

Senior Scope

A newspaper serving the communities of **Acushnet ■ Dartmouth ■ Fairhaven ■ Gosnold ■ Marion ■ Mattapoisett ■ New Bedford ■ Rochester**

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Making Social Day Work, page 12

Social day reopens in Fairhaven

Loss of programs during the pandemic hurt participants and their families

New Bedford area social day programs, devastated during the COVID-19 pandemic, are making a comeback in 2023 with the re-opening of the Fairhaven Council on Aging program this month. The addition brings the number of active social day programs between Westport and Wareham to three, down from six before pandemic lockdowns. Of the three that closed - Fairhaven, Dartmouth and Wareham - Fairhaven is the first to reopen. The COA plans to open Jan. 31, operating three days a week.

Despite financial and other challenges, Fairhaven COA Director Martha Reed made reopening the program a focus of her first year as director.

"It's too important a program to not at least give it our full effort because it's a need in the community," said Reed. "Our seniors are hurting. We see the need every day and how thirsty they are for socialization."

Westport COA director Director Beverly Bisch agreed.

Even though social day is not



Social Day participants celebrate at a Valentine's Day party from pre-pandemic days in this photo from the Fairhaven Council on Aging.

"Our seniors are hurting. We see the need every day and how thirsty they are for socialization."
—Martha Reed,
Director, Fairhaven Council on Aging

a medical model, like adult day programs, it supports the health and well-being of older adults, she said, referring to programs designed for adults who need care beyond what social day provides.

Bisch kept her program open after COVID lockdowns but reduced the number of days she operates a week to two. She's been working to increase that number to three and will do so this month.

"These are people who live alone,

who don't drive anymore, and are just so isolated," she said. "I know people think it's not important because we're not a medical model. But people are social beings and they need to be able to come in and develop friendships... If you can't get to those people, they're home alone for hours and hours and they don't do anything."

Social day programs offer camaraderie, physical and mental activity, meals, and purpose.

For example, two women who used to bring their husbands to the program and are now widowed come in for themselves now, said Bisch, adding, "They love coming here because it's just given them a purpose to get up in the morning and get out. They have so much fun...They sing

Continued on page 12

State plan will boost access to mental health support

Child & Family Services designated the CBHC for New Bedford area

New "front door" access to mental health and substance use care in Massachusetts will help individuals and their loved ones, including older adults, figure out where to find the support they need and how to connect to it. The plan also designates Child & Family Services as the South Coast's local service provider.

The expanded access comes through the 2023 implementation of a statewide Roadmap for Behavioral Health Reform plan outlining

the designation of 25 Community Behavioral Health Centers, including Child & Family Services locations in both New Bedford and Fall River.

The designated CFS sites are now serving "as hubs for comprehensive community mental health and addiction care, providing routine and urgent outpatient services as well as crisis care for children and adults," according to a media release on CFS' website.

"Child & Family Services is both honored and excited to receive this designation as a CBHC from the Commonwealth of Massachusetts,"

said Anne Sampaio, CEO, in the release. "Historically, CFS has been a primary provider of community and behavioral health services and we now look forward to the expansion and enrichment of these services in the Greater Fall River, New Bedford, Plymouth, and Cape Cod areas."

"As a CBHC, MassHealth members will be able to receive timely, coordinated, and comprehensive treatment to address their behavioral healthcare needs," Sampaio said.

In addition to the CBHCs, the statewide plan adds mobile crisis

Continued on page 3

Social Security’s top five data privacy resources for staying safe online

By Delia De Mello
Social Security

It is important that you stay safe online. When we collect your personal information, we are committed to protecting your privacy.

Please review these data privacy resources:

A great online resource is www.ssa.gov/myaccount. You can visit this page to open a secure my Social Security account, keep track of your earnings record, and identify any suspicious activity.

Our Privacy Program page at www.ssa.gov/privacy is a central resource to learn about our Privacy Compliance Program, submit a Privacy Act request, and review our privacy policies and reports.

In our blog post, 10 Ways to Protect Your Personal Information, we cover steps you and your loved ones can take to protect personal data. You can check out this blog at blog.ssa.gov/10-ways-to-protect-your-personal-information.

Our fact sheet, How You Can Help Us Protect Your Social



Delia DeMello

Security Number and Keep Your Information Safe, provides details to safeguard your private information. You can access this fact sheet at www.ssa.gov/pubs/EN-05-10220.pdf.

Our Guard Your Card infographic at www.ssa.gov/ssnumber/assets/EN-05-10553.pdf helps you and your loved ones understand when you need to show your physical Social Security card – and when you do not.

We encourage you to help protect your vital information. Please share these resources with your loved ones.

From the Editor

Last month I spent my days calling person after person in aging professions to learn more about social day programs – why some of them have struggled and closed, what is happening here in the South Coast, and how future trends might influence them.

The conversations got me thinking about social conditions that affect our oldest populations the most, like transportation, for example, and isolation.

Ironically, despite all of our technology, we live in a disconnected world where many older adults are experiencing loneliness, sitting in their homes alone day after day.

Isolation often becomes a problem when older adults can no longer drive and have to give up their car keys, Beverly Bisch told me as she talked about why social day activities and connections are important to older adults. Social day provides people a reason to get out of bed in the morning, she said, and a place to go and make friends at a time in life when one’s social circle has dwindled.

“It’s fun, don’t get me wrong, but it’s not play,” she said.

“It used to be more medical and more frail (elders), but it’s not as much anymore,” Bisch said. “Now it’s more people who are isolated.”

Bisch said some who begin coming to social day later hear from their

doctors, ‘I don’t know what you’re doing but whatever it is, keep doing it.’”

In Fairhaven, COA Director Martha Reed says she’s noticed a rising interest in attending social activities versus educational programming.

“Our highest attended activities right now are the ones that are socializing,” she said. “Not the educational ones, not Medicare 101, and not falls prevention.”


Other social activities exist for older adults including regular COA programming like the Marion COA’s Memory Cafe. But social day programs are a sort of one-stop shop providing transportation, meals, activities, the presence of their peers, and staff in one space.

Reed summed it up this way. “Social Day is a way to get out and socialize with your peers in a safe environment,” she said.


Connect with Beth Perdue at bperdue@coastlinenb.org or by mail to Senior Scope, 863 Belleville Ave., New Bedford, MA 02745.




