



Feb. - March, 2021  
Volume No. 90

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# KSHL seeks candidates

The Kansas Silver Haired Legislature, (KSHL) is a unicameral legislature consisting of 125 representatives from across Kansas. They come together annually in Topeka to discuss and propose legislation that impact Kansans of all ages. Measures that are passed by the KSHL are presented to the Governor and Kansas Legislature when they convene in January each year.

“Elections for the KSHL county delegates will take place March 17, 2021, in the 28 counties in southwest Kansas and

we are seeking candidates to run for these county positions” according to Rick Schaffer, Executive Director of the Southwest Kansas Area Agency on Aging (SWKAAA). Each county will elect and be represented by one delegate.

Individuals who are interested in becoming a candidate must be 60 years of age or older, a resident in the county in which they are running, and a registered voter of Kansas. Delegates are elected to serve a two year term. There are no term limits. If there is only one candidate for each county,

an election will not be conducted.

The deadline for filing for the KSHL candidacy is 5:00 p.m. CST, Friday Feb. 26, 2021. All petitions, filing fees and other nomination papers must in SWKAAA’s office by that time. Items that are stamped that day and received the next day will not be accepted.

All current KHSL delegates will have to be re-elected or re-appointed and must also submit the necessary filing forms. If

an individual is interested in becoming a candidate for their county or have questions concerning the KSHL program please contact Rick Schaffer at 1-800-742-9531 or in Dodge City at (620) 225-8230.

Filing forms and information concerning the nomination procedures may also be obtained from SWKAAA, at P. O. Box 1636, Dodge City, KS 67801 or by calling the above phone number.



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Published by the SouthWest Kansas Area Agency on Aging

## Important Dates

### FEBRUARY 2021

February 3: Sub-Region IV, Syracuse

February 5: Sub-Region VI, Medicine Lodge

February 10: Sub-Region III, Lakin

February 11: Sub-Region II, Dodge City

February 13: Sub-Region I, Hugoton

February 14: Sub-Region V, LaCrosse

February 17: SWKAAA Offices Closed for President’s Day

February 18: Board of Directors Meeting, Dodge City, 10:00 a.m.

### MARCH 2021

March 3: Advisory Council Meeting, Dodge City, 1:30 p.m.

March 17: SWKAAA Executive Committee



## February Special Dates

**February 14: Valentine’s Day:** Valentine’s Day is a celebration of love and lovers. The traditions of Valentine’s Day are broad and many. It is a time to exchange cards or small gifts. Chocolates, flowers, jewelry, and romantic dinners are the big hits of this holiday.

It is a romantic event for lovers, and a fun event for kids and family. Many a couple become engaged or marry on Valentine’s Day. For others, it is a day to fall in love.

**Roses** come in a wide range of colors. Each different color has a different meaning, or significance. It sends a silent, yet extremely important message from the sender to receiver.

Who originally defined the rose color meanings? We don’t know. But make sure you are sending the right message when you select roses for someone. Otherwise, he or she will get the wrong message!

Guys, rest assured ... SHE knows the meaning of every rose color. But she is only looking for one ... the red rose.

### Rose Color Meaning

**Red:** Nothing sends the message of love more clearly, than a red rose. Make that a dozen! The meaning of this

rose color is quite clear. Red roses represent love, beauty, passion, courage and respect.

**White:** White is the color of purity and innocence. It also represents silence or secrecy, reverence and humility.

**Pink:** Appreciation, “Thank you,” grace, perfect happiness, and admiration

**Dark Pink:** Send roses of this color to show appreciation or gratitude.

**Light Pink:** Admiration, sympathy

**Yellow:** Joy, gladness, friendship, delight, freedom, the promise of a new beginning.

**Orange:** Admiration, desire, enthusiasm, fascination

**Red and White:** Given together, these signify unity.

**Red Rosebud:** A symbol of purity and loveliness

**White Rosebud:** Symbolic of girlhood

**Cream:** Charm, thoughtfulness, graciousness

**Thornless Rose:** Signifies “Love at first sight.”

**Always February 27: No Brainer Day:** Now this day is for me! Someone certainly was using his brain when he created this special day.

