



Florida Association of
Aging Services Providers

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Florida Association of Aging Services Providers

Guest Editors: James Dodd, Summit Home Healthcare
Products and Amanda Hinz, Senior Friendship Centers

Message from the President

By Darrell J. Drummond, Council on Aging of St. Lucie, Inc.



Happy Summer! As we enter the summer months, we tend to slow down and focus on vacation and relaxation.

Unfortunately, this year we are having to deal with a lot of issues within our senior network that demand our attention and action. The newsletter this quarter will deal with many of the issues confronting us now, from supply issues to the impact inflation is having on our ability to meet the needs of our clients and staff. As we

navigate these issues, I believe it is important to remember that many of us have faced these types of issues before and have the experience and expertise to provide invaluable assistance to anyone within our membership. Please don't hesitate to reach out to our staff for referrals for any pressing issue you may need assistance in resolving.

During the last three months, we have had several days and months where we have recognized different events and causes.

Continued on Page 2

Table of Contents

President's Message	1-2
Florida Conference on Aging	3
Medical Supplies and Supply Chains	4-5
AARP Awards Grants to 10 Florida Organizations	5
Preparing for the 2022 Hurricane Season	6
Thank you Humana Healthy Horizons for the FASP Awards	7
Thank you Sponsors!	9

This Issue's Sponsors

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Continued from page 1


Some of the ones that have occurred are listed here:


National Mental Health Month – May 2022

 amplifies the message of “Together for Mental Health.” The National Alliance on Mental Illness used this time to bring our voices together to advocate for mental health and access to care through their blog, personal stories, videos, digital toolkits, social media engagements and national events.

National Prevention Week – May 8 – 14

 Each May, we observe National Prevention Week to raise awareness about substance use prevention and positive mental health.

Older Americans Month May 2022 theme “Age My Way”; an opportunity for all of us to explore the many ways older adults can remain in and be involved with their communities.


World Elder Abuse Awareness Day (June 15th)

 Digital Equity for All Ages is the theme of World Elder Abuse Awareness Day 2022.

Alzheimer’s & Brain Awareness Month is observed in June as an opportunity to spread the word about and discuss Alzheimer’s disease and other dementias. Throughout the month, the Alzheimer’s Association encourages people around the globe to support the movement by wearing purple and training their brains to fight the disease.


As always, I encourage members to reach out to your local governments to proclaim these causes during their public meetings. This is a great way to stay connected to your local leadership and keep your organization recognized as the go-to agency for these types of services.

Within this newsletter you will see registration information regarding the FCOA Annual Conference coming August 22-24th, to be held in Orlando at the Hyatt Regency. There will be many sessions and speakers present to address many current senior issues. In addition to that, after almost three (3) years, this conference will afford us the opportunity to meet and share each other’s company physically rather than virtually, as we have been forced to do during the pandemic.

I look forward to seeing everyone in August and please take time to enjoy this beautiful Florida summer weather!

Darrell Drummond





*Florida Conference on Aging
August 22-24, 2022*

Hyatt Regency, Orlando, FL

The Florida Conference on Aging is a multi-disciplinary conference held annually. FCOA is proud to partner with the Florida Association of Aging Services Providers for this event. Watch the [FCOA website](#) for information about specific workshops and speakers.

Conference Hotel Information

Hyatt Regency - 9801 International Drive, Orlando, FL
Reservations: 402-593-5048 (group code G-N5ST)
or [ONLINE CLICK HERE](#)

Room Rate: \$153/night for rooms reserved by July 30, 2022.

Participants who book their room in the FCOA room block waived resort fee of \$30/night and a daily self-parking rate of \$10 or 25% off of valet parking.

[Conference Schedule at a Glance](#)



Free Pre-Conference Intensive

Florida Conference on Aging

Monday, August 22, 3:00pm—5:00pm

eCIRTS Panel & Dialogue With WellSky and DOEA

[REGISTER TO ATTEND!](#)



Medical Supplies and Supply Chains

By: James Dodd, Summit Home Healthcare Products

In 2021 as the end of the pandemic seemed to be on the horizon, I remember thinking “I can’t wait to get back to normal after all this!” Ah, how naive that seems now. I believe we all had some awareness that things wouldn’t all immediately go back to normal, but I think most of us had expectations that we wouldn’t be far off as the pandemic winds down.

With new problems like inflation, scarcity, gas prices, and the Ukrainian invasion by Russia; it looks like the next couple of years are going to be just as problematic as the pandemic years. We’re all aware of what’s going on in the retail market: prices are all going up! What many may not understand is why or how many different global problems combine to cause it.

My industry, consumable medical supplies and durable medical equipment, is facing several of the same challenges as the retail sector. Raw materials are more expensive, the supply chain is bottlenecked, transportation costs are rising, and some products are backordered indefinitely.

You have likely heard of the tampon shortage; it has been a repeated headline over the past weeks. What isn’t reported as often is that adult incontinence products are dealing with the exact same challenges that are causing this shortage. Incontinence care is a critical part of home care for the aging population, just like feminine hygiene is for women.

