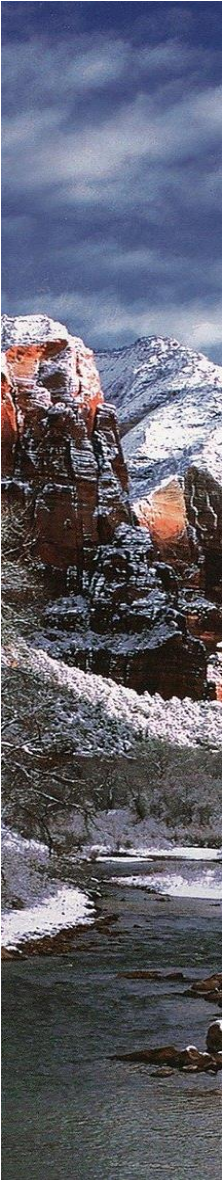


Division of Aging and Adult Services

January 2021 Newsletter



A Message from the Director:

Happy New Year! 2020 was quite a year. We could make a strong case that it challenged us like never before. 2020 has become a punchline to countless jokes, it exposed vulnerabilities and difficulties, and it provided opportunities to adapt and improve. The Aging Network stepped up to meet each and every challenge. The Aging Network continued to provide essential services, continued to protect and advocate, and added new services for vulnerable and older adults.

It is an absolute honor to work with such a dedicated group of individuals. Through determination, collaboration, partnership, ingenuity, creativity, resiliency, grit, and compassion, you stepped up to meet the needs of Utahns in our communities statewide. We are filled with gratitude and want to express our sincere, heartfelt thanks for all that you do. Remember to take good care of yourselves - self-care is essential.

In a recent meeting that I attended, the participants were asked to sum up 2020 in one word – I am certain that many words are coming to mind for you now as they did for me that day. However, when it came to my turn, I chose, HOPE. This was based on the knowledge of what has been accomplished by the greater Aging Network, and what is possible moving forward. We have made it through together despite the challenges that have been faced, both professionally and personally.

Let us continue to serve, continue to innovate, continue to raise awareness, continue to problem solve, continue to improve and grow, and continue to move the Aging Network's mission forward. "When you reach the top of the mountain, keep climbing."

Here's to 2021, and a bright future ahead!

Jacob Murakami
Assistant Division Director



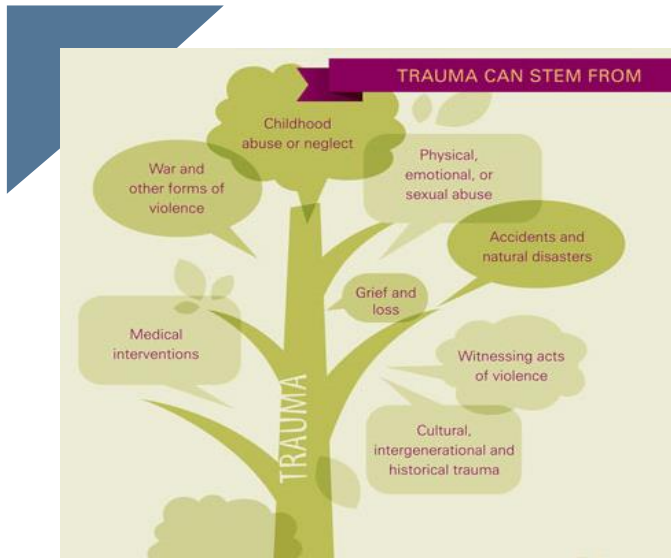
Did You Know?

The Utah Strong Recovery Program is providing free help for COVID-19 related stress. If you or someone you know is experiencing stress, anxiety, or depression, because of COVID-19, a crisis counselor is available 7 days a week, 7a.m. to 7p.m. All services are confidential and free of charge. Services include: emotional support, crisis counseling, coping strategies, mental health education, and referrals if more help is needed. Call or text 385-386-2289 or Email (first name and phone number only) UtahStrong@utah.gov. For immediate response after hours, call 1-800-273-TALK (8255). Video chat and counseling in Spanish and other languages are available.

