barstow-browning-saturday-california-deputies-investigation-homicide-scene-crime-suspects-injured-

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.



FDUCATIONAL (LASSES & ELF (ARE 6) PPORTUNITIES

Caregiver Resource Program | Ombudsman | HICAP | OASIS



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Keeping you and your loved one safe during COVID-19. We are offering some of our Caregiver Education Classes & Self Care Opportunities online or by phone. In-person classes - must have proof of full vaccination and screening. 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.

JULY Classes

Difficult Conversations About **Difficult Decisions**

Thursday, July 7, 2022 | 2:00 pm to 3:30 pm

Weeping your Mental Health in Check While Caregiving

Thursday, July 14, 2022 | 2:00 pm to 3:30 pm

Powerful Tools for Caregivers

This is a 6 week series that will give you the tools to be a successful & happy caregiver.

Every Thursday for 6 weeks

July 14, 2022 to Aug 18, 2022 | 2:00 pm to 3:30 pm

Challenging Dementia Behaviors

Thursday, July 21, 2022 | 2:00 pm to 3:30 pm

Recurso Comunitario: Consejos para el proceso de Medi-Cal y IHSS

Es una clase híbrida, virtual y presencial Jueves, 28 de julio de 2022 | 1:00 pm a 2:30 pm

AUGUST Classes

(ii) Elder Estate Planning Tuesday, August 16, 2022 | 2:00 pm to 3:30 pm

Hospice vs Palliative Care Wednesday, August 17, 2022 | 2:00 pm to 3:30 pm

(II) What to know about Medicare Friday, August 19, 2022 | 2:00 pm to 3:30 pm

CLASS KEY

Want to know if a class listed is in-person or virtual? These symbols will tell you.

IN-PERSON Class

VIRTUAL Class

HYBRID Class (both virtual and in-person)

JULY Self-Care

Caregiver Painting

Limited Space

Wednesday, July 20, 2022 | 2:00 pm to 3:00 pm

AUGUST Self-Care

Caregiver Napkin Decoupage

Limited Space

Thursday, August 18, 2022 | 2:00 pm - 3:00 pm

Caregiver Bingo

Must Register by 8/11/2022

Thursday, August 25, 2022 | 1:30 pm to 2:30 pm

SEPTEMBER Self-Care

Caregiver Paper Mache Art

Limited Space

Thursday, September 8, 2022 | 2:00 pm to 3:00 pm

Caregiver Book Club

Must Register by 9/1/2022

Wednesday, September 28, 2022 | 2:00 pm to 3:00 pm

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.

SEPTEMBER Classes

Ontrolling your Frustrations Thursday, September 15, 2022 | 2:00 pm to 3:30 pm

Effective Communication with Dementia Thursday, September 22, 2022 | 2:00 pm to 3:30 pm

The Dr. is in: Different Kinds of Dementias Thursday, September 29, 2022 | 2:00 pm to 3:30 pm

For more info on these events or our programs, visit: www.valleycrc.org

> Like us on Facebook: www.facebook.com/ValleyCRC/

Facebook

Find us on Instagram: https://www.instagram.com/ valley caregiver resource cntr/





save the date

25TH ANNUAL CELEBRATION OF CARE

Signature Executive Hangar 6:30pm

PRESENTING SPONSORS:





OTHER SPONSORSHIPS AVAILABLE

\$10,000

PRESENTING SPONSOR

- · Name and logo prominently listed as the 'Presenting Sponsor' on all event collateral and in all media spots
- . Two sponsor tables for eight with VIP service and seating
- Special VIP recognition, decor, and gifts for your tables at the dinner
 Name and logo listed on invitation and all VCRC social media sites
- Recognition in the quarterly VCRC Newsletter (circulation of 3,000)
- Full page ad in the event program

\$2,500

EMERALD SPONSOR (ONLY EIGHT AVAILABLE)

- . One sponsor table for eight at the event with priority service and seating
- · Name and logo on all VCRC social media sites and on our web site
- Recognition in the quarterly VCRC Newsletter (circulation of 3,000)
- · 1/4 page ad in the event program

\$5,000

SAPPHIRE SPONSOR (ONLY FOUR AVAILABLE)