By definition, a “No brainer” is doing something that is simple, easy, obvious, and/or totally logical. Therefore, today is the day for you to do all those “no brainer” tasks and activities. If a project requires thinking, study, or analysis of any kind, then

it’s not the chore to do today. Some people think that Christmas should be every day of the year. They even sing that theme in popular holiday songs. But maybe No Brainer Day should be every day of the year.

If you simply use your brain, you’ll quickly get the hang of the concept of the day. And were certain you will excel at No Brainer Day!

This is a really special and valuable day. Creating it, therefore, would be a no brainer!

## South West Kansas Area Agency on Aging, Inc.

Rick Schaffer,  
Executive Director  
Paige Hamilton, Editor  
Amanda Boles, Circulation

### Our Mission:

“To promote the well being of older Kansans and individuals with disabilities in southwest Kansas.”

Visit us on the web at  
[www.swkaaa.org](http://www.swkaaa.org)  
or visit us on Facebook

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Mary Boyce





## March Special Dates

**March 3: Caregivers Day:** **Caregivers Day** is a very important day of recognition for the tens of millions of Americans, who selflessly give their time to care for those who are ill, disabled, or elderly.

Many individuals and organizations have declared a care giver recognition day on many different dates. The most common of them are November 13, and March 3. We give the nod to November 13, as November is National Caregiver Appreciation Month.

This day of recognition is for both paid and unpaid care givers. We believe unpaid care givers, deserve even more special recognition. They silently go about the task of supporting someone in need, most often a family member. They give their time freely, and often spend their own money in doing so. It can be a thankless task ... without even a thanks from the person being cared for or other relatives who find countless reasons not to help.

Some interesting statistics:

- 29% of the U.S. population, some 65 million Americans are care givers in some way.
- According to the U.S. Department of Labor, over 40 million

Americans, age 15 or older, provide unpaid care to the elderly alone.

### How to Celebrate Caregiver Appreciation Day:

Most care givers, especially unpaid care givers, do not seek or expect any form of recognition. They do what they do, simply because it needs to be done, and it is the right thing to do.

- Give a simple thank you to everyone you know who is a caregiver in any capacity.
- Send a thank you card by mail or email.
- Give them a day off. Take over the role of caring.

### Third Tuesday in March

**Tea for Two Tuesday** is established for two or more people to enjoy a cup of tea together. Tea is a very relaxing beverage. And, how much more pleasant it is, when it is enjoyed with others. While the name of this very special day, is Tea for Two Tuesday, we encourage you to have "a spot of tea" with any number of people. Go ahead ... make it a Tea party. The more, the merrier!

Call yourself a "Teetotaler" if you like. But, drinking tea does not make you a Teetotaler. (Sometimes spelled Teatotaler, Tee Totaler and other variations) By definition, a Teetotaler is someone who has sworn off alcohol, often turning to tea as a substitute.

They say variety is the spice of life. We encourage you to try different types of tea today. There is no shortage of tea flavors, some have caffeine, some are caffeine-free.

Please drink responsibly! If your drink tea, you can still drive. And, it is good for you.

### Origin of Tea for Two Tuesday:

This special day was created by the tea lovers at Holiday Insights,

in March, 2016.

Up to this point, there has not been any holidays or special days recognizing Tea. So, naturally it was about time!

**March 30th: National Doctor's Day:** National Doctor's Day was created to show appreciation to your doctors. Doctors perform vital diagnosis, treatment and care for yourself and your family. When you are well, your doctor keeps you well. When you are sick, there is no other person more important to you than your doctor.

Hallmark suggests you send your doctors a card of appreciation. (it's no surprise to hear this from Hallmark). Card companies have cards for this event ... no surprise here, either!

