

# eCommunication

## From the Director

As the Older Americans Substance Abuse and Mental Health Technical Assistance Center (TAC) begins its fourth year of operation, the importance of addressing older adult mental health and substance abuse issues has gained momentum in several critical areas at the national level. As most of our readers are aware, the 2005 White House Conference on Aging highlighted mental health issues in Resolution #8: Improve Recognition, Assessment, and Treatment of Mental Illness and Depression. The Older Americans Act Amendments of 2006 reauthorized critical legislation ensuring service provision for older adults, specifically including language supporting prevention of and early intervention for mental health issues.



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The growing national recognition of older adults mental health and substance abuse issues has been spurred by efforts at the state and local levels.

The TAC will continue to work with state agencies and local providers of substance abuse, mental health, and aging services to increase recognition of the importance of prevention and early intervention among older adults. To date, TAC staff have conducted over **80** assessment conference calls with nearly **150** representatives from aging, mental health, substance abuse, public health, and emergency management to learn about the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats to older adult substance abuse and mental health response in local communities and statewide.

We have held face-to-face planning meetings with 8 States and 3 Territories, with 60 participants having the opportunity to meet, learn more about State activities and resources, and identify opportunities for further collaboration and discourse.

It has been our privilege over the past three years to meet a number of strong advocates and champions for older adult substance abuse and mental health issues. If you are already one of these individuals, we commend you for your efforts. If you want to learn more about what other champions are doing, please contact the TAC. We look forward to continued successes and ongoing collaboration with the field as we respond to future technical assistance and training needs.



## TAC Update

The TAC has been busy this spring and summer. TAC staff presented at several conferences. We provided five workshops for the American Society on Aging/National Council on Aging Joint Annual Conference which was held on March 7-10, 2007 in Chicago. The TAC also hosted a highly successful State Planning Meeting for Louisiana and Mississippi conducted in

New Orleans on May 16-17, 2007. This meeting, although similar to the TAC's previous state planning events, expanded to include public health, emergency and disaster response, along with mental health, substance abuse, and aging representatives. While we continue to focus on older adult behavioral health needs, the context of the May meeting included disaster preparedness and response issues for older adults as well. While in

New Orleans, the TAC Project Director also presented on the topic, "TAC Overview, Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, and Threats Highlights and Older Adults and Disaster: Assets and Challenges," to state attendees from 16 states at the 2005 Hurricanes Behavioral Health Lessons Learned/Reflections on the Crisis Counseling Assistance and Training Program on May 16, 2007.  
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## Areas Served by TAC Continue to Grow!

### Information/ Materials

Alabama  
Alaska  
American Samoa  
Arizona  
Arkansas  
California  
Colorado  
Connecticut  
DC  
Florida  
Georgia  
Guam  
Hawaii

Idaho  
Illinois  
Indiana  
Iowa  
Kansas  
Kentucky  
Louisiana  
Maine  
Massachusetts  
Maryland  
Michigan  
Minnesota  
Mississippi  
Missouri  
Nebraska

Nevada  
New Jersey  
New Hampshire  
New York  
North Carolina  
Northern  
Mariana Islands  
Ohio  
Oklahoma  
Oregon  
Pennsylvania  
Puerto Rico  
Rhode Island

South Carolina  
South Dakota  
Tennessee  
Texas  
Utah  
Vermont  
Virginia  
Washington  
West Virginia  
Wisconsin  
Wyoming

### State Planning

American Samoa  
Connecticut  
Guam  
Hawaii  
Louisiana  
Maryland  
Mississippi  
Northern  
Mariana Islands  
Ohio  
Oregon  
Washington