- One sponsor table for eight with VIP service and seating
 Name and logo on all VCRC social media sites and on our web site
- Recognition in the quarterly VCRC Newsletter (circulation of 3,000)
- 1/2 page ad in the event program

\$1,000

RUBY SPONSOR

- · Four reserved seats
- Name and logo on all VCRC social media sites and on our web site
- Recognition in the quarterly VCRC Newsletter (circulation of 3,000)
- · Listed in the event program

FOR MORE INFORMATION, PLEASE CONTACT: Michelle DiBuduo, Executive Director

559-224-9154 | mdibuduo@valleycrc.org



ELDER AND DEPENDENT ADULT ABUSE AWARENESS



There are an estimated 202,549 cases of reported elder and dependent adult abuse PER YEAR in California. Elder abuse is significantly underreported. For every case known to programs and agencies, 24 are unknown. For financial abuse, only one in 44 cases is known.

Help the California Long-Term Care Ombudsman Programs and partners around the state to raise awareness about elder and dependent adult abuse. Learn about the different types of abuse, how to recognize them and how to report abuse to the appropriate local agencies.

Self-Neglect

Refusal or failure to provide himself/herself with adequate food, water, clothing, shelter, personal hygiene, medication (when indicated), and safety precaution.

2 Physical Abuse

The use of physical force that may result in bodily injury, physical pain, or impairment; or any physical injury to an adult caused by other than accidental means.

Neglect by Others

Failure to provide the basic care, or services necessary to maintain the health and safety of an adult: this failure can be active or passive.

4 Sexual Abuse

Sexual contact with a non-consenting adult or with an adult considered incapable of consenting to a sexual act.

5 Financial Abuse

The illegal or unethical exploitation and/or use of an elder's funds, property, or other assets.

6 Mental Abuse

Verbal or emotional abuse includes threatening significant physical harm or threatening or causing significant emotional harm to an adult through the use of: Derogatory or inappropriate names, insults, verbal assaults, profanity, or ridicule; or harassment, coercion, threats, intimidation, humiliation, mental cruelty, or inappropriate sexual comments.

Abandonment

The desertion or willful forsaking by anyone having responsibility for care.

8 Isolation

Preventing the individual from receiving mail, telephone calls, or visitors.

In an emergency, call 911. To report cases of abuse, whether it is on your own behalf or that of someone you know, call:

Available Mon-Fri 8:00am-5:00pm

Fresno-Madera Long Term Care Ombudsman Program:
 559-224-9177 (Abuse in Long-Term Care Facilities only)

Available 24-hours a day:

- Fresno County Adult Protective Services: 559-600-3383
- Madera County Adult Protective Services: 559-675-7839
- CA Adult Protective Services: 1-833-401-0832
- CA Long-Term Care Ombudsman CRISIS line: 1-800-231-4024



How To Recognize Abuse



Lack of basic amenities



Cluttered, filthy living environment



Unexplained or uncharacteristic changes in behavior



Unexplained sexually transmitted diseases



Unpaid bills, new credit cards and/or increased cash withdrawals



Harassment, coercion, intimidation, humiliation



Caregiver isolates elder

In an emergency, call 911. To report cases of abuse, whether it is on your own behalf or that of someone you know, call:

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LGBTQI+ and Caregiving

By Toni M. Onkka, LCSW

he month of June is recognized as Pride month, encompassing the LGBTQIA+ community. In 1969 the Stonewall riots in New York City, was the catalyst for the Gay rights movement. This community has suffered and continues to suffer from oppression, discrimination and openly hateful treatment. Society's disdain for this community often leads a person to experience internalized hatred for oneself (internalized homophobia). The community has changed and evolved over the years to better identify its members to include sexual orientation and gender identity. The prior reference was the "gay community." It is now known as LGBTQIA+ (lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, gueer, intersex, asexual, and others).

Caregiving is a challenge in the best of circumstances. The above information is important because it helps to understand some of the unique challenges this community faces in providing care or seeking caregiving support. Due to the often-long history of abuse and discrimination, a person suffers; they are hesitant to reach out for help. For example, it is often difficult to find an accepting medical professional that treats a person in this community with respect and dignity. In addition, the partner or spouse of the person is at times not accepted by the professional.

