

ENGAGE

The Quarterly Caregiver Newsletter from AGE of Central Texas



Navigating the realities and opportunities of aging and caregiving

Spring 2020

| www.AGEofCentralTX.org

Pflugerville Seniors Conference Returns on Thursday, May 14th

AGE of Central Texas is again partnering with the Pflugerville Community Church to host the free **Pflugerville Seniors Conference** on Thursday, May 14th, taking place at the Pflugerville Community Church (1214 Pfennig Lane, Pflugerville, TX 78660) from 8:30 a.m. to 2:00 p.m. The fourth annual community event will feature area experts discussing topics that include long-term care, financial planning, and memory loss.

Registration and light breakfast will begin at 8:30 a.m., and the Resource & Information Fair will also open and run continuously through the conference. The healthcare staff of Baylor Scott & White Medical Center Pflugerville will also be offering free health and wellness screenings from 8:30 a.m. to 10:00 a.m.

From 10:00 a.m. to noon, participants can attend

two informative one-hour workshop sessions. Financial services professional Lorna Allen, M.S., MBA, will discuss "Long-Term Care Funding Options" at 10:00 a.m. Then at 11:00 a.m., Attorney Keith Leuty of the Barnett & Leuty Law Firm will discuss "The 5 Legal Documents That Everybody Needs as They Age."

At noon, participants will be able to again explore the extensive Resource & Information Fair prior to the complimentary lunch. During the lunch, AGE of

Central Texas expert K.C. Lawrence, LMSW, will discuss cognitive changes as we age, and issues related to early memory loss.

Registration for the Pflugerville Seniors Conference is free online at www.TinyURL.com/PVilleConf2020, or by calling (512) 600-9275. For more information, visit www.AGEofCentralTX.org.

Pflugerville Seniors Conference

2020 Pflugerville Seniors Conference Guest Presenters:



Lorna Allen is a financial services professional who works with women, healthcare professionals, and business owners to create effective, efficient, and strategic retirement plans to help people reach their personal and professional financial goals. She earned her MBA from Baylor

University, a B.A. in Psychology from The University of Texas at Austin, and an M.S. in Clinical Neuropsychology from The University of Texas at Tyler. She is a professional speaker and provides educational presentations and seminars throughout Texas related to financial matters.



Attorney Keith Leuty is a Partner in the law firm Barnett & Leuty, P.C., in the primary practice area of Wills & Estate Planning. Keith is a certified Mediator and member of the State Bar of Texas. He also served as an Adjunct Law Professor for more than three years at Virginia College at Austin teaching classes including Wills & Estates, Property Law, Criminal Law, Torts and Civil Procedure. Keith is also accredited by the V.A. and specializes in general Estate Planning and helping military veterans who may be eligible for the Aid & Attendance Benefit.

Free Caregiver Seminar



Advance Care Planning: The GIFT Project

Presented by experts from Hospice Austin, the seminar will discuss advance care planning prior to a health care crisis.

Saturday, April 18 | 10 am - Noon
The AGE Building in Austin

AGE of Central Texas will host the free caregiver support seminar exploring “**Advance Care Planning: The GIFT Project**” on Saturday, April 18, 2020. Part of the on-going workshop series to help family members effectively care for an older adult, the free seminar will be held from 10:00 a.m. to 12:00 p.m. at the AGE of Central Texas main campus, located at 3710 Cedar Street in Austin.

The GIFT Project is an initiative of Hospice Austin to encourage advance care planning prior to a health care crisis. This interactive seminar empowers participants to identify what matters most to them and take steps to ensure their wishes are honored. The discussion will include how to:

- Identify your wishes
- Decide who you would like to speak for you
- Discuss your wishes with loved ones
- Complete your advance directives

Registration for the conference is free, but space is limited. Participants can register for free online at <http://www.TinyURL.com/AGEapril2020> or by calling (512) 600-9275.

Follow AGE on Social Media for Daily Caregiver News, Updates & Resources:



@AGEofCentralTX



May Is National “Older Americans Month”

Every May, the Administration on Aging—part of the Administration for Community Living—leads the nation’s observance of Older American’s Month. For 2020, the theme will be “**Make Your Mark,**” to encourage and celebrate the countless contributions that older adults make to our communities.