Incontinence supplies essentially have three major components that make the cost of the product: cotton, petrochemical raw materials, and transportation. Cotton raw materials, which make up the “fluff” to help with moisture absorbency, has seen a 34% increase. Petrochemical products for the super absorbent polymer which are responsible for most of the moisture absorbency and the outer layer plastics of the products, are up a whopping 125%. Lastly, but certainly not least are the delivery costs, both to the distributor and to the client’s home which are up 85% in the past 12 months. The majority of incontinence supplies are delivered straight to a patient’s home.

The combined effect of these issues is that incontinence products cost more. Many manufacturers have put some of their lowest priced products on hold being unable to keep the costs down enough to make those products profitable. Sooner than later, the wholesale costs will result in a price increase from CMS and DME companies.

In fact, the statistics above came from the American Association for Homecare in a letter addressed to Medicaid Program Directors intended to inform them that reimbursements they have negotiated are going to need to change or they risk supply interruptions and possibly even suppliers going out of business. This is a problem because two out of three medical supply businesses have closed the doors since 2013, there are not many of us left.

Durable medical equipment (DME) such as walkers, bedside commodes, and grab bars have all had supply chain issues over that past 12 months as well. Over the past decade the production of the items has largely moved overseas to China. US consumer demand for nearly everything imported from China increased dramatically as our pandemic restrictions eased in the US. This put extreme pressure on the cargo shipping industry that imports Chinese goods, and demand for shipping containers of goods to the US far exceeded the capacity of the industry to get them there.

This meant that many containers of DME were delayed with no ETA for delivery and the cost to ship them rose exponentially. There have also been delays on the US side where container ships couldn’t be unloaded fast enough, leaving many ships to sit in port for weeks before they could be unloaded. This further cascaded into the labor shortage of US long haul truckers to move the items across the US to where they were needed.



Continued on Page 5

Continued from page 4

As if that weren't enough, China's city-wide lockdowns to combat the spread of Covid often meant that Chinese workers were not even able to leave their homes, much less go to work. This created additional bottlenecks in the manufacturing of these items, compounding the logistical problems even more.

For months DME was on backorder and when it did arrive in stock the logistical surcharges have been typically doubling the cost of the item above their pre-pandemic prices. While the industry is hopeful that as these supply chain problems are worked out as the capacity of the cargo industry catches up with the demand and the lockdowns in China abate, these surcharges have not yet gone back down.



Medical suppliers have been feeling the impacts of supply chain disruptions, oil prices, and raw material costs just like the retail industry. It's easy to label it as inflation, and it is inflation, but there are many different components that affect many points along the chain that bring these products to the patients that need them. Individually they would have a much lesser impact on the price and availability of the medical supplies that are crucial to homecare. All together they are having a tremendous impact on an industry that has been relatively stable on pricing for over a decade.

It remains to be seen which of these factors will be transitory and which will remain, but I find myself still wishing to get back to that pre-pandemic normal and wondering if that will ever happen.



AARP Awards Grants to 10 Florida Organizations to Make Communities More Livable

This year, AARP is bolstering its investment of affordable and adaptable housing solutions in response to the national housing crisis

TALLAHASSEE, FLA. – Today, AARP Florida announced 10 organizations throughout the state will receive 2022 Community Challenge Grants, totaling \$157,800, as part of the largest group of grantees to date with \$3.4 million awarded among 260 organizations nationwide. Grantees will implement quick-action projects that help communities become more livable in the long-term by improving public places; transportation; housing; diversity, equity and inclusion; digital access; and civic engagement, with an emphasis on the needs of adults age 50 and over.

Florida State Director Jeff Johnson said, "AARP Florida is committed to working with communities to improve residents' quality of life through tangible changes. We are proud to collaborate with this year's grantees as they make immediate improvements in their communities to jumpstart long-term change in the Sunshine State, especially for Floridians 50+."



Preparing for the 2022 Hurricane Season

Hurricane Season June 1 through November 30

Living in Florida offers many benefits and advantages, but be sure to thoroughly prepare for the 2022 Atlantic Hurricane Season that started on June 1. After assessing damages done from hurricanes in the past few years, Floridians are encouraged to have [at least 7 days of supplies](#). These supplies include food, water, medicine, batteries, etc. Each family and business is advised to be adequately stocked and prepared to face this hurricane season.



During the past three years, four hurricanes have made landfall in Florida, including Hurricane Michael, the first hurricane to make landfall in the U.S. as a Category 5 since Hurricane Andrew in 1992. If you are unsure of what to do when disaster strikes, make a plan today. To get you and your family started on planning visit FloridaDisaster.org/GetAPlan.

If you are an owner of a business and want to ensure that you will be able to continue business after a disaster, visit floridadisaster.org/business/planning-for-businesses/ to get started on planning.