Beth Perdue

**Coastline**
508-999-6400

Mass Options 844-422-6277
massoptions.org 844-422-MASS

**SHINE Counselors**
in the Greater New Bedford Area

Dartmouth Council on Aging 628 Dartmouth St., Dartmouth	508-999-4717	Peggy Vollmer Virginia Walega
Fairhaven Council on Aging 229 Huttleston Ave, Fairhaven	508-979-4029	Dianne Perkins Carolyn Dantoni
GNB Community Health Center 874 Purchase Street, New Bedford	508-992-6553 x147	Derek Mendes
Immigrants’ Assistance Center 58 Crapo St., New Bedford	508-996-8113	Lucy Oliveira
Marion Council on Aging 465 Mill Street, Marion	508-748-3570	Connie Heacox
Mattapoisett Council on Aging 17 Barstow Street, Mattapoisett	508-758-4110	Connie Heacox
New Bedford Council on Aging 181 Hillman St. (for New Bedford residents only)	508-991-6250 508-991-6252 508-991-6170 508-991-6170	Natasha Franco Luisana Paez-Espinal Pat Foster Nora Rose
PACE, Inc. 166 William St., New Bedford	508-999-9920	Freda St. Marie-Johnson
Rochester Council on Aging 67 Dexter Lane, Rochester	508-763-8723	Jan Cote
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Our donors help *Senior Scope* carry out its mission, and we cannot thank you enough for your support. Voluntary donations can be mailed to Coastline, 863 Belleville Ave., New Bedford, MA 02745. Checks can be paid to the order of: *Coastline*. We cannot process checks made out to “*Senior Scope*.” You can also call Coastline’s Payment Department at 508-742-9114 to donate with a credit card or use the QR code below to donate online.

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Thank you St. Jude for prayers answered.

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The Way Things Were



A Sweet Day, 1966

Joseph Cox, one of the co-founders of Dorothy Cox’s Chocolates, and his son Francis Cox (left) make chocolate hearts for sweethearts with sweet teeth at their Fairhaven building in 1966.

The local favorite, which was started in 1928 by five siblings, including Dorothy Cox herself, both made and sold candy in the building. The business is still active and is now run by the third and fourth generations of the family.

At right, Kathryn LaVallee eyes trays of chocolate temptations to choose from for Valentine’s Day.

“The Way Things Were” is a collaboration between Senior Scope and Spinner Publications. To share your photos and memories, email Senior Scope editor, Beth Perdue, at bperdue@coastlinenb.org or mail photos to her at Senior Scope, 863 Belleville Ave., New Bedford, MA 02745.

Mental Health continued...

services and launches a 24/7 behavioral health help line that offers a single point of contact for real-time support, initial clinical assessment, and connection to the appropriate evaluation and treatment, regardless of insurance status or ability to pay, according to the state’s release. It is designed to reduce reliance on hospital emergency rooms by improving the availability of behavioral health clinical services for adults and youth.

CBHC services, provided in-person and via telehealth, include:

- Same-day access to intake and brief assessment, urgent and crisis treatment, and medication;
- Same-day evaluation and referral to treatment, with timely follow-up appointments;
- Care across the lifespan for all ages – children, adults, and families; and,
- Extended hours including evenings and weekends.

Announced in 2021, the reform plan is a multi-year blueprint, based on listening sessions and feedback from nearly 700 individuals, families, providers, and other stakeholders who identified the need for expanded access to treatment, more effective treatment, and improved health equity, the state said in a media release.

The hotline is available by calling or texting 833-773-BHHL or by online chat at masshelpline.com.



com. Help in multiple languages is available.

CFS’ New Bedford site is the CBHC for the state’s southern coast, according to the organization, serving MassHealth members from Acushnet, Carver, Dartmouth, Duxbury, Fairhaven, Halifax, Hanover, Hanson, Kingston, Marion, Marshfield, Mattapoisett, New Bedford, Pembroke, Plymouth, Plympton Rochester and Wareham.

The CBHC for Fall River will serve MassHealth members from Fall River, Freetown, Somerset, Swansea, and Westport catchment areas, CFS said. The Cape Cod area will be served by Bay Cove Human Services as the designated CBHC, with a partnership with CFS to provide children’s services.

For more information, visit www.mass.gov/roadmap-for-behavioral-health-reform.



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Senior Whole Health complies with all applicable Federal civil rights laws and does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national origin, age, disability or sex. Senior Whole Health (HMO SNP) and Senior Whole Health NHC (HMO SNP) are coordinated care plans with a Medicare Advantage contract and a contract with the Commonwealth of Massachusetts/EOHHS MassHealth (Medicaid) program. Enrollment depends on annual contract renewal. H2224_2021_15696_M Accepted 11/16/2020

Update

Yoga for early Parkinson’s

This small group yoga class includes functionally based movements on and off the mat, yoga postures/practices, breathing exercises, and more. Improve your strength, flexibility, balance and energy and promote overall well-being while addressing challenges as they arise. With instructor Nanci Winterhalter, certified yoga therapist, yoga teacher, and physical therapist. Six-class session is \$75; support is readily available. For details, call 508-990-0178 or email Nanci at NanciWinterhalter@gmail.com.

Local program can help with consumer problems

The New Bedford Regional Local Consumer Program wants people to know that gift cards are for gifts and not for payments. If someone calls you and asks you to buy a gift card to pay bail or ransom; keep your social security benefits; pay an IRS debt; pay for computer tech support; pay for a family member in trouble; keep your utilities on; or, pay for a lottery prize, beware. Hang up because it’s a scam. The consumer program made the announcement working in cooperation with the Office of the MA Attorney General. Contact them at 508-979-1693 or consumer@newbedford-ma.gov if you have a consumer problem or question.

Protect yourself from RSV

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention are recommending that older adults take extra care to protect themselves from RSV, or Respiratory Syncytial Virus, this winter. Adults age 65 and older are in one of the high-risk categories for severe RSV infection, the CDC said. Each year, between 60,000-120,000 older adults in the U.S. are hospitalized and 6,000-10,000 of them die due to RSV infection, the CDC estimates. Adults with RSV infection typically have mild cold-like symptoms, but can develop a lung infection or pneumonia, the agency said. Protective steps include: washing your hands often with soap and water for 20 seconds; avoid touching your eyes, nose, and mouth with unwashed hands; avoid close contact with sick people; avoid close contact, such as kissing, and sharing cups or eating utensils with people who have cold-like symptoms; cover your mouth and nose with a tissue when coughing or sneezing; clean and disinfect surfaces that people frequently touch, such as doorknobs; and, stay home when you are sick, if possible.