Transgender individuals have an extremely difficult time seeking care as well. They are misgendered on purpose because of the lack of acceptance. Members of this population are often afraid to access caregiver support groups because of the fear of rejection and judgment. Mental health is an important aspect of being a caregiver and the caregiver stress often feels overwhelming. Members of the LGBTQIA+ community are careful in selecting therapists to make sure they find someone who is non-judgmental and can provide empathy as they move through their caregiving journey.

The family structure is often different from the societal norms. Often individuals have been rejected by their families and either live a solitary life or they have developed a social support system which some refer to as their "family of choice."

VCRC staff have all received training and have demonstrated their cultural competency in providing care for the LGBTQIA+community. The number of people in this community with dementia continues to rise; by 2030 the numbers are expected to be over 1 million (Alzheimer's Dementia, 2021). It is vital to understand the unique needs of this community and provide services in a respectful and accepting manner. Of course, this is important when providing caregiving service for all who seek care.

therapist, I have worked with individuals and caregivers in the LGBTQIA+ community. Unfortunately, there are still many barriers to obtaining services. I am proud that we have VCRC in our community as they have proven their ability to work with this community to help meet their needs and reduce their caregiver burden.

Reference:

Nowaskie, Dz, Sewell, D: Assessing the LGBT cultural competency of dementia care providers. Alzheimer's & Dementia 2021;7:e12137

MEDI-CAL APPLICATION ASSISTANCE DAY

Hosted at:
Valley Caregiver Resource Center
5363 N Fresno Street
Fresno, CA 93710

Assistance for Seniors and Caregivers by appointment only!

Participants must be fully vaccinated

During your scheduled appointment, a Fresno
County Eligibility Worker may provide assistance
with the following:

- General program questions
- Application assistance with:
 - *Medi-Cal
 - *CalFresh
 - *CalWorks
- Ongoing cases
- · Understanding letters received

2nd Wednesday of each Month

Starting





For more information or to schedule an appointment please contact HICAP at (559) 224-9117





Free Service to Medicare Ben







THIS PROJECT WAS SUPPORTED, IN PART BY CREAM THUMBER POSS-\$0058-0.00, FROM THE U.S. ADMINISTRATION FOR COMMUNITY LIVING, DEPARTMENT OF HALTH AND HAMMAS SERVICES, ASSISSIMATION, O. F. 2022. IGRANITIES UNDER TAKEN PROJECT, UNDER GOVERNINGER TO PROVIDE FOR THE PROPERTY PROVIDED FOR THE PROPERTY PROVIDED FOR THE PROPERTY PROVIDED FOR THE PROPERTY PROPERTY OFFICIAL. ADMINISTRATION FOR COMMUNITY LIVING POLICY, INCAP OPERATE WITH FRANCIAL ASSISTANCE AND SUPPORT FROM THE PROPERTY FOR THE PRESENCE.

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Ombudsman(Cont.)

We conduct monthly, unannounced visits to all licensed facilities in Fresno and Madera Counties and can offer assistance in the following areas:

- Investigate complaints made by, or on behalf of, a resident
- Violation(s) of Resident Rights
- Questions or concerns about the quality of a resident's care
- Questions about a transfer or discharge notice received
- Care Plan Meeting requests
- Resident Council Meetings
- Family Council Meetings
- Alleged abuse claims (financial, physical, mental or emotional)
- Resident-to-resident altercations
- Relocation options
- Community resource referrals
- Advanced Health Care Directive witnessing (Skilled Nursing Homes only)

Ombudsman services are free and confidential! If you would like to request assistance, schedule a facility visit or volunteer to serve our seniors, please call the Ombudsman Program office at (559) 224-9177, Ext. 401.

JOIN US ON FACEBOOK



Join the Valley Caregiver Support Network (VCSN) on Facebook... a group page designed for sharing concerns, observations, information and compassionate support. Here you can ask caregiving questions and find solutions to obstacles you may be having.



CALL TO SCHEDULE YOUR APPOINTMENT TO REVIEW YOUR MEDICARE PLAN CHOICES

HICAP is a program of the Valley Caregiver Resource Center serving Medicare beneficiaries in Fresno and Madera counties. HICAP counseling services are provided by counselors registered with the California Department of Aging who are acting in good faith to provide information about health insurance policies and benefits to you, the client.

Counseling is free, confidential, and unbiased.

www.valleycrc.org (559) 224-9117 • (800) 434-0222

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Wright Equities