

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S REPORT

October
2024



NEMCSA staff and Board Members attended a fundraiser last month in support of the Career Development Coordinator position.

Interested in a Good Story?

Take a look at the articles listed below:

[Rewrite Your Money Story by Hidden Brain](#)



[The Supreme Court says cities can punish people for sleeping in public places by NPR](#)



Program Impact AREA AGENCY ON AGING

Social Security & Medicare Updates

Social Security is expected to increase by 2.5% for 2025. That's an average increase of \$48 per month.

Medicare Changes in 2025: As a result of the Inflation Reduction Act of 2022, several big changes are coming to Medicare in 2025.

Medicare Part D: Out-of-Pocket Costs Cap:

Currently, Medicare Part D operates through four phases:

1. **Deductible:** You pay the full negotiated cost of your medications until you reach a deductible of \$545.
2. **Initial Coverage:** After you meet your deductible, your plan will help pay for your covered prescription drugs. You pay copayments.
3. **Coverage Gap ("Donut Hole"):** Once your total drug spending reaches \$5,030, copayments increase from what they were in the initial coverage phase.
4. **Catastrophic Coverage:** Once your total drug spending reaches \$8,000, there is no cost-sharing for covered drugs during the remainder of the year.

Starting in 2025, the model will change: Part D plans can have a deductible of up to \$590, and copayments will apply until your total out-of-pocket costs reach \$2,000.

Since insurance companies will have to offset the cost of this new model, anticipate significant variations in premiums, copayments, and covered drugs this annual enrollment season.

The 2024 **Medicare Open Enrollment** period will be from October 15 to December 7, 2024. This is the time when Medicare beneficiaries can review and change their current coverage, or choose a new plan. Changes made during this period will take effect on January 1, 2025.

Contact the Michigan Medicare Assistance Program for assistance and information: **1-800-803-7174**

Fall Prevention

The annual Matter of Balance (MOB) Lay-Leader Refresher was conducted in September with 17 coaches from seven counties meeting in Gaylord for the annual MOB Refresher. AAA staff member Tyler Sluck successfully conducted his first Matter of Balance Workshop series at the Alpena Free Methodist Church. One participant commented "After taking MOB I feel more confident in my balance and aware of obstacles." Another participant stated, "MOB made leaving my house more enjoyable I am not afraid of falling anymore."



Take a free Falls Check-Up at
ncoa.org/FallsFreeCheckUp



*It's
Expo
Time!*

It's that time of year when many communities are hosting senior expos and health fairs. Region 9 Area Agency on Aging staff can be seen at many of these events trying to get the word out about agency services and available resources. Brooke Mainville and Connie McQuarrie attend the Northern Senior Expo in Gaylord on September 4, 2024. However, the AAA staff has been seen at many other health fairs cross our region.

Program Impact

EARLY CHILDHOOD SERVICES

Head Start Conducts Annual Self-Assessment

Head Start's annual self-assessment process is a critical component of its continuous improvement efforts, aimed at evaluating the effectiveness of its programs in supporting the growth and development of children from low-income families. Through this process, Head Start programs review their goals, objectives, and overall performance in areas such as health, education, family engagement, and administrative systems. The self-assessment involves input from staff, parents, and community stakeholders, ensuring a comprehensive evaluation. Findings are used to identify strengths, address challenges, and refine services, helping to meet federal standards and improve outcomes for the children and families served. On September 27, a dedicated team came together to review data and make recommendations. The final self-assessment report will be widely shared.



Benefits of Self-Assessment

- Help see the big picture
- Bring fresh perspective
- Understand the possibilities and challenges the program faces
- Cultivate new ideas
- Build stronger community partnerships
- Maximize use of existing resources



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A division of NEMCSA

Program Impact

BRIDGES OF SELF-SUFFICIENCY

NEMCSA BOSS Program continues to achieve remarkable outcomes, helping participants progress toward self-sufficiency and improving their lives. Below are the highlights from August:

- First in-person BOSS mentor staff meeting, where we deepened connections through a team-building exercise. This was followed by open discussions on what's going well and areas for improvement. Based on feedback, a new **financial procedure** has been implemented to streamline mentor purchasing.
- The BOSS Program remains open for continuous referrals—please help spread the word!

BOSS Program Mentors have been extraordinary in empowering families to achieve their goals and work toward self-sufficiency. Their dedication and passion are the driving forces behind these incredible success stories.



This project was supported, in whole or in part, by federal award number SLRF4951 awarded to The State of Michigan by the U.S. Department of the Treasury.



COMMUNITY RESOURCES

The CRC Team provided valuable assistance to several individuals in August through auto repair support, allocating a total of \$2,129.63 in funding to ensure transportation needs were met, helping participants maintain mobility for work and daily life.

The CRC team aided 97 individuals, families, and community partners, including 19 NEMCSA staff members. They facilitated referrals, connected individuals to valuable resources, created flyers and graphics, and continued to share important information on the Community Resource Corner pages, social media, and the NEMCSA website.

The CRC team is pleased to announce the completion of the **211 Annual Report** for the year! Thanks to software advancements, collaboration with NEMCSA directors, and support from a dedicated 211 rep, the process has been much smoother this year.