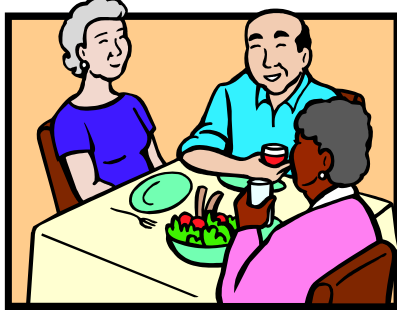
We suggest you simply tell your doctor(s) that you appreciate all that they do for you and your health. If you don't see your doctor today, make a note to thank him (or her) at your next appointment. You can also send them an Ecard.

### Origin of National Doctor's Day:

Doctor's Day observances date back to March 30, 1933. It was started by Eudora Brown Almond of Winder, Georgia. The day marks the anniversary of the first use of general anesthesia in surgery. The first National Doctor's Day was celebrated in 1991.

On March 30, 1958, the United States House of Representatives adopted a resolution commemorating Doctor's Day. In 1990, the congress and the senate approved legislation establishing National Doctor's Day. The resolution designating March 30 as National Doctor's Day was signed by President George Bush.

## Need a Hot Meal at Noon?



Friendship Meals are available to seniors age 60 and above and their spouses who need a nutritious meal.

Meal-on-Wheels for seniors 60 and above are available for those who are assessed and qualified as home bound.

**A donation of \$3.50 per meal is suggested for eligible seniors.**

To find a meal site near you, call Friendship Meals at 1-620-792-1241

*Call the local site at least a day in advance to reserve your meals.*

# FTC warns eye care prescribers to follow the law — or else

By Colleen Tressler

*Division of Consumer and Business Education, FTC*

The FTC's Eyeglass Rule makes it easier to comparison shop — which can help you save money. After you get an eye exam that determines your best vision with eyeglasses (a refraction), your eye care prescriber has to give you a copy of your prescription — whether you ask for it or not. You can use your prescription to buy eyeglasses wherever they are sold — from another prescriber, a store, or online. Cost, quality, and supply can vary a lot from seller to seller, so it pays to shop around for the best deal.

Your prescriber also can't make you pay an extra fee, buy eyeglasses, or sign a waiver or release in exchange for your prescription. That's the law. Even so, not all prescribers do the right thing. That's why the FTC sent warning letters to 28 prescribers telling them about possible violations of the Eyeglass Rule. Complaints involving five of the prescribers also allege violations of the Contact Lens Rule, which has similar requirements for giving patients contact lens prescriptions. The letters tell prescribers to review the rules, comply with the requirements, and that failure to do so could result in legal action and financial penalties.

If you suspect an eye doctor is violating the Eyeglass Rule or the Contact Lens Rule, let us know about it at [ReportFraud.ftc.gov](https://www.ftc.gov/report-fraud).

## Your Rights and Your Prescription

### What are my rights under the FTC's Eyeglass and Contact Lens Rules?

After you get an eye exam for glasses or a fitting for contact lenses, your eye care prescriber has to give you a copy of your prescription — whether you ask for it or not. It's the law. To get it, the prescriber can't make you:

- request it
- pay an extra fee
- buy eyeglasses or contact lenses, or
- sign a waiver or release

For contact lens prescriptions, your prescriber should ask you to sign a confirmation that she gave you a copy of the prescription.

### Why would I want my prescription?

You have a choice about where to buy your glasses or contacts. You don't have to buy them from your prescriber. You might find a better deal, a better supply, or simply more convenience, at another prescriber's office, a retail or warehouse store, or online. Having a copy of your prescription means it should be easy to shop where and how you want to shop.

### When and how should I get my prescription?

The prescriber has to give you your prescription for glasses at the end of your eye exam without you even asking.

The prescriber has to give you your contact lens prescription after your fitting. A fitting may require more than one appointment and may involve you trying lenses out for a few days before the fitting is finalized. The prescriber can

give you your contact lens prescription electronically instead of a paper copy, but only if you agree, in writing or electronically, to get it that way, and agree to the specific method of delivery (e.g., email, portal, or text). If you get your prescription electronically, it

must be accessible, downloadable, and printable.