Services Operated by the Utah Department of Human Services, Division of Substance Abuse and Mental Health through a FEMA Grant, facilitated by Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration.



Vicarious Trauma – Organizational Readiness



Is your organization prepared to address the impact of vicarious trauma?

As Jake mentioned, 2020 has been quite a year. Vicarious trauma is often misunderstood and conceptualized with burnout, compassion fatigue and secondary trauma. So, what is vicarious trauma? Vicarious traumatization is a negative reaction to trauma exposure; and while education and resources are often directed to victim services and first responders, a broader application can and should be applied to all social service organizations.

In the last year, it is safe to say that everyone has been affected by some form of vicarious trauma; whether it be victim trauma, the pandemic, political divide, earthquake, isolation, riots, unemployment, wind storms, or home-schooling - we have faced many challenges. Those in social service organizations are dealing with their own experience of trauma, while also supporting those we serve through their trauma.

We often discuss the importance of self-care in the workplace, but equally important to recognizing and promoting self-care, is being able to identify the existence of what causes vicarious trauma and ensure as an organization that resources are in place to mitigate the negative consequences of trauma.

A vicarious trauma-informed organization proactively addresses the existence and impact of vicarious trauma through policies, procedures, practices, and programs that focus on the individual, the organization as a whole, and the quality of services delivered. To know if your organization is prepared, the Vicarious Trauma Organizational Readiness Guide (VT-ORG) provides an assessment tool that can be used to build capacity in five key areas of organizational health. Is your organization ready?

The American Psychological Association defines resilience as the process of adapting well in the face of adversity, trauma, tragedy, threats, or even significant sources of stress, such as family and relationship problems, serious health problems, or workplace and financial stressors. It means “bouncing back” from difficult experiences. As we move forward in the new year, we prepare for healing; we can become vicariously resilient by overcoming adversity and creating positive transformation through connection with others, appreciation in one’s life, and a greater sense of meaning and HOPE.



The Office for Victims of Crime Vicarious Trauma Toolkit was designed to build trauma-informed organizations. The toolkit provides a compendium of resources to become vicarious trauma-informed. For further information and resources, please visit: <https://ovc.ojp.gov/program/vtt/introduction>





Program Highlight: Utah Senior Health Insurance Information Program (SHIP)

The SHIP mission is to empower, educate, and assist Medicare-eligible individuals, their families, and caregivers through objective outreach, counseling, and training, to make informed health insurance decisions that optimize access to care and benefits. The SHIP vision is to be the known and trusted community resource for Medicare information.

SHIPs conduct outreach by providing presentations, distributing information, conducting enrollment events, and participating in health fairs, senior fairs, and other community events. SHIPs provide free, in-depth, unbiased, one-on-one health insurance counseling and assistance to Medicare beneficiaries, their families, and caregivers. SHIPs assist people in obtaining coverage through options such as Original Medicare (Parts A & B), Medicare Advantage (Part C), Medicare Prescription Drug Coverage (Part D), and Medicare Supplement (Medigap).

SHIPs also assist beneficiaries with limited income to apply for programs, such as Medicaid, Medicare Savings Program and Extra Help/Low Income Subsidy, which help pay for or reduce healthcare costs. SHIPs recruit and train both volunteer and in-kind counselors to provide program services. SHIP counselors are highly trained and certified to help Medicare beneficiaries, their families, and caregivers with:

- Informing about Medicare Advantage, Medicare Prescription Drug coverage, and Medigap plan comparison or enrollments;
- Explaining how supplemental insurance options (e.g. insurance plans for retirees) work with Medicare;
- Providing information on long-term care insurance; and
- Referring beneficiaries to agencies such as the Social Security Administration and State Medicaid offices for additional assistance.

A SHIP counselor can be reached statewide at 1-800-541-7735.

AAA Recognition

The San Juan AAA SHIP program found a unique way to provide services in the midst of the pandemic. They provided “drive thru” events in October that provided Medicare beneficiaries the ability to receive a flu shot, a hot meal, and Medicare counseling, all without the person ever leaving their car. San Juan was recognized by The Administration on Community Living later that month for their service.