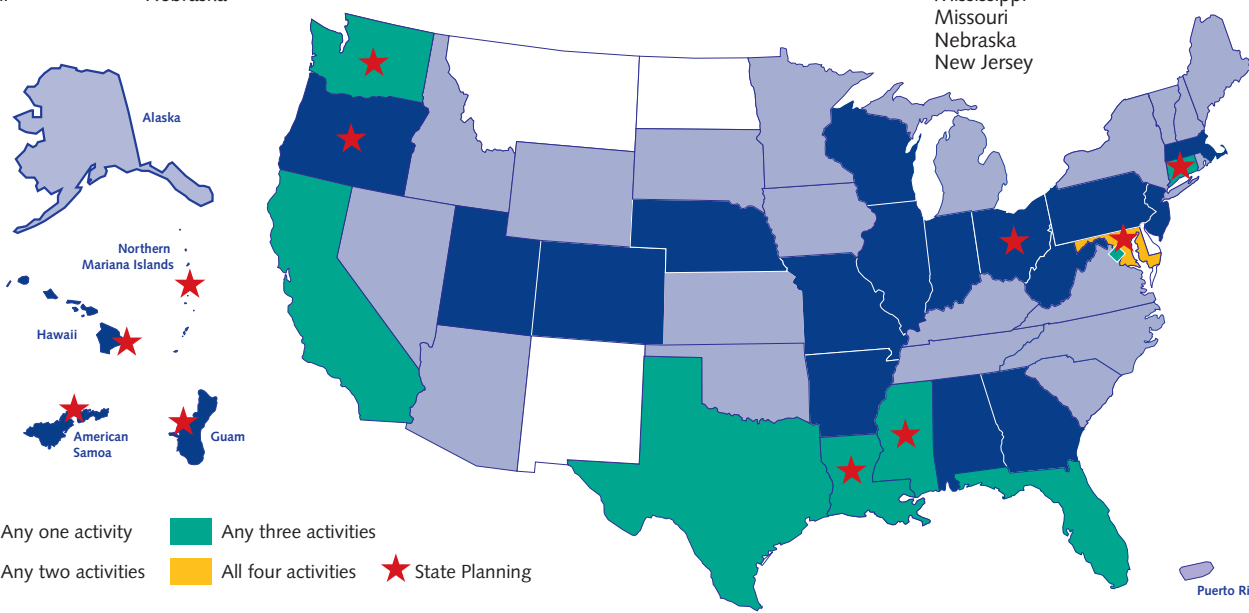
### Presentation

Alabama  
Arkansas  
California  
Colorado  
Connecticut  
DC  
Florida  
Georgia  
Illinois  
Indiana  
Louisiana  
Maryland  
Massachusetts  
Mississippi  
Missouri  
Nebraska  
New Jersey

Pennsylvania  
Texas  
Utah  
Wisconsin

### Exhibit

California  
DC  
Florida  
Maryland  
Pennsylvania  
Texas  
Washington  
West Virginia



Any one activity    
  Any three activities  
 Any two activities    
  All four activities    
 ★ State Planning



## News from Our Federal Partners

**Lisa Park, MSW**



SAMHSA has a number of publications regarding older adult mental health and substance abuse issues. They include the *Get Connected!* Toolkit and a report on overcoming stigma as well as communications related to a joint SAMHSA and Food and Drug Administration (FDA) public service announcement, "As You Age." Through the Knowledge Application Program's Multi-Language Initiative, several brochures have been translated into Chinese, Korean, Russian, Spanish and Vietnamese for clients and the general public whose first language is not English. Additionally, a wide variety of short reports are available regarding substance use among older adults. SAMHSA also has a number of publications for health and social service providers including a substance abuse prevention relapse manual and quick guides for clinicians. A handful of SAMHSA's older adult publications are below. For a complete listing, including links to available PDFs for downloading, please visit [http://www.samhsa.gov/aging/age\\_08.aspx](http://www.samhsa.gov/aging/age_08.aspx).