You might ask for an additional copy of your prescription, or give

See **Eye,**  
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## Medicare Fraud and Abuse Affect All Of Us...

It is estimated that Medicare loses **BILLIONS** of dollars each year to fraud and abuse.

Consider the following tips from the Senior Medicare Patrol to help you **PROTECT, DETECT, and REPORT** concerns...

- **Review your Medicare Summary Notice or Explanation of Benefits quarterly for accuracy.**

**Look for three things :**

1. **Charges for something you didn't get.**
2. **Billing for the same thing twice.**
3. **Services that were not ordered by your doctor.**

- **Protect your Medicare, Medicaid, and Social Security numbers as you would a credit card.**
- **Do NOT give out personal information to unknown callers, visitors, or providers whom you have not contacted for services.**
- **REPORT any concerns to the Kansas Senior Medicare Patrol.**

**For Information or Assistance Call the Kansas Senior Medicare Patrol at 1-800-860-5260**





# At a crossroads? Consider a career in healthcare as a home caregiver

(StatePoint) Considering a career change? You're in good company — 18 percent of the deskless workforce who had a job during COVID-19 plan to leave for better benefits or job security, according to a recent survey by Quinyx.

Experts say that if you're looking for meaningful work in a reliable, recession-proof industry, the field of home healthcare might be the right career path for you.

"At a time when work and life are blurring together more than ever, home caregiving allows for greater mobility and flexibility for professionals like LPNs, RNs and therapists, as well as home support aides and companions," says Jennifer Sheets, president and chief executive officer of Interim HealthCare Inc. "Compassionate and mission-driven professionals within and outside of healthcare can bring their unique skills to these positions to ensure patients get the care they need."

To encourage people from all professional backgrounds to consider whether a career in home healthcare is right for them, Sheets offers the following insights into the field:

• **Previous home care experience not required:** For certain roles, you don't need a degree or industry experience to qualify for a home caregiving position, you just need a compassionate heart and a willingness to help others.

Whether you're a licensed healthcare professional (like a nurse or therapist) or you're employed in a service industry like hospitality, retail or food service, you likely have people skills and a desire to positively impact others, both of which are needed to step into this field and begin a rewarding career.

• **The work is rewarding:** Seeking a career path with purpose? Caregivers have the opportunity to make a difference in the lives of others every day. And, if you decide to take your career further, you can. The industry offers much potential for career growth.

• **Positions offer autonomy:** If you already work in the

healthcare industry, you may discover that providing personalized care to patients at home offers greater flexibility and autonomy than other sites of care in the industry. Home caregivers have full visibility into a patient's health and provide the unique care the patient needs to achieve their goals. What's more, every day is different, offering diverse experiences that use every facet of your skill set.

• **Jobs are wide-ranging.** In the case of Interim HealthCare Inc., a healthcare franchise company providing nurses, therapists, aides and other healthcare personnel to approximately 173,000 people

annually and has been operating since 1966, there are job opportunities in every specialty: from medically complex pediatric patients to seniors who need a little bit of help. More information on Interim HealthCare and current openings across the country can be found by visiting [IHCmadeforthis.com](http://IHCmadeforthis.com).

Sometimes, life brings you to a crossroads. For many people, that time is now. Whether you're looking to make a difference in a new industry or you're seeking to level up your healthcare career, consider whether the field of home caregiving might be right for you.



Aging & Disability  
Resource Center

1-855-200-ADRC (2372)  
[www.kdads.ks.gov](http://www.kdads.ks.gov)



The KanCare Ombudsman's Office has two satellite offices, one in Wichita and one in Olathe, as well as the main office in Topeka. We take phone calls from our toll-free line and assist current Medicaid consumers and people who have questions about the Medicaid application process. We also assist people who need help filling out an application if they call and make an appointment to come in.