Older adults’ time, experience, and talents benefit family, peers, and neighbors every day. This year’s theme highlights the ways everyone can make an impact in the lives of older adults, in support of caregivers, and to strengthen communities.



Communities that encourage the contributions of older adults are stronger. By engaging and supporting all community members, Central Texas residents can recognize that older adults play a key role in the vitality of our neighborhoods, networks, and lives.

Older adults can make their mark via the **AGE Computer Lab**, which offers low-cost, peer-to-peer knowledge of computers, photos, cameras, mobile devices, and more. For more information about the AGE Computer Lab, and the monthly class and seminar schedule, visit www.AGEcomputer.org.



FREE Caregiver Education for Family Members Caring for a Loved One



Classes are now forming in Travis, Williamson, Hays, and Bastrop Counties; find a free class near you:

www.CaregiverUcenTX.org

Is Memory Loss a Normal Part of Aging?

By K.C. Lawrence, LMSW,
Memory Connections Program Director

There are many advantages to getting older: insight from a lifetime of experience and more wisdom to share. At the same time, changes in our bodies and brains are expected as we age. We at AGE are often asked – when should I be concerned about my memory or thinking? When should I tell a friend or family member that I'm worried about them? And what should I do about it?

It's important to note that changes in brain function are common with aging. For example:

- More difficulty with word finding;
- Having a harder time remembering names;
- Challenges with multi-tasking; or
- Taking more time for complex tasks or learning.

Why is this? As we age, there may be changes in the brain such as: parts of the brain may shrink, communication between nerve cells may reduce, blood flow may decrease, and inflammation may increase. These physical changes in the brain can lead to changes in memory or thinking, even in an otherwise healthy person.

What changes are beyond what is expected? Changes to note are those that disrupt daily life and are noticeable to others. Often, it can be a change in a person's long-standing patterns. Examples of symptoms include:

- Forgetting information that is usually easily remembered, like a familiar driving route;
- A new pattern of misplacing important belongings, like keys or wallet;
- Asking the same question repeatedly;
- Struggling with complex tasks that were once easy, such as paying the bills;
- Difficulty completing familiar tasks, such as dialing the phone or reading the clock;
- Impaired reasoning or judgement, perhaps making unusual decisions;
- Drastic personality changes or unusual behavior, such as being much more irritable or angry than usual;

- Withdrawal from a previously active social life, perhaps due to embarrassment about symptoms.

It's important to note that different types of dementia have a variety of early symptoms, and dementia can look very different from person to person.

If there is a concern about memory or thinking, it is very important to talk to a doctor to find out what is causing the symptoms. Several medical conditions – such as medication side effects, thyroid problems, or depression – are treatable causes of memory loss.

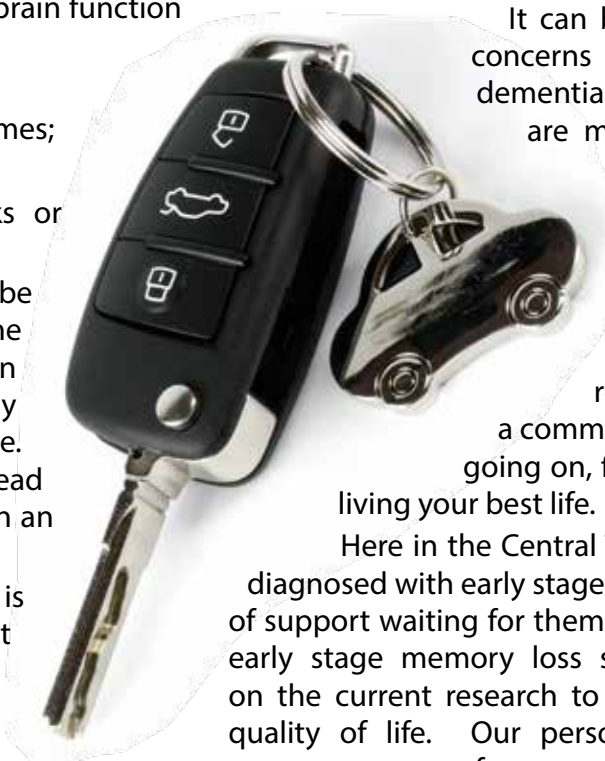
It can be scary to bring up these concerns with your doctor. While dementia does not have a cure, there are medications and treatments that can help manage symptoms. Symptoms of dementia start slowly and usually progress over a number of years. Talking with a doctor, regardless of the outcome, is a commitment to finding out what's going on, figuring out next steps, and living your best life.