### General Publications

*Mentally Healthy Aging: A Report on Overcoming Stigma for Older Americans, 2005.*  
Inventory Code: SMA05-3988  
[http://download.ncadi.samhsa.gov/ken/pdf/SMA05-3988/aging\\_stigma.pdf](http://download.ncadi.samhsa.gov/ken/pdf/SMA05-3988/aging_stigma.pdf)

*Community Integration for Older Adults with Mental Illnesses: Overcoming Barriers and Seizing Opportunities, 2005.*  
Inventory Code: SMA05-4018  
<http://download.ncadi.samhsa.gov/ken/pdf/SMA05-4018/OlderAdults.pdf>

*Get Connected! Toolkit: Linking Older Adults with Medication, Alcohol, and Mental Health Resources, December 2003*  
<http://www.samhsa.gov/Aging/docs/GetConnectedToolkit.pdf>

### Public Service Announcements

*As You Age...A Guide to Aging, Medicines and Alcohol, 2004*  
<http://media.shs.net/asyouage/asyouagebrochure01.pdf>

"As You Age" Public Service Announcement #1  
(Ask, Guard, Educate), 2004  
<http://media.shs.net/asyouage/asyouageprintads01.pdf>

"As You Age" Public Service Announcement #2  
(There's No Better Time...), 2004  
<http://media.shs.net/asyouage/asyouageprintads01.pdf>

### Multi-Language Publications

*Good Mental Health is Ageless, December 2001*

- Available in Chinese, 2005  
<http://kap.samhsa.gov/mli/docs/chinese/AgingMH-Chinese.pdf>
- Available in Korean, 2005  
<http://kap.samhsa.gov/mli/docs/korean/AgingMH-Korean.pdf>
- Available in Russian, 2005  
<http://kap.samhsa.gov/mli/docs/russian/AgingMH-Russian.pdf>
- Available in Spanish, *La Buena Salud Mental No Tiene Edad*, 2004  
<http://kap.samhsa.gov/mli/docs/spanish/AgingMH-Spanish.pdf>
- Available in Vietnamese, 2006  
[http://kap.samhsa.gov/mli/docs/vietnamese/mentaltext\\_vietnamese\\_JBS.pdf](http://kap.samhsa.gov/mli/docs/vietnamese/mentaltext_vietnamese_JBS.pdf)

*Aging, Medicines and Alcohol, December 2001*

- Available in Chinese, 2005  
<http://kap.samhsa.gov/mli/docs/chinese/AgingMed-Chinese.pdf>
- Available in Korean, 2005  
<http://kap.samhsa.gov/mli/docs/korean/AgingMed-Korean.pdf>
- Available in Russian, 2005  
<http://kap.samhsa.gov/mli/docs/russian/AgingMed-Russian.pdf>

- Available in Spanish, 2005  
*El Envejecimiento, los Medicamentos y el Alcohol*,  
<http://kap.samhsa.gov/mli/docs/spanish/AgingMed-Spanish.pdf>
- Available in Vietnamese, 2006  
<http://kap.samhsa.gov/mli/docs/vietnamese/Aging-Vietnamese.pdf>

### Short Reports

*The DASIS Report: Older Adult Alcohol Admissions: 2003, 2006*  
<http://oas.samhsa.gov/2k6/olderAdultsTX/olderAdultsTX.cfm>

*The DASIS Report: Retired Admissions: 2003, 2006*  
<http://oas.samhsa.gov/2k6/retiredTX/retiredTX.cfm>

*The NSDUH Report: Substance Use Among Older Adults: 2002 and 2003 Update, April 22, 2005*  
<http://oas.samhsa.gov/2k5/olderadults/olderadults.cfm>

### For Health and Social Service Providers

*Substance Abuse Relapse Prevention Manual for Older Adults: A Group Treatment Approach, 2005*

*Alcohol Use Among Older Adults: Pocket Screening Instruments for Health Care and Social Service Providers, December 2001*

KAP Keys for Clinicians and Quick Guide for Clinicians Based on TIP 26: Substance Abuse Among Older Adults (assembled set), December 2001



## Safe Driving for Older Adults

For many older adults, driving represents much more than getting to the places that they want or need to go. It represents independence and control of one's life. According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention Injury Center, there were more than 28 million licensed drivers age 65 years and older, in 2004. This represented a 17 percent increase from the number in 1994. To insure the safety of oneself and others while driving, older adults need to be aware that use of medications and herbal supplements can impact driver abilities.