Call us today at (855) 643-8180, or visit our [website](http://www.kancare.ks.gov/kancare-ombudsman-office) ([www.kancare.ks.gov/kancare-ombudsman-office](http://www.kancare.ks.gov/kancare-ombudsman-office)).

# Can you recognize signs of stroke?

(StatePoint) Many people are avoiding in-person doctor's visits to limit potential exposure to coronavirus — or are simply ignoring health concerns altogether. However, when it comes to medical emergencies such as stroke, immediate medical attention is critical.

The fifth leading cause of death in the U.S., stroke occurs every 40 seconds and it can happen to anyone, of any age, at any time. When 59-year-old Paul "David" Dyches had a stroke on the job this past August, he quickly realized something was very wrong.

"I never experienced a feeling like this before, and I knew we had to do something right away," says Dyches, who was experiencing classic stroke symptoms of weakness in his arms and legs. Upon his arrival at the hospital, he was evaluated via tele-neurology by experts over 150 miles away. After doctors confirmed he was experiencing a stroke, they delivered treatment immediately and he was able to be discharged the following day.

While in some cases quick action can help with recovery, statistics suggest that many Americans may be avoiding hospitals when they need them most due to anxieties surrounding the pandemic. A recent study published in "JAMA Internal Medicine" showed that emergency room visits to five major healthcare systems decreased by more than 40 percent as COVID-19 cases spiked.

As patients such as Dyches are learning firsthand, hospitals have a range of protocols in place to help keep patients and staff safe from coronavirus infection.

"The hospital staff set me at

ease right away," says Dyches.

Beyond pandemic fears, one age-old barrier to seeking timely medical attention for stroke is simply awareness of signs and symptoms. While Dyches can credit himself with recognizing a classic symptom — arm and leg weakness — and reacting rapidly, only one in five U.S. adults are able to recognize 10 signs and symptoms of stroke, according to a nationwide survey\*. What's more, nearly 70 percent of the survey respondents say they're knowledgeable about stroke, yet 62 percent falsely believe that signs of stroke come on slowly over a day or two, when in fact symptoms of stroke can come on suddenly.

Experts say that immediate medical attention, which is vital, relies on everyone learning and being able to recognize the BE FAST signs and symptoms of a stroke in themselves and others and calling 911 immediately. BE FAST stands for Balance, Eyes, Face, Arm, Speech and Time and refers to these signs of stroke:

- Balance: Sudden loss of balance
- Eyes: Loss of vision in one or both eyes
- Face: Face looks uneven or droopy
- Arm: Arm or leg is weak or hanging down
- Speech: Slurred speech, trouble speaking or seems confused
- Time: Immediately call 911

For more shareable information and resources, visit [Stroke-awareness.com](https://strokeawareness.com), developed by Genentech Inc, a member of the Roche Group.

"I am a testament to the fact that emergencies like stroke don't stop for a global health pandemic,"

says Dyches. "Anyone who experiences stroke symptoms should call 911 and get themselves to the ER as quickly as possible."

BE FAST was developed by Intermountain Healthcare, as an adaptation of the FAST model implemented by the American Stroke Association. Reproduced

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\*On behalf of Genentech, a nationwide Stroke Awareness Survey was conducted on March 25 – April 10, 2020 among 2,009 adults ages 35+ in the U.S.



**If you, a loved one or friend are experiencing any of these symptoms, call 911 immediately. When it comes to stroke, time matters.**

BE FAST was developed by Intermountain Healthcare, as an adoption of the FAST model implemented by the American Stroke Association. Reproduced with permission from Intermountain Healthcare. © 2011 Intermountain Healthcare. All rights reserved.



# What every chronic pain sufferer needs to know

(StatePoint) According to a new survey from Boston Scientific of more than 500 people with chronic pain, 60 percent aren't satisfied with their current treatment or therapies. Professional golfer Grant Waite can relate.

Repetitive, rotational movements make golf incredibly stressful on the back. Waite tried multiple surgeries, which didn't provide relief, and he said he couldn't function while taking prescription medications.