Speaker announced for Civil War Roundtable

The February meeting of the Civil War Roundtable will begin at 6 p.m. Feb. 28 at the Low Tide Yacht Club, Fort Taber, 1000 S Rodney French Blvd, New Bedford. The speaker for the month is David Prentiss. Doors open at 5:15 p.m. for social hour. Prentiss is a long-time member of the Round Table and has delivered many interesting presentations. Meetings are free and open to the public well lit, with plenty of free parking. All are welcome.

Telehealth consult on treatment with Paxlovid available

The Massachusetts telehealth service for COVID-19 treatment can now be accessed by calling 833-273-6330 from 8 a.m. to 10 p.m. daily in addition to the online platform. The telehealth service can tell you if the COVID-19 treatment is right for you, and the treatment can be sent to your pharmacy or to your home for free. Paxlovid is designed for individuals 12 years and older who are at an increased risk of severe disease and have tested positive for COVID-19. A list of qualifying conditions and more information can be found at <https://www.mass.gov/info-details/free-telehealth-for-covid-19-treatment-with-paxlovid>. If eligible, you’ll be connected with a clinician for a phone or video consultation within 30 minutes.

Information sessions for Changemaker grants

United Way of Greater New Bedford will hold two virtual information sessions this month for anyone interested in applying for a Changemaker Grant. Changemaker Grants let local all-volunteer groups apply for up to \$2,500 to complete projects that are engaging, community driven, solutions-focused, and that foster unity through community action. Changemaker groups also receive support through skill-building workshops, networking opportunities, and new volunteer recruitment through Volunteer SouthCoast. Applications will be accepted Feb. 1 - March 10. Information sessions will take place via Zoom at 1 p.m. Feb. 8 or 5:30 p.m. Feb. 9. For more information and for session registration links, visit unitedwayofgnb.org/changemaker-grants or call 508-994-9625.

NBPD offering wellness checks for older women

The New Bedford Police Department are inviting sign ups of women aged 65 and older who live alone in the city and would benefit from a visit by a police officer as a wellness check. The visits are part of the department’s outreach program and are funded through a grant from the Associates for the Relief of Aged Women. The goal is to check on elderly women who are living alone in the community, addressing issues they might have, check on their locks and alarms, and just provide an overall sense of security that they might be lacking. If you would like to participate or know of a woman who may be living in seclusion and might benefit from a visit from our officers, please call them at 508-961-6300, ext. 79470 or ext. 79456.

Cable TV classes starting

Kick off your New Year by producing your own TV show on New Bedford Public Access. New five-week in-person sessions are starting in the studio to learn basic TV show production and editing. This course is available to all New Bedford residents and organizations. Basic certification class sessions are: Wednesdays, 10 a.m. - 12:30 p.m., from Feb. 1 to March 1; or Mondays, 6-8:30 p.m., from March 13 to April 10. To sign up, email Charlene at charlene.rocha-arruda@newbedford-ma.gov or Shelbi at shelbi.chandler@newbedford-ma.gov, or call the studio at 508-979-1775.

Call Mass211 to connect to helpful resources

Mass 211 exists to serve the community with an anonymous confidential telephone service ready to answer your questions 24-hours a day, 7 days a week, and 365 days per year. Mass 211 calls are answered by specialists who will connect you to the help you need. Trained specialists can assist with almost any challenge including transportation, housing food, utility bills, mental health concerns, care options, substance use concerns and more. Mass211 is the non-profit, statewide information and referral line for health & human services. If you need assistance dial 2-1-1 from a landline/cell phone in Massachusetts to find programs near you. Translation is available in 150-plus languages.



George Smith, longtime Coastline supporter and board member, smiles at a sign renaming the boardroom in his honor. From l-r are: Nancy Smith, George Smith, Coastline CEO Justin Lees, Ashley Barrigas, and Advisory Council member, Maria Connor (seated).



Unveiling the George Smith Boardroom

Coastline renamed its boardroom the George Smith Boardroom in January, recognizing Smith’s 30-plus years of support for the organization. Smith served as New Bedford city councilor, Bristol County chapter president of Mass Senior Action Council, and most recently recipient of the AARP Andrus Award for his long career of advocating for the elderly throughout Bristol County. With him are Coastline CEO Justin Lees, and Board President Michelle Beneski.

Your Health

How a community walking program changed hearts

A Wellness Q&A with Dr. Mike Rocha

In honor of American Heart month and its goal of raising awareness of cardiovascular disease prevention, Senior Scope spoke with Dr. Mike Rocha, the New Bedford cardiologist and wellness leader, who started the *Walk with a Doc* program in in the city.

What led you to start *Walk with a Doc*? Have you met your goals?

In 2014, there was an article published in the Standard-Times on the findings of the Tufts Healthy Aging Collaborative that showed that the health of our elderly population was overall one of the lowest in the state.

We scored low in almost all aspects including heart health, mental health, and prevention. The take home message was that pills and procedures aren't enough for keeping us well and that more could and should be done. This is when we started a monthly walk as a first step. In 2015, we officially became part of the international Walk with a Doc program founded by cardiologist David Sabgir in Columbus, Ohio.

We started small and over the years have added more doctors and nurse practitioners to lead the walk from all of the local health systems to achieve the goal of being weekly. We have had

setbacks with the pandemic when we had really grown the numbers of our weekly walkers in 2020 but we are building it back up again. We were one of the first Walk with a Doc groups to get back going outside in the summer of 2020.

We are able to discuss current health topics and answer questions at each walk. During the pandemic, a lot of attention went toward COVID-related topics but most recently we had the opportunity to discuss cardiac arrest in the setting of the Buffalo Bills player, Damar Hamlin, and the importance of learning CPR.

I do feel that our initial goal of starting movement and mindset has been planted but the obstacles to creating a healthier population is a huge task requiring buy-in at many levels. This is our contribution toward this goal while we work toward the bigger task of a healthier Greater New Bedford.

Have you seen friendships develop?