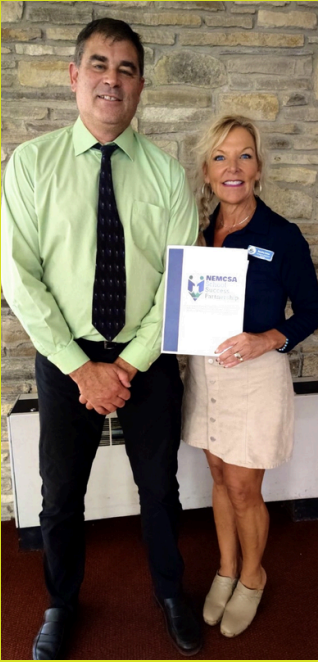
The CRC team has been actively participating in monthly County Collaborative meetings, sharing important updates with community members and bringing back valuable information. This information is regularly updated on the Community Resource Corner pages, both internally and externally.

Participated in several outreach events, including:

- Project Connect in Alcona, Montmorency, and Iosco Counties.
- At the Alcona Project Connect, there was a significant NEMCSA representation! Along with the CRC Team, staff were joined by NEMCSA Early Childhood Programs and Volunteer Programs, ensuring that a wide range of services and support were available to the community.
- Presentations to the School Success Team
- Sterling Health Center Fair
- Outreach visits also took place throughout Montmorency County, expanding the reach and connection with local communities.

Program Impact

SCHOOL SUCCESS



School Success is back in Onaway!

On September 10, 2024 Dorothy Pintar, Community Programs Director and Liz Skiba, School Success Area Manager gave a School Success Program presentation to the Onaway Area School Board. The School Board voted unanimously to reinstate the School Success Program at the secondary level after being without since 2011. The School Board Members shared that this is the type of support they need for their children. Both organizations are very excited to bring back this partnership.

Pictured : Dorothy Pintar, Community Programs Director
Dan Bauer, Interim Superintendent, Onaway Area Schools

The School Success Program Continues to Grow!



The start of the 2024-25 school year marked the beginning of two new amazing Behavior Tech positions. Additionally, two open School Success Liaison positions and one Attendance Liaison position were filled. From left to right, introducing Katelyn Skiba, Behavior Tech at TBJH in Alpena, Edie Zann, Behavior Tech at Ella White in Alpena, Kelsie Short, School Success Liaison at the Alternative Education Academy of Ogemaw County, Summer Morse, School Success Liaison at Richardson Elementary in Oscoda and John Pintar, Attendance Intervention Liaison, Grades 6-9 in Alpena.

School Success is so excited to have this group of talent!
Welcome to the team, Kate, Edie, Kelsie, Summer and John!

Program Impact

HOUSING



The Street Outreach crew is in full swing this summer delivering supplies to homeless encampments. The program is in need of more supplies; can you help? Bug spray, tarps, water, hot hands, granola bars - any little bit helps! Contact Tarin at (989) 358-4718 for questions regarding donations. To date, the program has had over 200 referrals for Street Outreach services. As of September 1st, there are still 349 people waiting for housing.



Pictured above is Donielle. She is currently housed with AHC and is such a joy to be around! She can't thank the program and staff enough for all they do. With her, is her cat, who she was separated from while homeless and is very thankful to be back with him! Unfortunately, the cat is the only family she has.



Pictured to the Left:

- Tent encampment (Oscoda County)
- Client living in stick shelter (Roscommon County)
- Client sleeping in their storage unit (Iosco County)

Housing Choice Voucher:

- Waiting lists are closed, including homeless preference
- No recertifications, each applicant on the waitlist will receive a letter once their recertification date passes
- Housing Assessment and Resource Agencies (HARA) will receive advance notice prior to the re-opening of the homeless preference waitlist so that the names can be added before the waiting list draws occur.
- Please contact (517) 241-8986 for HCV waitlist questions.

The above update does not affect the following MSHDA programs:

- Project-Based Voucher (PBV) programs
- Veterans Affairs Supportive Housing (VASH) program
- Stability Voucher Program

To find out more about Homeless & Prevention Services, call: 989-358-4678.



Program Impact

FINANCIAL EMPOWERMENT

In the month of September, staff worked with nine households to complete Pre-Purchase Counseling to better help them become prepared to complete the homebuying process, completed four Homebuyer Education classes, and five households participated in Rental Counseling. These households were all previously homeless and are working with staff to be able to maintain their housing.

Family Self-Sufficiency Program

The Family Self-Sufficiency Program currently has twenty-four active participants. This number is always changing as new people are enrolling or people deciding that they don't have to participate and are exiting. MSHDA recently sent FSS invitations to every Housing Choice Voucher holder in seven of NEMCSA'S counties so we expect there will be an increase in participants in the next month or two while they're applications are being processed by MSHDA.

To find out more about the Financial Empowerment Programs, Call: 989-358-4627.

WATER PROGRAM

During the Month of September:

\$10,620

WATER BILLS PAID

\$18,897

PLUMBING REPAIRS

\$24,395

**TENATIVE PAYMENTS
PENDING JOB COMPLETION**

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PEOPLE ASSISTED

To find out more about the Water Program, Call: 989-358-4675.

