



Connecting Older Adults with Community-based Resources and Options

AgeOptions provides many resources for educational outreach both in person and virtually. We pride ourselves on the variety of ways we support and help older adults in our community. Below is all of our programs that offer outreach education and what each of them uniquely offers.

Benefit Enrollment Center (BEC)

BEC assists low-income older adults and individuals with disabilities, in the suburban Cook County area, apply for public benefits. We screen and provide application assistance, over the phone, for Medicaid, Medicare Savings Program, Extra Help/LIS and SNAP. Consumers can call 708-383-0258 ext. 393 and leave a message – someone from the Benefits team will call them back to schedule an intake.

Caregiver Resource Centers (CRC)

AgeOptions partners with Caregiver Resource Centers in your area to offer services such as support groups, educational workshops, access to respite (a break), and the Grandparents Raising Grandchildren program. There is not an income requirement to receive services from any of these caregiver programs. A person is automatically eligible for services if they are providing unpaid care to an older adult or an adult with a disability, or a grandparent raising a grandchild.

Caring Together, Living Better (CTLB) is a partnership of faith-based and community organizations dedicated to serving African American and Latino family caregivers in west suburban Cook County.

- Wellness Workshops – self-care for the caregivers e.g. Caregiver Paint Night
- Volunteer Respite – Trained volunteers who have had a background check will come into the home to give a caregiver a break for a few hours.
- Caregiver Cafés- Caregivers have coffee and talk about caregiving issues
- Caregiver Support Group- Share your caregiver experiences with others

Grandparents Raising Grandchildren

- Grandparents can access services such as support groups, legal assistance, and other resources.
- They can call their local Caregiver Resource to get started on the intake process for the GRG program.
- Grandparent doesn't have to have legal custody of grandchild, but the grandchild has to live with the grandparent on a full-time basis.

The Area Agency on Aging of Suburban Cook County, since 1974

Avisery

Avisery provides tools and support to consumers and professionals serving older adults and people with disabilities, enabling them to help their clients access healthcare coverage that allows them to thrive as they age.

- Educates Medicare consumers, service providers and policymakers with practical, accessible materials
- Provides impartial information through in-person trainings, webinars and technical assistance for professionals and volunteers
- Problem solves & Advocates at an individual and systemic level
- Targets underserved groups in Illinois

Adult Protective Services (APS)

The Adult Protective Services Program is locally coordinated through [10 APS provider agencies](#).

Case workers from these agencies conduct investigations and work with older adults (60+) and adults with disabilities (18-59).

- Abuse allegations may relate to Physical, Emotional, Sexual, Passive Neglect, Self-Neglect, Willful Deprivation for individuals that reside in a community setting.
- Financial Exploitation investigations extend to individuals in the community AND those residing in facilities

Long-Term Care Ombudsman Program (LTCOP)

Regional Ombudsman Programs: City of Evanston, LAF

- Mandated by the Federal Older Americans Act and the Illinois Act on Aging, the Illinois Long-Term Care Ombudsman Program (LTCOP) is a resident-directed advocacy program which protects and improves the quality of life for residents in a variety of long-term care settings.
- Ombudsmen work to resolve problems of individual residents and to bring about changes at the local, state and national levels to improve care. Most residents receive good care in long-term care facilities.
- Trained community ombudsmen regularly visit long-term care facilities, monitor conditions and care, and provide a voice for those unable to speak for themselves.

Illinois Senior Medicare Patrol (SMP)

SMP is a statewide program that empowers Medicare and Medicaid beneficiaries to prevent, detect, and report healthcare fraud, errors and abuse through outreach, counseling, and education. SMP does:

- Outreach and Education: presentations to groups, exhibits at events, and one on one counseling with Medicare beneficiaries about healthcare fraud

- Beneficiary Fraud Cases: Receives beneficiary complaints about potential healthcare fraud and makes referrals to state or federal agencies for further investigation
- We offer Virtual and in person presentations. We have a 4-part webinar series we are currently offering virtually.

Call the Illinois SMP at AgeOptions at (800)699-9043 to schedule a webinar or in person presentation. Visit www.illinoismp.org for more information.

Senior Employment Specialist Program (SESP)

The goal of SESP is ensure older individuals are provided appropriate, equitable and maximum opportunity for participation in activities fostering increased employment and economic opportunities. This is accomplished through coordinated system of federal, state and locally supported educational, training and employment-related services, program and activities in suburban Cook County.

- Provides referrals to Senior Employment Community Service Program (SCESP) which matches eligible older adults with part-time jobs for community service organizations.
 - Eligibility: 55+, unemployed, income at or below 125% of federal poverty line.
- Provides employment-related training information to older adults interested in re-entering the workforce
- Promotes awareness of the benefits of hiring older workers

Thrive with Pride

Thrive with Pride is a new program for older adults (and caregivers) who are also members of the LGBT+ community. Programming is all virtual until at least the end of 2020. We have nine site partners around suburban Cook County who offer small-group discussions (via a variety of online platforms, including Zoom and Facebook), and a monthly "plenary" that is open to everyone (on Zoom). Our goal is to help older LGBT+ adults and caregivers feel less socially isolated and provide a space where they can share stories and swap resources in a safe and affirming setting. AgeOptions will provide many of our presentations and series (including caregiving, Take Charge of Your Health, Medicare ABCD's, SMP fraud prevention, Boost Your Budget and other programs) in the large-group settings, to provide LGBT+ older adults with information and resources that can help them thrive as they age.

The plenary is a great way to get a taste of the program - it is free and open to all, no registration or fee required. Bottom line: folks with questions can be sent to Kate Spelman, who will try to match LGBT+ older adults and caregivers with a cafe site and provide more info on our program or our agency's efforts to become more LGBT+ affirming to any ADRN professional. See more at <http://ageoptions.org/gallery/thrivewithpride/> for upcoming plenaries and more information.

Health Promotion Programs

AgeOptions offers a number of evidence-based health promotion programs that are currently being offered virtually.

- **Take Charge of Your Health and Take Charge of Your Diabetes** - designed for individuals with ongoing health conditions and caregivers. Workshops empower participants through skill building and action planning to make meaningful and lasting changes to their health. Workshops meet once a week for six consecutive weeks for 2 ½ hours. Some of the topics covered include healthy eating, physical activity and exercise, medication management and action planning. Workshops are also offered in Spanish.
- **Tai Chi for Arthritis and Fall Prevention** - designed to reduce the fear of falling and improve relaxation and balance in older adults who have concerns about falls. There are 16 hours of instruction once per week for 16 weeks or twice per week for 8 weeks. Sessions include one or two movements per lesson, progressively leading to completing the six basic core movements and six advanced extension movements.
- **Bingocize** - combines a bingo-like game with exercise and health education. The addition of Bingo addresses many of the barriers to older adults' participation because the game is fun, familiar and done in a group setting. The program has been shown to increase older adults' functional fitness, health knowledge, and social engagement. Classes meet twice a week for 10 consecutive weeks.
- **Stressbusting for Family Caregivers** - designed to improve the quality of life for family caregivers who provide care for persons with Alzheimer's disease, other related dementias, and chronic illnesses. Workshops meet 90 minutes once a week for 9 weeks and helps to decrease caregiver stress, depression and burdens. It also increases a caregiver's ability to manage stress and relax.

For more information on AgeOptions health promotion programs, visit www.ilpathwaystohealth.org.