We have many regular walkers and they usually recruit friends and family to join us. The benefit of walking goes far beyond the physical benefit. The social connections may be the biggest benefit that builds a sense of community. People have their own walking partners that have developed over the years. We continue to see study after study that points out that social connections are a huge contribution to our well-being.



What's been your most enjoyable moment from the program?

We have witnessed some inspiring things over the years. One woman was pushed by her daughter in a wheelchair around the route. One gentleman in his 90's shows up periodically and walks with a walker for part of the walk. We had another person with severe deforming arthritis walk weekly.

We have witnessed transformations where people can barely make a small portion of the walk and eventually increase their capacity to complete the full walk. These personal triumphs are opportunities to celebrate their achievements. We meet people where they are at, as this is not a race. People can participate at any pace and do as much of the walk as they are comfortable.

What are the benefits of walking, beyond physical gains?

Dr. John Ratey, a psychiatrist in Boston, has a wonderful quote that exercise is like getting a small dose of Ritalin and Prozac. He is absolutely correct that walking and exercise positively impact our brain neurotrans-

mitters and can help our mental well-being. Just yesterday, I saw a patient in the office that remarked how regular walking has improved their mood.

How important is it that physicians lead the walk?

The opportunity to interact with patients and the community fills the soul as a physician. It is a privilege to practice in the community that I grew up in. I really feel that what we are doing is walking medicine to be filled each week at Buttonwood Park (Mall in the winter). The physicians and nurse practitioners really enjoy leading the walks as it gives an opportunity to connect in a unique way outside of the office.

What are your top suggestions for older adults to do this month?

The first thing that we all need to do is be kind to ourselves. We are often comparing ourselves to others and judging ourselves harshly. We need to start where we are and keep going.

Pick something to change that is reasonable and try to stick with it. Walk 5 to 10 more minutes a day or a little more of whatever we like to do to move our bodies. Make one healthier choice a day in our diets. An extra veggie, salad, or fruit a day and one less food out of a package can make an impact.

Most importantly, being grateful for those around us and putting effort into our social connections are perhaps the best things for our heart.



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Call 1-866-610-2273 (TTY: call MassRelay at 711), 8 a.m. – 8 p.m., 7 days a week. The call is free.

Terminan los beneficios adicionales de SNAP (Programa de Asistencia Nutricional Suplementaria)

Las familias de Massachusetts que reciben fondos adicionales de SNAP a través del programa federal COVID-19 recibirán el último pago del beneficio adicional el 2 de marzo, de acuerdo con el Departamento de Asistencia Transitoria de Massachusetts (DTA, por sus siglas en inglés). Los pagos eran temporales y estaban destinados a ayudar a las familias durante la emergencia de salud pública por COVID-19.

“El Congreso ha votado recientemente poner fin a esos pagos a partir del 2 de marzo de 2023” dijo Brittany Mangini, comisionada adjunta del DTA en un video de mass.gov. Los beneficios no utilizados se transfieren mes a mes, dijo, de modo que las familias pueden guardar algunos de sus beneficios para después del 2 de marzo.

En el video, Mangini aconseja a

las familias informar al DTA sobre gastos médicos, de vivienda, o cuidado que hayan aumentado y que puedan afectar su beneficio.

“Su hogar debe informar al DTA sobre cualquier gasto que aumente por encima de sus prestaciones normales incluyendo gastos médicos superiores a \$35 al mes para cualquier integrante de su grupo familiar beneficiario de SNAP que sea mayor de 60 años o tenga una discapacidad; si sus gastos de vivienda como el alquiler o la hipoteca aumentaron; o si tiene gastos de cuidado de niños o adultos discapacitados a su cargo mientras trabaja, busca trabajo o asiste a la escuela,” dijo ella.

Para más información, visite mass.gov/extracovidsnap, o llame a DTA Connect al 877-382-2363 o a DTA Assistance Line (Línea de asistencia) al 877-382-2363.

Benefícios federais extra da SNAP irão terminar

Famílias em Massachusetts recebendo fundos extras da SNAP através do programa federal do COVID-19 irão ver os benefícios extra terminar com o seu pagamento em 2 de Março, de acordo com o Massachusetts Department of Transitional Assistance. Os pagamentos eram temporários e designados a ajudar famílias através da emergência de saúde pública do COVID-19.

“O Congresso votou recentemente para terminar esses pagamentos com efeito a partir de 2 de março de 2023,” disse Brittany Mangini, comissária associada da DTA num vídeo de mass.gov. Benefícios não reutilizados passam de mês para mês, disse ela, para que as famílias possam poupar alguns dos seus benefícios para além de 2 de março.

Num vídeo, Mangini aconselha as famílias a informarem o DTA sobre custos médicos, de vida ou de

cuidados que aumentaram e os quais poderão afetar os seus benefícios.

“O seu agregado familiar deverá deixar o DTA saber sobre qualquer despesa que aumenta para além dos benefícios normais incluindo despesas médicas as quais custam mais de \$35 por mês para qualquer pessoa participando no SNAP no seu agregado familiar o qual tem 60 anos ou mais ou tem uma incapacidade; se as despesas do seu agregado familiar aumentaram tais como a renda ou hipoteca; ou se tem despesa de cuidados para dependente como crianças ou adultos incapacitados enquanto está a trabalhar, procurando trabalho ou frequentando a escola,” disse ela.

Para saber mais, visite mass.gov/extracovidsnap, ou chame o DTA Connect no 877-382-2363 ou a Linha de Assistência do DTA no 877-382-2363.

Extra federal SNAP benefits to end this month

Massachusetts families receiving extra SNAP funds through the federal COVID-19 program will see the extra benefit end with their March 2 payments, according to the Massachusetts Department of Transitional Assistance. The payments were temporary and designed to help families through the COVID-19 public health emergency.

“Congress has recently voted to

end these payments effective March 2, 2023,” said Brittany Mangini, DTA associate commissioner in a mass.gov video. Unused benefits roll over month-to-month, she said, so families can save some of their benefits for after March 2.

In the video, Mangini advised families to let DTA know about medical, living, or care costs that have increased and which may affect

their benefit.

“Your household should let DTA know about any expenses that increase beyond your normal benefits including medical expenses that cost over \$35 a month for anyone in your SNAP household who is 60 or older or has a disability; if your household costs have gone up such as your rent or your mortgage; or if you have dependent care costs for

children or disabled adults while you are either working, looking for work, or attending school,” she said.