While great strides have been made to increase awareness regarding the dangers of drinking and driving, national attention is just beginning to address the dangers that exist with "drugged" driving. As reported by the National Institute on Drug Abuse, drugged driving is defined as driving under the influence of any drug, prescription or over-the-counter that renders the driver incapable of driving safely or causes the driver to be impaired with regard to driving judgment, motor skills or reaction time.

The combination of different medications can cause problems for some. Older adults take more medications than any other age

group and therefore are at greater risk regarding possible effects of medication affecting their ability to drive safely. Reactions to medication and supplements include:

- sleepiness,
- dizziness,
- nausea,
- blurred vision,
- slowed movement,
- inability to focus, and in some cases,
- even fainting.

Many individuals take multiple medications, particularly older adults. There are a number of reasons that people take medications and herbal supplements including:

- allergies,
- anxiety,
- cold/flu,
- depression,
- diabetes,
- cholesterol,
- heart conditions,
- pain,
- high blood pressure, and
- other temporary or chronic conditions.



If you notice (or if someone comments) that you may be experiencing a reaction to any type of medication, there are some things that can be done. First, discuss your experiences with your doctor. Often the doctor may be able to:

- adjust the dose,
- adjust the time of day you take the medication, or,
- change the medication to one that causes less reaction (i.e., drowsiness).

It is critical to give your doctor and pharmacist open and honest feedback regarding any medication side effect(s). Before taking a new medication, ask your doctor if you should drive. Side effects such as drowsiness are frequently more pronounced when beginning a new medication and get better as the body adjusts to the medication. The American Automobile Association Foundation for Traffic Safety recommends not driving for three or four days until side effects can be determined and the body has adjusted

Information for this article was obtained from the following websites. For more information on safe driving and medications, please visit:

<http://www.cdc.gov/ncipc/factsheets/older.htm>

<http://www.nida.nih.gov/Infofacts/driving.html>

<http://www.nhtsa.dot.gov/people/injury/olddrive/Medications/index.htm>

<http://www.seniordrivers.org/driving/driving.cfm?button=medication>

to the medication. Practicing self-monitoring of your reactions to any prescription or over-the-counter medication or herbal supplement is important to maintaining your driving safety and independence.

## TAC Update

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TAC staff also presented two workshops for the National Association for Area Agencies on Aging's 32nd Annual Conference, *Gateway to the New World of Aging*, held in San Francisco on July 29-August 1, 2007. The topics included "Disaster Preparedness and Response for Older Adults" and "Mental Health Services for Older Adults/Increasing Provider Comfort Levels: Working with Older Adults." The summer season ended with the TAC Project Director presenting at the National Association of State Mental Health Program Directors Older Persons Division 2007 Annual Meeting which was held in Louisville on August 26, 2007.

Through information dissemination, presentations, technical assistance requests, and TAC's e-mail and 888-line, the TAC has responded to the needs of 17 states and territories between the months of March and June 2007. The TAC looks forward to several upcoming opportunities to interact with the field. In October 2007, the TAC Project Director and Deputy Project Director have been invited to conduct a keynote address and workshop at the conference "Embracing the Challenge: Mental Health and Aging" sponsored by the Connecticut Association of Area Agencies on Aging (C4A). The TAC Project Director will also be presenting in Little Rock at the 27th Annual Arkansas Aging Conference on October 24, 2007.