For information about planning for any disaster and for disaster preparedness tips, visit www.ready.gov/.

[Complete Disaster Supply Kit Checklist](#)



Prepare for Your Pet

Your pets are important members of your family, so they need to be included in your family's emergency plan. [Get Pet Prep Tips](#)

FASP is on Social Media—Are You?



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Humana | Healthy Horizons™

Thank you Humana Healthy Horizons for sponsoring the Best Direct Service Employee of the Year and the Senior Volunteer of the Year Awards!

FASP will present these awards during the Florida Conference on Aging to honor the dedication of Florida service employees and volunteers. The 2022 Florida Conference on Aging will be held August 22-24, at the Hyatt Regency in Orlando, Florida.

Due to the generosity of Humana Healthy Horizons in Florida, Award winners will receive \$500 for themselves and \$500 for their agency, one year complimentary membership in FASP, complimentary registration to the Florida Conference on Aging and 1 night hotel stay to receive their award.

The Humana Healthy Horizons Best Direct Service Employee of the Year Award acknowledges an employee who makes a difference in the lives of seniors individually or through a unit, group, agency or organization.

Past Best Direct Service Employee of the Year

Award Winners

2021 Frances Duran-Brea
2020 Belkys Pueriet
2019 Lizabeth Miguel
2018 Carole Ware
2017 Ed Gines
2016 Paula Jory
2015 Sherry Tucker
2014 Toulia Wootan
2013 Paulette Kozlowski
2012 Lori Radice
2011 Debbie Slade
2010 Therese Pokryfke

The Humana Healthy Horizons Senior Volunteer of the Year Award acknowledges the accomplishments of a Senior Volunteer who serves clients.

Past Senior Volunteer of the Year

Award Winners

2021 Seth Thomas Miller
2020 Denise Hegener





Continued from page 5

The Florida 2022 Community Challenge Grant projects include:

- **Dunedin, Fla. – Dunedin Public Library – \$6,200** Universal-access picnic tables will be added to the playground at the library, and a “story walk” will be created with signage explaining the city’s history and other distinctions.
- **Fort Lauderdale, Fla. – Grace Arts – \$12,500** A giant fabric shade with a design of geometric shapes will hang above an outdoor shopping plaza in the Victoria Park neighborhood to provide shade and better location for cultural events and activities.
- **Miami, Fla. – Friends of The Underline – \$20,000** Miami’s Walk4Life club will expand into the city’s downtown. One digital message board will highlight members’ accomplishments, offer health tips and promote wellness events.
- **Miami, Fla. – Transit Alliance Miami – \$20,000** The *My Transit My City* project will offer lessons and technical support to older adults and people with disabilities about how to use the county’s redesigned bus system.
- **Pensacola, Fla. – Council on Aging of West Florida – \$50,000** Two “tiny houses” will be built. One will house a low-income senior citizen, the other will be used as a model home to educate the community about the ways tiny houses can help alleviate the city’s severe housing shortage.
- **Defuniak Springs, Fla. – Walton County Board of County Commissioners – \$9,000** A gaming area will be created at the Coastal Branch Library on an existing courtyard or green space. It will include a ping-pong table, cornhole game and checkers/chess table.
- **Tallahassee, Fla. – 2-1-1 Big Bend – \$15,000** Rides will be provided throughout the county to residents age 50 or older.
- **Tampa, Fla. – Carrollwood Cultural Center – \$6,350** To aid blind or visually impaired arts aficionados, audio describers will be hired and an assistive-listening system will be installed for center’s theatrical, dance and art offerings. The Blind Visionaries multimedia group will perform, and a tactile and audible art exhibit will be staged.
- **Tampa, Fla. – City of Tampa – \$7,500** A pathway will be built to connect Linebaugh Avenue and apartments for older adults to the walking loop in Takomah Trail Park.
- **Wilton Manors, Fla. – Three Bridges Neighborhood Association – \$11,250** To improve the aesthetic appeal of Coral Gardens Park, new lighting, plants and a Little Free Library will be installed. Grant funds will also be used for a renaming contest and block party.

AARP Community Challenge Grant projects will be funded in all 50 states, Washington, D.C., Puerto Rico, and the U.S. Virgin Islands. True to the program’s quick-action nature, projects must be completed by November 30, 2022.

This year, AARP is bolstering its investment of affordable and adaptable housing solutions in response to the national housing crisis. With additional funding support from Toyota Motor North America, the program is also increasing its support of projects that improve mobility innovation and transportation options.

The grant program is part of AARP’s nationwide Livable Communities initiative, which supports the efforts of cities, towns, neighborhoods and rural areas to become great places to live for people of all ages. Since 2017, AARP Florida has awarded 24 grants and \$264,328 through the program to nonprofit organizations and government entities across the state.

View the full list of grantees and their project descriptions at aarp.org/communitychallenge and learn more about AARP Livable Communities at aarp.org/livable.



Thank You Sponsors!



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Promoting Independence in our Community

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