To learn more, visit mass.gov/extracovidsnap, or call DTA Connect at 877-382-2363 or the DTA Assistance Line at 877-382-2363.

Translations provided by:





PAVING THE WAY FOR FUTURE GENERATIONS

RethinkALZ Clinical Research Study Enrolling Now

If you or a loved one has been diagnosed with Alzheimer's disease, or a physician suspects it may be Alzheimer's disease, you or they may be eligible to participate in a clinical research study.

Study Criteria

To be considered for the RethinkALZ study, patients must:

☐ Be ages 50 to 87 years old


☐ Be diagnosed with, or have a suspected clinical diagnosis of, Alzheimer's Disease

☐ Have a gradual change in memory for six months or more

☐ Have a family member or loved one who can be available as a study partner during the entire study

☐ Be fully vaccinated for COVID-19 or have had a previous COVID-19 infection

Other criteria will apply. There is no cost to the patient to participate in the RethinkALZ trial or for any of the study-related procedures. No hospitalization will be required. You may be compensated for your time and travel for each clinical study appointment.



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WON'T YOU BE MY NEIGHBOR?

‘But I can’t do yoga, I’m not bendy enough!’

By Nanci Winterhalter, MSPT
What image pops into your mind when you think of yoga? Is it a lithe, young person clad in leggings and a crop top in some beautiful (and sometimes confusing) position that you could never see your body doing, even in your youth?
If so, this may be a surprise to you, but at its core, yoga is actually a path of self-exploration, self-study and self-awareness. Yoga includes a group of ancient practices from India which help us know and understand ourselves better. We breathe, relax, meditate, move mindfully with respect to our own unique bodies, and use yogic tools to learn more about ourselves internally.
As we work on our inner peace, we expand the resources we need to care for ourselves and to serve others. I don’t know about you, but when I am more comfortable with myself, I play better in the sand box of life!
How did I begin?
In my late 40’s, I was hoping to feel stronger, more flexible and have more stamina and started attending athletic style yoga classes nearby. With steady effort, over a period of time, I was feeling the physical

benefits. I started paying attention.
I gradually began to take closer notice of my lifestyle habits. My eating style began to shift - more greens, whole grains, eating organic when able, limiting meat and sugar and dropping processed food. It was surprisingly easy as I became aware of the sensation of improved mind and body balance when I took “right action.”
I cultivated more regular sleep patterns (see last month’s article). My regular walking became more meditative as I put the phone down and started to pay attention to nature and/or the sensations of my body as I walked.
My feisty Italian nature was regulating as my yogic studies helped me to learn patience and temperance. Still working on that! Haha.
When sad and sometimes traumatic things arise in my life, as they do for all of us, it is the practical tools of yoga which help keep me resilient and courageous.
The wonderful people I meet through yoga enrich my life daily and inspire me to continue serving my community.
As I have entered my 60’s, the



“When sad and sometimes traumatic things arise in my life, as they do for all of us, it is the practical tools of yoga which help keep me resilient and courageous.”

—Nanci Winterhalter,
Yoga therapist and teacher

physical aspect of my yoga practice is alive and well, but gentler. It is only part of my practice of self-care! Are you curious yet? How do you start? After a

discussion with your doctor about your plans, reach out to your local council on aging, community center or accessible yoga studio where there are dedicated classes for seniors and/or chair yoga.
Speak to the teacher to let them know you are a beginner and inform them of any concerns you may have.
Take it slow to start, knowing you are on a journey, not a sprint. Listen to your body while you keep an open mind. And heart!
Columnist Nanci Winterhalter, MSPT, is a certified yoga teacher and therapist.

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Renters: What to consider when landlords won't make repairs

By South Coastal Counties Legal Services (SCCLS)

One of the difficult housing situations face by tenants is what to do when a landlord refuses to make much needed repairs.

Here's a hypothetical situation to consider:

My name is Susan. I am 71 years old. I have lived in my apartment for several years. My apartment has been in good shape, and my appliances have mostly worked just fine. However, recently there have been some problems. First, the stove stopped working. I emailed the landlord about it. He replied that he would fix it, but so far, he has not done anything about it. Then, the shower stopped working. I emailed the landlord about the shower, and again he replied that he would fix it. Now another week has gone by, and I am still waiting for the landlord to come and make the repairs. Meanwhile, the rent is due in a few weeks. I am considering withholding part of the rent due to these problems.

Renters like Susan are faced with a tricky decision: whether or not to withhold rent in an effort to get the landlord to make repairs. The law does allow the tenant to withhold some (or all) of the rent in some situations, but it can be risky for the tenant to take this step. For example, if Susan chooses to withhold rent, her landlord could file an eviction for non-payment.

Before taking the step of rent withholding, Susan needs to ask herself the following questions:

Do the defective conditions “endanger or materially impair” Susan’s health, safety, or well-being? The answer to this question is yes; not having access to a stove and a shower at the very least certainly impairs Susan’s well-being, whereas a minor repair might not meet this standard.

Does the landlord know about the defective conditions? The answer to this question is yes; Susan notified the landlord by email.

Did Susan cause the defective conditions? The answer to this question is no; neither Susan nor anyone connected with Susan caused the stove and the shower to stop working.

Can the repairs be made without Susan having to permanently move out? The answer to this question is yes; both the stove and the shower can be repaired without Susan having to move out.

Susan has satisfied the above questions. She decides that she has had enough. She understands that there is a risk, but she decides to withhold half of her next rental payment if the repairs still have not been made.

Unfortunately, Susan is not aware that she can also contact the Board of Health for an inspection, which would put pressure on the landlord to make the repairs. Nevertheless, she takes the important step of notifying the landlord in writing about the rent withholding. She mails the landlord a letter listing the needed repairs, stating that she has already notified him and has given a reasonable amount of



time, and notifying the landlord that she intends to withhold rent until the repairs are made.

Now, a few weeks later, the rent is due and the repairs still have not been made. Susan mails her rent check to her landlord for half the amount of her rent. She then deposits the other half of the amount for her rent in a separate account in case she needs to pay the landlord some or all of it later. Additionally, she has documented the needed repairs by taking videos with her cell phone of both the stove and the shower not working.