## Calendar

### September 2007

#### **The Music Festival for Mental Health**

Napa Valley, CA  
September 8, 2007  
<http://www.music-festival.org/>

#### **National Aging Month**

The Healthy Aging Campaign  
September 2007  
<http://www.healthyaging.net/>

#### **National Alcohol and Drug Addiction Recovery Month**

SAMHSA  
Center for Substance Abuse Treatment  
September 2007  
<http://www.recoverymonth.gov/>

#### **National Suicide Prevention Week**

September 9–15, 2007  
American Association of Suicidology  
<http://www.suicidology.org/>

#### **Independent Living: "A Lifetime of Achievement"**

Louisville, KY  
Department of Aging and Independent Living  
September 5–7, 2007  
Contact Willa Thomas  
502-564-6930

#### **Grandparents Day**

September 9, 2007  
<http://www.grandparents-day.com/>

#### **N.C. Conference on Aging: "Today – Tomorrow – Together!"**

Winston-Salem, NC  
UNC Institute on Aging  
September 10–12, 2007  
<http://www.aging.unc.edu/nccoa/index.html>

#### **Autumn Series on Aging**

Philadelphia, PA  
American Society on Aging  
September 17–20, 2007  
<http://www.asaging.org/asav2/autumnconference/as07/index.cfm>

#### **Active Aging Week**

International Council on Aging  
September 25 – October 1, 2007  
<http://www.icaa.cc/aaw.htm>

#### **3rd Annual Art of Recovery Expo**

Phoenix, AZ  
Sponsored by SAMHSA  
September 29, 2007  
<http://www.artofrecoveryexpo.com/>

#### **"Reaching New Heights in Successful Community Living" The 23rd National Home and Community Based Services Conference**

Albuquerque, New Mexico  
National Association of State Units on Aging New Mexico  
Aging and Long Term Services Department  
September 30 – October 3, 2007  
<http://www.nasua.org/waiverconference/>

### October 2007

#### **Autumn Series on Aging**

San Francisco, CA  
American Society on Aging  
October 8–11, 2007  
<http://www.asaging.org/asav2/autumnconference/as07/index.cfm>

#### **World Mental Health Day**

World Federation for Mental Health  
October 10, 2007  
<http://www.wfmh.com/>

#### **2007 Annual Conference: "The Booming of an Aging Population: Building Strategies to Enjoy Our Golden Years"**

Dallas, TX  
The National Hispanic Council on Aging  
October 31 – November 2, 2007  
<http://nhcoa.org/>



## November 2007

### **Lung Cancer Awareness Month**

Lung Cancer Alliance

[http://www.lungcanceralliance.org/involved/lcam\\_month.html](http://www.lungcanceralliance.org/involved/lcam_month.html)

## December 2007

### **World AIDS Day**

December 1, 2007

<http://www.unaids.org/services/events/event.aspx?EventID=683&displaylang=en&y=2007&m=7>

### **Governor's Conference on Aging**

Chicago, IL

Illinois Department on Aging

December 12-14, 2007

Contact Rose Loeber-Hamilton  
217-785-3377

## February 2008

### **National Heart Month**

Sponsored by

American Heart Association

1-800-242-8721

### **Preventive Medicine 2008**

Austin, TX

Amer. College of Preventive Medicine

February 20-23, 2008

<http://preventivemedicine2008.org/default.htm>

### **ICADI International Conference on Aging, Disability, and Independence**

St. Petersburg, FL

University of Florida

February 20-23, 2008

<http://www.icadi.phhp.ufl.edu/>

### **AGHE 34th Annual Meeting and Educational Leadership Conference 'Disciplinary Convergence: The Nexus of Gerontology and Geriatric Education'**

Baltimore, MD

Association of Gerontology

in Higher Education

February 21-24, 2008

<http://www.aghe.org/site/aghewebsite/section.php?id=8328>





## STAFF

### OLDER AMERICANS

Substance Abuse & Mental Health  
Technical Assistance Center

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U.S. Department of Health and Human Services  
Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration  
Center for Substance Abuse Prevention