



NEWS RELEASE – Area Agency on Aging District 7, Inc.

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Contact: Jenni Dovyak-Lewis, Communications Manager

F-32 URG PO Box 500

Rio Grande, OH 45674

Phone: 740.245.5306/Toll-Free 1.800.582.7277

E-Mail: jdovyak@aaa7.org

Community Leaders Needed for Chronic Disease and Diabetes Self-Management Programs

Interested in being trained to help your community better manage their chronic disease conditions? The Area Agency on Aging District 7 (AAA7) is looking for community leaders to assist with facilitating its Chronic Disease Self-Management Class. Community, or lay, leaders will continue to support the classes in their individual communities after they complete training through the AAA7. An upcoming training is taking place locally in Jackson in February for those individuals who are interested in serving as a lay leader in their community. Currently, the AAA7 is recruiting volunteer leaders for the following counties: Gallia, Jackson, Lawrence, Pike and Scioto.

Self-management programs for people with chronic conditions are designed to help Ohioans with chronic diseases such as high blood pressure, asthma and arthritis, learn to manage their conditions and take control of their health. The Chronic Disease Self-Management Program (CDSMP) and Diabetes Self-Management Program (DSMP) were created at Stanford University, and are available in 43 states and several countries throughout the world. They are proven community initiatives that provide health benefits and promote disease prevention.

CDSMP is a six-session workshop that meets once a week where participants learn how to minimize symptoms such as fatigue, pain, stress and depression. It teaches skills for communication, managing medications, better breathing, and how to design your own self-management program. The Diabetes Self-Management Program teaches participants how to manage the mental and physical symptoms of Type 2 Diabetes, eat healthy, monitor blood sugar, and communicate more effectively with health care providers. Both programs focus on the participants' role in managing their illnesses and building their confidence so they can be successful in adopting healthier behaviors. Workshops are highly interactive, where workshop leaders as well as group members provide support while learning new techniques for dealing with symptoms.

In 2010, the Ohio Department of Aging, in partnership with the Ohio Department of Health, received \$1 million in grant funding through the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA) to expand CDSMP and DSMP statewide. Ohio's 12 area agencies on aging, local health districts, community organizations, and local partners are implementing the programs in local communities in an effort to reach more Ohioans.

To expand these evidence-based programs, the AAA7 is looking for individuals to become trained lay leaders. Lay leaders are volunteers who typically have chronic conditions themselves and conduct workshops using the prepared curriculum. They complete a training program where they are mentored by master trainers. An essential element to these six-session workshops is that they are held in community-based settings, such as senior centers, faith-based organizations and libraries, with most led by certified and trained lay leaders rather than medical professionals.

A Lay Leader Training will take place in Jackson, Ohio, on February 1st, 2nd, 8th and 9th from 9:00 am until 4:30 pm at Ponderosa Restaurant's Oak Hill Room, located on Main Street in Jackson. Those who are interested must attend all four days and must schedule their first workshop by March 1, 2012. Attendees will be provided with in-depth information needed to conduct the workshops and receive the materials at no cost.

Anyone interested in CDSMP or DSMP either as a participant or volunteer workshop leader, should contact the local Area Agency on Aging District 7, Inc. by calling 1-800-582-7277, extension 254. A pre-screening is required of all applicants who express an interest in serving as a lay leader. Registration deadline for the Lay Leader Training is Monday, January 23rd.

Your local Area Agency on Aging District 7, Inc. provides services on a non-discriminatory basis. These services are available to help older adults and those with disabilities live safely and independently in their own homes through services paid for by Medicare, Medicaid, other federal and state resources, as well as private pay. The AAA7's Resource Center is also available to anyone in the community looking for information or assistance with long-term care options. Available Monday through Friday from 8:00 am until 4:30 pm, the Resource Center is a valuable contact for learning more about options and what programs and services are available for assistance.

Those interested in learning more can call toll-free at 1-800-582-7277 (TTY: 711). Here, individuals can speak directly with a nurse or social worker who will assist them with information surrounding the programs and services that are available to best serve their needs. The Agency also offers an in-home assessment at no cost for those who are interested in learning more. Information is also available on www.aaa7.org, or the Agency can be contacted through e-mail at info@aaa7.org. The Agency also has a Facebook page located at www.facebook.com/AreaAgencyOnAgingDistrict7.

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Pictured are, left to right, Vicki Woyan and Vicky Abdella, RN, with the Area Agency on Aging District 7 (AAA7), who both serve as Master Trainers of the local Chronic Disease Self-Management Classes sponsored by the AAA7. A Lay Leader Training Course will take place in February for those interested in supporting the classes in their community by serving as a facilitator.