Susan’s landlord is not happy when he receives Susan’s check for half the amount of her rent. He then contacts his attorney to initiate eviction proceedings against Susan for non-payment of rent. However, once the landlord’s attorney learns of the series of steps Susan has taken, the attorney advises the landlord not to proceed with the eviction and instead to repair the stove and the shower as soon as possible. The landlord’s attorney recognizes that Susan took the right steps in withholding rent. Accordingly, the attorney advises the landlord that Susan has a valid defense to the eviction and that the landlord would run the risk not only of losing in court but also of potentially having to pay Susan money damages.

In the end, Susan’s landlord fixes the stove and the shower, and Susan remains in her apartment. Susan and her landlord come to an agreement that she can keep the amount of rent she withheld (half of one month’s rent).

It is important to consider that many similar situations do not resolve quite so smoothly. This could have resulted in a contentious court battle with an uncertain outcome. Before withholding rent, it would have been a good idea for Susan to have contacted an attorney. Also note that some (or all) of the withheld rent money might need to be paid to the landlord after the repairs are made.

In this scenario, Susan chose to withhold rent and it worked out well for her. The landlord even agreed to let her keep the amount she withheld. Anyone in a similar situation should be aware that some (or all) of the withheld rent money might need to be paid to the landlord after the repairs are made.

If you would like to learn about alternative strategies you can use to get repairs made, see Mass Legal Help at <https://www.masslegalhelp.org/legal-tactics> and read Chapter 8 – Getting Repairs Made.

The information contained here does not constitute legal advice and is intended to provide a basic understanding of landlord-tenant law. This information is provided by South Coastal Counties Legal Services (SCCLS) which provides free legal services to eligible clients. There are no income criteria for adults age 60+ but individual representation is prioritized to those with the greatest economic and social need. For information, call our intake line at (800) 244-9023.

Trivia

FOR YOUR ENTERTAINMENT – KIM CAMARA

- 1.) Where in the US was the highest temperature ever recorded?
A.) Red Desert B.) Kobuk Valley
C.) Owyhee Desert D.) Death Valley
- 2.) How deep is the Grand Canyon at its deepest point?
A.) 2000 feet B.) 4000 feet C.) 6000 feet D.) 7500 feet
- 3.) What is the world’s saltiest ocean?
A.) Atlantic Ocean B.) Pacific Ocean
C.) Indian Ocean D.) Artic Ocean
- 4.) What is TOFU made of?
A.) Cow’s Milk B.) Soy Milk
C.) Walnuts D.) Wheat flour
- 5.) When is dessert served in traditional Chinese restaurants?
A.) Whenever you want B.) At the end
C.) Never D.) In the middle
- 6.) What state is directly north of Arizona?
A.) Kansas B.) Utah
C.) Oklahoma D.) Idaho
- 7.) Trypanophobia is the fear of what?
A.) Needles B.) Falling C.) Owls D.) Clowns
- 8.) Who is credited with inventing the sandwich?
A.) John Mayo B.) John LaCroix
C.) John Casper D.) John Montagu
- 9.) How many varieties of tomatoes are there?
A.) Over 5000 B.) Over 1000
C.) Over 10,000 D.) Over 3000
- 10.) What was the biggest hit of the 1980’s according to Billboard?
A.) Beat it B.) Physical
C.) Like a Virgin D.) Purple Rain

[Answers listed on page 11]

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Military War Horse Quiz

Test your knowledge by matching the general to his horse.*

*Warning: Civil War Roundtable Flagbearer Bob Lytle warns readers that this quiz is not for the faint-of-heart. “I will forewarn you that some of your readers will disagree with some of the matches,” he told Senior Scope. “This is because most generals had back up horses and some of my answers are backup horses, because the primary horses are (too) well known.” As an example, Lytle said, General George Meade’s primary horse was “Old Baldy,” but it is his backup horse listed here.

- | | |
|-----------------------|----------------|
| 1. George Meade | A. Grey Eagle |
| 2. George Thomas | B. Fancy |
| 3. Phillip Sheridan | C. Cornwall |
| 4. George McClellan | D. Charlemagne |
| 5. William T. Sherman | E. Black Burns |
| 6. John Reynolds | F. Blackie |
| 7. John Sedgewick | G. Billy |
| 8. Joshua Chamberlain | H. Cincinnati |
| 9. Grant | I. Rienzi |
| 10. John Buford | J. Dolly |

(Answers on page 11. Generously shared by the New Bedford Civil War Roundtable.)

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Councils on Aging

Acushnet COA

For more information, call the Acushnet Council on Aging at 508-998-0280. The center is located at 59 ½ South Main St., Acushnet, MA 02743.

Left, Right, Center with Jan: Wednesday, Feb. 15 at 12:30 - 3:30 p.m. at \$1 per game. Seating is limited, so call 508-998-0280 to reserve your slot.

Zumba: There will be no Zumba classes from Feb. 14 through April 10.

Strong Women, Strong Bones, a Title III program: Monday-Thursday, 9 a.m. \$2/suggested, voluntary donation. Great exercise program for those living with osteoporosis or osteo arthritis.

Strenght and Conditioning with Larry: Wednesdays, 10:30 a.m.; \$6, Fridays, 10:30 a.m., free Take this class standing or seated while alternating upper-body strength work with low-impact cardio to maximize fitness benefits.

Resistance Bands with Karen: Thursdays, 10:15 a.m., Free. Resistance bands use oppositional force to train your muscles instead of weight, and you can alter how intense of a workout you get. Bring your bands or use ours.

Tai-Yo-Ba: Mondays, 10:30 a.m. Free. Gentle movements inspired from elements of tai chi, yoga and physical therapy. Can be done seated or standing up. No class on Feb. 13

Chair Yoga: Fridays, 1 p.m., \$3/class. A gentle practice in which postures are performed while seated and/or with the aid of a chair.

Mardi Gras Crafts with Alice: Feb. 14 at 1 p.m. Grab your sense of humor and let your creativity shine during this Mardi Gras craft project with one of our favorite volunteers, Alice Rebelo from Vibra Hospital. \$3/pp includes all supplies, registration required, 508-998-0280.

Save the Date: Planning for Medicare, April 4 at 5:30 p.m.

Dartmouth COA

For more information, call the Dartmouth Council on Aging at 508-999-4717. The center is located at 628 Dartmouth St., South Dartmouth, MA 02748. Read the current newsletter or previous newsletters online at: www.town.dartmouth.ma.us/council-aging/pages/coa-newsletters.