WEATHERIZATION

The program had a busy month of September. Staff are working on closing twenty jobs this month which is a large number for them. They are also scheduled to attend the technical conference taking place in Mt. Pleasant on October 7th. The program has 140 clients on the waitlist and staff have minimized the waitlist down to only a five month wait, which may sound like a lot, but two years ago the wait time was well over one year. NEMCSA is very proud of the intake staff, inspectors and contractors. The program has continuing relationships with DTE, Consumers, and PIE&G related to their low-income based rebate program has been a HUGE asset to Weatherization this year. The funds provided to NEMCSA's Weatherization program help to make the clients homes more energy efficient and more affordable! In less than one year, the program has been able to assist almost every home staff have entered into the program with this rebate money, which to date about 85% of those funds went directly back to the client's energy efficiency needs.

To find out more about the Weatherization Program, Call: 989-358-4700.

Program Impact

VOLUNTEER PROGRAMS

Foster Grandparent/Senior Companions

NEMCSA's Foster Grandparent and Senior Companion program hosted the Michigan Association of Foster Grandparents and Senior Companion Programs (MAFGSCP) fall conference in Alpena from September 11th to 13th. The maritime-themed event, "Navigating Through the Challenges," attracted 32 registrants from across Michigan. The agenda included topics like the "Intergenerational Workforce," funder updates, and poverty training. Attendees praised the conference for its engaging content, networking opportunities, and excellent food. Feedback highlighted the conference's organization, relevance, and the welcoming atmosphere, making it a memorable experience for participants.

Pictured to the right are Heidi Powers, FGP/SCP Project Director and Leslie Atkinson, Volunteer Programs Coordinator welcoming members of the MAFGSCP to the fall conference held in Alpena.



RSVP

The AmeriCorps Seniors Volunteer 9/11 project was writing cards of appreciation and thanks to first responders: police, firefighters, 911 dispatchers, and EMT's. RSVP volunteers, COA centers staff and seniors all wrote cards with RSVP volunteers and RSVP staff delivering them. Centers involved in the project were Alcona, Alpena, Onaway, Presque Isle, Rogers City and the 3 centers in Roscommon County. RSVP staff continue to bring on new volunteers, attend senior fairs in various counties and distribute program information in communities to spread the word about AmeriCorps Senior Volunteer Program.



NEMCSA's Heidi Powers Receives 2024 Rita Katzman Vision for Volunteers Award



Northeast Michigan Community Service Agency, Inc. (NEMCSA) is proud to announce that Heidi Powers, FGP/SCP Project Director, has been awarded the prestigious 2024 & Rita Katzman Vision For Volunteers Award by the Michigan Association of Foster Grandparent & Senior Companion Programs (MAFGSCP). The Rita Katzman Award, established in 2003, is presented annually to a staff member who exemplifies dedication and vision in supporting volunteer programs.

This year, Heidi Powers was selected for her exceptional leadership, positivity, and commitment to fostering participation in volunteer initiatives across Michigan. Heidi has been an active member of the MAFG/SCP since 2016, consistently going above and beyond in her role.

Whether it's through her work as Chair of the Outreach Committee, overseeing senior volunteer programs in 12 counties, or her involvement in advocacy efforts, Heidi continues to make a significant impact. Her work has been instrumental in preparing for the 2025 Older Michiganians Day, and she has been a key player in uniting agencies and volunteers to further the mission of senior volunteer programs.

At the award ceremony, MAFG/SCP Treasurer Susan Taylor of Community Action of South Central Michigan presented Heidi with the award, recognizing her incredible contributions. The nomination highlighted her tireless efforts to encourage participation, lead with optimism, and advance the work of senior volunteer programs statewide.

NEMCSA is a private, nonprofit Community Action Agency that provides many programs and services throughout its eleven northeast Michigan core counties. These counties include: Alcona, Alpena, Arenac, Cheboygan, Crawford, Iosco, Montmorency, Ogemaw, Oscoda, Otsego and Presque Isle. To find out more information about NEMCSA's programs and services, please visit www.nemcsa.org.

PHOTO: Left, Susan Taylor, MAFGSCP Treasurer from Community Action of South Central Michigan, and right, Heidi Powers, FGP/SCP Project Director from NEMCSA.



BECOME A NEMCSA SHINE BRIGHT VOLUNTEER!



WHERE YOU CAN SHINE BRIGHT:

You have the power to SHINE BRIGHT and help your community to become a stronger, safer and healthier place to live. You can clean up the local playgrounds, beaches, help at local food pantries, sit on an advisory committee, deliveries, handyman work and much more.

WHO CAN SHINE BRIGHT:

**ANYONE! FELLOW CO-WORKERS, BY YOURSELF
OR WITH YOUR KIDS**

The Northeast Michigan Community Service Agency has ongoing needs for volunteers to serve our community through fulfilling our mission of "Enhancing quality of life by empowering individuals and strengthening communities"

To get Started contact:

NEMCSA Shine Bright Volunteer Program

Phone: 989-358-4708 Email: shinebright@nemcsa.org