Here in the Central Texas area, anyone recently diagnosed with early stage dementia has a community of support waiting for them. The Memory Connections early stage memory loss support program is based on the current research to promote brain health and quality of life. Our person-centered, weekly, small group program focuses on the strengths of our participants. Memory Connections includes various cognitive, physical, and creative activities, as well as a professionally facilitated support group. Older adults experiencing early stage memory loss share challenges and emotions with others in similar situations, and their care partners can get information and resources, as well as support themselves.

Some of the changes that occur as we get older can lead to feelings of embarrassment, isolation, fear, and concern. But you aren't alone – AGE is here to help. If you have any questions about aging in general, or early stage memory loss in particular, please call or email us:

AGE of Central Texas Memory Connections Program
(512) 451-4611, ext. 236

Email: MemoryInfo@AGEofCentralTX.org





AGE of Central Texas is a non-profit organization that helps older adults and their caregivers thrive as they navigate the realities and opportunities of aging and caregiving. We envision a society where aging is a shared journey marked by connection, strength, and vitality, and the role of caregiving is supported through community, collaboration, and guidance. Visit online at www.AGEofCentralTX.org or call (512) 451-4611 for more information.

Thrive Social & Wellness Centers

- Providing daytime care for older adults with physical or cognitive needs in the longest-operating licensed, non-residential Day Activity and Health Service Centers in Central Texas.
- Specialized in caring for individuals with memory loss or dementia.
- Convenient locations in Austin and Round Rock, open Monday - Friday from 7:00 a.m. to 5:30 p.m.
- Full-time nurse at each Center to assist with health monitoring and medication management.
- Activities designed to engage both the mind and body including music, brain boosters, gardening, and more
- All-inclusive: full day of activities, meals and snacks, and transportation options.
- Accepting Medicaid, Veteran's benefits, or private pay at \$65 per day.
- Call today for additional information and to schedule a free visit:



Thrive Social & Wellness Center - Austin
3710 Cedar Street
(512) 458-6305

Thrive Social & Wellness Center - Williamson Co.
475 Round Rock West Drive, #120
(512) 255-4865

AGE of Central Texas is an Equal Opportunity Provider

AGE of Central Texas
www.AGEofCentralTX.org

Central Office and Thrive Social & Wellness Center - Austin
3710 Cedar Street, Austin, Texas 78705
(512) 451-4611

Thrive Social & Wellness Center - Williamson County
475 Round Rock West Drive, #120
Round Rock, Texas 78681
(512) 255-4865

Caregiver Education & Resources

- Navigation center offering free personalized assistance and guidance by phone, email, or walk-in.
- Free educational seminars and conferences with free respite services available.
- Free caregiver support group meetings every month in Austin and Round Rock.



CaregiverU

- Free evidence-based courses for non-professional, family caregivers, offered year-round at locations in Travis, Williamson, Hays, and Bastrop Counties.
- Visit www.CaregiverUcentx.org for current schedules.

Memory Connections

- Evidence-informed, weekly cognitive activities and support for individuals with a diagnosis of early-stage Alzheimer's disease, dementia, or memory loss.
- Five weekly area locations around Central Texas with sessions from 9:30 a.m. to 2:30 p.m.



Health Equipment Lending

- Free loans of gently-used durable medical equipment and free incontinence products available.
- Call (512) 600-9288 or email Help@AgeofCentralTX.org to request or reserve items.



Peer-Based Computer Classes

- Peer-to-peer technology instruction through low-cost classes and seminars for senior adults.
- Visit www.AGEcomputer.org for the current class schedules and more information.