Tax Preparations: Tuesdays between 9 and 11 a.m. Feb. 7-April 11 for low to moderate income individuals filing the simple form. Contact the center to schedule an appointment.

Senior Supper Club: Tuesday, Feb 7th from 4-6 p.m. Cost is \$5 in advance.

Technology Classes: Web Browser Safety workshop, Friday, Feb. 10 9-11 a.m.; and, All about the Android Phone, Friday, Feb. 17 9-11 a.m. Preregistration is required. Cost is \$5 per session.

Valentine Dance: Tuesday, Feb. 14 1:30-3:30 p.m. Registration for residents begins Feb. 1. Nonresidents begins Feb. 7. Free.

Chocolate Talk & Tasting: Thursday, Feb. 16 at 1 p.m. Cost is \$3. Preregistration required.

Advanced Healthcare Planning Discussion: Monday, Feb 27 at 11 a.m. Preregistration is required.

New Open Studio Art Class: Tuesdays, 9:30 a.m. - noon. Work on projects with other artist and get instruction on an as need basis. Cost is \$10. Walk-ins welcome.

Popcorn and Movie: 1 p.m. Feb. 22. "New in Town" Preregistration required. Free.

Parkinson's Support Group: Second Thursday of the month, 1-2:30 p.m. This group is designed for people with Parkinson's and their care partners. Walk-ins welcome.

New Gentle Yoga with Vicki Smith: Tuesdays, 11:30 a.m. Cost is \$5.

Line Dancing with Christina: No experience necessary. Instruction/Variety of genres of music. Fridays at 1 p.m. Cost is \$3. Walk-ins welcome.

Music with Friends: Do you love music, play an instrument, love to sing? Join this informal group on Tuesdays at 1:00 to share songs and sounds. Free. Walk ins welcome.

Meditation with Lynda: Tuesdays at 10:15 a.m. Walk-ins welcome. Free.

Visiting Dental Hygienists Clinic: Call 508-827-6725 for more information and to schedule an appointment.

Blood Pressure Clinic: The last Tuesday of the month from 10-11 a.m. Walk-ins welcome.

Coffee Hour: Tuesdays and Thursdays from 9:15-10:15 a.m.

Free Pain Consultations: Baystate Physical Therapy. By appt., 3rd Thursday at 1 p.m.

Pound by Pound: Weight loss support. Wednesdays, 10:15-11. Walk-ins welcome.

YWCA Widow Person Program: At the Center -1st and 3rd Thursday. Two sessions from 8:30-10 a.m. and 10:30-noon. Walk-ins are welcome.

Elder Law consultations: With Atty. Brandon Walecka. Second Thursday of the month from 10-11 by appointment.

Free Legal consultation: With Justice Bridge through UMass Law the last Wednesday of the month from 2-3 p.m. by appointment.

Osteo Exercise: Mondays 10:15 a.m., Fridays 10 a.m. Free weights provided. Much of class is seated. Walk-ins welcome. Free.

Zumba Gold: Tuesdays at 10:30 a.m. \$7.

Cam's Body Awareness & Adaptability: Wednesdays 9:30-10:15 a.m., Fridays 11:15 a.m. - noon. Eliminate the risk of falls. Learn proper body mechanics nd movements through exercise. \$2. Walk-ins welcome.

Fairhaven COA

For more information, call the Fairhaven Council on Aging at 508-979-4029, located at 229 Huttleston Ave., Fairhaven, MA 02719. Visit the Fairhaven COA website at: fairhaven-ma.gov/council-aging. Open to 8 p.m. on Wednesdays, beginning in September.

Alzheimer's Association: 1-2 p.m. Feb. 2. First Thursday of each month. Email Donna Leary at MimiDonna29@gmail.com to register.

Online Chair Zumba: Mondays at 10 a.m. at www.chairzumbaonline.com.

Blood Drive: Feb. 20 1:30 - 6:30 p.m. in the Fairhaven Recreation Center gym.

Memory Café: Feb. 23, noon to 2 p.m. Reservations required.

Single Senior Supper: Third Thursday of every month. Call the Wednesday before to confirm attendance.

South Coastal Counties Legal Services: 1 p.m. Jan. 9. Please come join to learn how South Coastal Counties Legal Services can help you.

AARP Tax Aide Program: Appointments are on Tuesdays beginning in February, 9 a.m.-1 p.m. Call the COA for an appointment.

Technology Classes: Feb. 6 and 8. Android Smartphone Basics. Feb. 13 and 15. Android Smartphone Apps for Seniors. Call or stop in for sign-up information.

Moving with Moxie: Balance and Circuit Training Group. Starting Feb. 8 and 22 at 1 p.m. Second and last Wednesday of the month in the Rec Center. Cost is \$5. Class size is limited to 10. Call 508-979-4029 to sign up.

Reiki/Alphasonic: 9-noon, Feb. 13 and 27, Reiki is a subtle yet powerful form of energy medicine that is an effective modality for a wide range of issues in the body, mind and spirit. Alphasonic can be used to help improve health and performanc, aiding the body to heal and recover faster. \$20 per session. Sign-ups required. Call the COA.

Chair Yoga: Wednesdays and Fridays, 11:15 a.m. -12:15 p.m. Cost is \$3.

Wellness Clinic: 11:15-1:15 every Wednesday. Call the Board of Health for information at 508-979-4023, ext. 125.

Mobile Dental Hygienist: Call Teresa or Andrea at 508-827-6725 or email them a smile@mobiledentalhygiene.com.

Walking: Monday to Friday from 12:30 to 1 p.m. Check the schedule and sign-up at the Fairhaven Council on Aging.

Marion COA

Call the Center at 508-748-3570. The center is located at the Benjamin D. Cushing Community Center, 465 Mill St., Marion, MA 02738. Like us on Facebook: facebook.com/marioncoa. COA hours of operation are: Monday through Thursday, 8 a.m. to 1 p.m. Marion Board of Health: 508-748-3530.

Flower Arranging: With Marion Garden Group Friday, Feb. 10 at 1 p.m. Members of the Marion Garden Group will be visiting to help us create a beauful Valentine's arrangement. There will be a \$5 materials charge for this class due at sign up. Space for this class is limited, call 508-748-3570 to reserve your spot.

Love Songs: Monday, Feb. 13, 1 p.m. Richard Hughes will be leading a singalong of great love songs.