Twelve years ago, the pain in his back was so debilitating he could barely get out of bed, let alone play professional golf or spend time with his family. "Pain is debilitating not just physically, but mentally and emotionally because there's no escaping it. When you're in pain, it's just difficult to function."

According to the CDC, more than 50 million chronic pain sufferers nationwide are struggling with pain that lasts for six months or longer without finding relief. One of the most common reasons that adults seek medical care, chronic pain has been linked to restrictions in mobility and daily activities, dependence on opioids, anxiety and depression, and reduced quality of life. Unfortunately, less than half of those surveyed are aware of drug-free, minimally-invasive, interventional therapies helping patients such as Waite return to activities they love and regain hope for their future.

Waite sought help from a pain management specialist – a doctor specially trained to address acute and chronic pain. That's when he learned about spinal cord stimulation (SCS).

SCS is an FDA-approved

implanted medical device that interrupts pain signals from reaching the brain. Unlike some surgical procedures, it can be personalized to an individual's needs and is reversible.

Patients undergo a trial period, allowing them to evaluate and adjust the pain relief delivered before deciding to receive a permanent implant. Initially, Waite didn't know much about this treatment, but after completing his trial and full implantation with the Boston Scientific Spectra WaveWriter SCS System, he champions it.

"Before SCS, my pain forced me to give up my active lifestyle, which was hard. Now there are very few limitations on what I can do," says Waite, who is back to playing golf, working out, and even hiking and traveling with his family.

"The experience of chronic pain is complex and unique to every person. But pain management specialists have many tools in our arsenal that can provide adequate, lasting, personalized pain relief," says Dr. Steve Pyles, a pain specialist and founder of the Pain Treatment Centers in Florida.



The new survey found that 94 percent of chronic pain sufferers would try an FDA-approved, drug-free alternative to help manage chronic pain, but less than half have ever seen a pain specialist.

Dr. Pyles notes that for patients with chronic pain in the lower back, legs and feet, SCS offers a personalized experience that can treat multiple pain areas simultaneously. For those suffering from moderate lumbar spinal stenosis, interspinous spacers may relieve pain and discomfort in the lower back, legs, groin and buttocks.

Alternatively, radiofrequency ablation delivers a small current to interrupt pain signals at the source.

To find a local pain management specialist and learn more about chronic pain, visit [www.pain.com](http://www.pain.com), an educational site from Boston Scientific. You can also take a pain assessment quiz and connect with other patients.

Life with chronic pain can be all-encompassing. However, experts say that non-drug therapies are providing tangible relief to patients.

## Experiencing constipation? Get the help you need

(StatePoint) Constipation is something that most people have likely experienced at one time or another. For some people however, symptoms can occur over the long term.

Symptomatic individuals and patients should learn more about two types of long-term constipation: Chronic Idiopathic Constipation (CIC) and

Irritable Bowel Syndrome with Constipation (IBS-C). While CIC and IBS-C share many of the same symptoms, there are important differences between the two.

One in seven U.S. adults have CIC and those with this condition may experience:

- **Infrequent bowel movements (BMs)**

- **Hard-to-pass BMs**
- **Straining**
- **Discomfort**
- **Not feeling empty after a BM**

In addition to symptoms of CIC, patients with IBS-C

See **Bowel,**  
page 8



# Foot and ankle symptoms you should never ignore

(StatePoint) Many people deal with foot and ankle concerns by simply ignoring them, hoping the problem goes away. However, certain symptoms could be a sign of a serious condition, warn experts.

“A foot and ankle surgeon has the right education and training to provide preventive care and early intervention, which remain essential, even in the age of COVID-19 when you may be avoiding in-person visits,” says Jeffrey D. Loveland, DPM, FACFAS, foot and ankle surgeon and Fellow Member of the American College of Foot and Ankle Surgeons (ACFAS).