DAAS Updates

Thank you to everyone who participated, shared and promoted our state-wide needs assessment. The Division has received preliminary results and will have the final report by spring; once we have received the final results, we will share our findings as we work together to improve resources and outcomes for vulnerable adults! We have established three new multi-disciplinary teams in the state; one in Tooele, Salt Lake and the Uintah Basin. All three multi-disciplinary teams meet virtually, and we have had an excellent community response to Elder Justice Initiatives. To see if a multi-disciplinary team is meeting in your area, please visit: <https://www.justice.gov/elderjustice/elder-justice-network-locator-map>. We have updated the daas.utah.gov website to include informational material on multi-disciplinary teams, financial exploitation, scams and fraud; please take a moment to look at the resources available under the Protection section of the site. We have also included some recorded trainings for the community.



Community Partner Spotlight

The Utah Medicaid Fraud Control Unit (MFCU) is a division of the Utah Attorney General's Office. MFCU's mission is two-fold: to investigate and prosecute fraud committed by providers against the Medicaid program, and to investigate and prosecute the abuse, neglect, and exploitation of vulnerable adults who reside in skilled nursing facilities, assisted living facilities, group homes, and other board-and-care facilities. MFCU investigates allegations of physical abuse, sexual abuse, neglect, personal dignity exploitation, and financial exploitation committed against individuals who are vulnerable, either because they are over the age of 65 or because they have mental or physical impairments which substantially affects their ability to care for themselves. With this focus in mind, MFCU partners closely with Adult Protective Services, State Ombudsman, Office of the Public Guardian, Department of Health, Department of Human Services, and many other sister agencies to safeguard these vulnerable individuals. These agencies share MFCU's goal to give a voice to victims, hold their perpetrators accountable, and to deter future abuse, neglect, and exploitation.

MFCU was instrumental in putting forth legislation to update Utah's statute to make personal dignity exploitation an offense against a vulnerable adult. MFCU works closely with Adult Protective Service investigators to gather evidence for successful perpetrator prosecution. MFCU is an excellent partner in our multi-disciplinary team approach throughout the state and leads one of the MDTs that focuses on prosecution of offenses made against vulnerable adults. MFCU has a dedicated team of both attorneys and investigators, and their dedication to serving the community is invaluable. We thank MFCU and their hard work and service in Utah!



Looking Forward

Are you setting goals for 2021? Knowing where your older adult clients and community members stand in terms of their quality of life can not only help you better understand the well-being of older adults in your community, but can also help you improve programming by designing services to address specific needs, involve older adults in improvement initiatives, strengthen relationships within the community and potential partners to address target areas, support aging research and advocacy, strengthen your measurement and evaluation approaches, and contribute to a national voice advocating for the well-being of older adults, including the policy and culture change needed to improve millions of lives.

The National Council on Aging (NCOA) has partnered with the Institute for Healthcare Improvement (IHI) and the 100M Healthier Lives Initiative, to pilot the Adult Well-Being Assessment (AWA), a simple 8-question survey that is a practical and easy-to-use method of measuring an older adult's quality of life. The AWA assesses the most impactful elements of well-being and can be administered in person, on the phone, or through an online survey. For more information and to access the survey, go to <https://www.ncoa.org/resources/adult-well-being-assessment-tailored-for-aging-adults/>.

Division Director

Nels Holmgren
nholmgren@utah.gov
801.538.3921

Older Americans Act

Jacob Murakami
jmurakami@utah.gov
801.538.4641

APS

Nan Mendenhall
nmendenh@utah.gov
801.538.4591

DAAS Public Information

Debbie Booth
debooth@utah.gov
801.538.4339

Program Manager SHIP, SMP, and SCSEP

Darren Hotton
dhotton@utah.gov
801.538.4412

DAAS Main Line

801.538.3910

Toll Free

1.877.424.4640

.....
To report abuse,
neglect, or
exploitation of a
vulnerable adult:

Report by Telephone

Monday - Friday
8:00 am - 5:00 pm
1-800-371-7897

Report Online 24/7

daas.utah.gov