Continued on Page 11



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Community



Social Day programs at Brooklawn and Hazelwood Parks in New Bedford enjoyed an "Appreciation Day" this fall (above and at left).

Social Day continued...

and they dance and they do arts and crafts and brain games."

Social Day took a big hit during the pandemic, even for programs that managed to stay open. Lockdowns, the need for masking and social distancing, plus the fear of infection in a vulnerable population strained already stressed programs, so that when they closed, it was difficult to reopen.

Some, like Wareham, remain closed.

Although the program is not gone for good, Wareham COA Director Sharon Rice said they're not yet ready to reopen. "We're currently trying to figure out how to make it work, but it is in limbo right now," she said.

Reed too is uncertain about the long term sustainability of her program. Although she pulled together many pieces of the former program, leveraged a waiting list of interested participants, and worked with Coastline to make the funding side work, there are still unknowns.

"Financially, it depends on if we can run our full census. The break-even point was about 48 people a week," she said, referring to the total number of participants the program can hold. "We'll have to look at it again in three, six, and nine months to see if we are hitting it."

Unknown expenses have hurt programs across the state, according to Patty Sullivan, manager of the Dementia Friendly Massachusetts Initiative at the Massachusetts Councils on Aging, who said programs receive varying degrees

"People are just so isolated and when they get isolated like that they need a purpose. Everybody needs a purpose. Having social day allows them to have that purpose."

—Debra Lee,
Director, New Bedford Council on Aging

of funding through the state's Aging Services Access Points who in turn are funded by the state Executive Office of Elder Affairs.

Each social day program negotiates its own contract with its regional ASAP at rates that vary from a low of about \$30 per person per day to a high of about \$70, according to Sullivan.

"During COVID, people really had to regroup. They used that time to see how they could run their programs differently and they began to look differently at the budget," she said. To assist them, MCOA "developed a budget template that shows all of the expenses that you have to think about when you're running a program."

Fairhaven's contract with Coastline, for example, is at \$54 per day with \$10 in additional, but temporary, ARPA funding, bringing the total to \$64 per day. That figure includes transportation costs which are sometimes considered extra.

Like other social days, New Bedford closed its program during the pandemic but was quick to reopen when lockdowns ended, putting safety protocols in place

in collaboration with the city's health department. These included using masks, personal protective equipment, plexiglass dividers, and frequent testing. Vaccinations, while not required, are encouraged and are available on site when possible.

"We're very cautious," said COA Director Debra Lee, noting the social day programs have not had any COVID-19 infections. "Anyone who comes in has to be tested. Anyone who is out sick has to be tested."

The COA opened a second social day at its Hazelwood site in October of 2020 because demand was high and because they needed extra space to be able to meet social distancing requirements.

Both programs offer treatment plans for participants based on their needs, establishing individualized short and long term goals, said Lee. For example, she said, a goal for an individual who is quiet and tends to keep to themselves might be to make one friend in the next 90 days.

The program also offers relief for family members, a crucial aspect of social day programs that is sometimes overlooked, COA directors said.

"Caregivers need a break," said Lee.

"There's a huge gap in services for folks who have memory issues and there's a lot of caregiver stress or burnout that we're seeing," agreed Reed.

Caregivers, she said, are "looking for a safe space to know their person is okay so they can have either respite which is much needed, or the ability to work outside the home. Social Day fits

that need."

While the future of social day may be uncertain, COA directors agree that programs will continue to be crucial as an important piece of the elder care puzzle. Several directors see the need for more facilities, especially regional ones, that can accommodate larger numbers of people.

In New Bedford, Lee has a dream of opening a large-scale social day in a single facility that could hold hundreds of people a day. She's identified a few unused sites in the city that might work but knows finding the funding would be daunting.

"There is a definite need," she said. "People are just so isolated and when they get isolated like that they need a purpose. Everybody needs a purpose. Having social day allows them to have that purpose."

In Fairhaven, excitement is building for re-opening day.

Reed has a "dream team" of staff returning for the program: retired COA director Ann Silvia is now the Social Day's activities coordinator, and former COA activities coordinator, Sally Bourke, is the program director. Both women know the program, know what's worked in the past, and best of all, know many of the older adults who plan to attend.

Cooking programs, pet therapy, cookouts, music and dancing, and more are all in the works.

"There's a party for everything," Silvia said with a grin. "We already have the Valentine's Day party planned."

Making it Work: Funding social day, valuing people, and how scholarships help

Social Day programs contract with local aging services access points, known as ASAPs, in Massachusetts to provide the majority of their funding with amounts based on the number of MassHealth participants who are covered by Senior Care Options plans.

For each participant with a SCO plan, programs receive a daily rate that varies across the state with a low of about \$30 per day per participant in a Western Massachusetts program and a high of more than \$70 per day on the Vineyard, according to Patty Sullivan, manager at the Massachusetts Councils on Aging.

Some programs, including those funded through Coastline, have been

able to increase the reimbursement rate using American Rescue Plan Act funds, but the funds are temporary and expected to end in 2023.

One sustainability solution for social day programs is to scale up by increasing participants. But there are physical and other limitations that councils on aging face, especially those that operate within one building. Most town COAs have barely enough space to accommodate both populations, limiting any growth they might aspire to. In New Bedford, the COA has two sites solely dedicated to social day and runs its COA programs at other locations, helping it grow.

COAs set the rates for those who pay privately but have generally kept them

at or close to reimbursement rates. Many were reluctant to raise costs in the past, Sullivan said, but they eventually did so and found people were willing to pay the higher price.

That's because the rate is still incredibly low per hour when compared to home care costs, said Beverly Bisch, COA director in Westport. The rates for private pay in Westport work out to be about \$8.33/hour for six hours a day, she said, adding, "Where are you going to get respite for that amount?"

Through its Title III programs, Coastline provides funding for social day scholarships that help families who don't qualify for MassHealth. Scholarships can also help families get into a program quickly when they are

burned out or need the relief to meet work or other obligations. Organizations, like MCOA, also fund scholarships and COA directors said they rely on these to help seniors and families.

Funding social day is tied up with understanding what the programs provide to the people who attend and the value those who staff them offer, according to Elizabeth Connell, executive director of MCOA.

"Part of this is valuing the work that those people are doing," said Connell, referring to social day workers. "People have to have these conversations about the value of the work that's being done...that we value our older adults, we value our seniors, and we value the work that needs to be done."