To help you determine when it's time to consult a specialist, ACFAS is offering insights into symptoms that affect the foot or ankle and frequently are signs of serious medical conditions:

- **Deep Vein Thrombosis (DVT):** DVT is a condition in which a blood clot forms in a deep vein, most commonly in calves or thighs. Potentially very dangerous, DVT can lead to a pulmonary embolism. See a doctor if you experience swelling in the leg, pain in the calf or thigh, or warmth and redness of the leg.

- **Peripheral Artery Disease (PAD):** Commonly referred to as poor circulation, PAD is the restriction of blood flow in the arteries of the leg and could be an indication of more widespread arterial disease that can cause stroke or heart attack. Common symptoms include leg cramping while walking or lying down, leg numbness or weakness, cold legs or feet, sores on the toes, feet or legs that won't heal, a change in leg color, loss of hair on the feet and legs, and changes in toenail

color and thickness.

- **Osteoporosis:** Osteoporosis, a bone-thinning disease affecting more than 28 million Americans, accounts for 1.5 million bone fractures annually. One early symptom is increased pain with walking, accompanied by redness and swelling on the top of the foot. A foot and ankle surgeon can diagnose osteoporosis through a bone densitometry test.

- **Foot Bumps:** Common foot bumps include ganglionic cysts and plantar fibromas. While both benign, these bumps tend not to go away on their own and can cause discomfort and disruption of everyday activities. Foot bumps can also be cancerous, so it's always best to have them

examined.

- **Charcot Foot:** Charcot foot, a severe diabetes complication, is a sudden softening of the foot's bones caused by neuropathy. It can trigger an avalanche of problems, including joint loss, fractures, collapse of the arch, massive deformity, ulcers, amputation and even death. Charcot foot cannot be reversed, but its destructive effects can be stopped. Symptoms appear suddenly and can include warm and red skin, swelling and pain.

- **Ulcers:** Not only is a foot ulcer a painful condition which can lead to amputation, it can be indicative of several underlying ailments, which are critical to diagnose and treat, including

diabetes, circulatory problems and issues with the mechanics of the foot or leg. Telltale signs that an ulcer may be brewing are swelling, temperature changes in the feet, color changes and calluses.

For more foot care information or to find a foot and ankle surgeon in your area, visit **FootHealthFacts.org**, the ACFAS patient education website.

“Even foot and ankle symptoms that seem minor could be signs of a serious medical condition, like diabetes, heart disease, osteoporosis or arthritis,” says Dr. Loveland. “Consulting a foot and ankle surgeon is the first step toward diagnosis and early intervention.”

## Bowel, from page 7

also experience abdominal pain related to changes in bowel movements, and one in 20 U.S. adults are living with this chronic condition.

The causes of CIC and IBS-C are not known. That said, for some, the cause could be linked to changes in the connections between the brain and the gut.

If you're experiencing constipation, you should consider speaking to your doctor who may help address your symptoms.

“Your physician can diagnose your condition and offer treatment options that may provide relief,” says Howard Franklin, MD, MBA, chief medical officer, Salix Pharmaceuticals. He suggests asking your doctor the following questions:

- What are my options if

lifestyle changes and over-the-counter medications haven't worked?

- How many bowel movements should I be having each week?
- What consistency should they be?

Dr. Franklin also recommends coming to your appointment prepared to share what symptoms you're experiencing and how long you've been trying to manage them. You might also be asked to identify what type of stool you most frequently experience when you are not taking medication using the Bristol Stool Form Scale. The Bristol Stool Form Scale is a visual representation of the seven types of BMs that you can have. “While it might seem

awkward to talk about, telling your doctor which type or types of stool you typically have can help you both create a treatment plan that works for you and your body,” says Dr. Franklin. “The good news is that now more than ever, it is possible for a doctor to evaluate your symptoms and diagnose IBS-C and CIC during a virtual visit, so take advantage of telehealth appointments.”

To learn more about the difference between IBS-C and CIC and for additional resources, visit **www.ConfrontConstipation.com**.

“If you are experiencing constipation, you are not alone,” says Dr. Franklin. “Constipation is not only common, it's treatable.”



# 2020 Focal Point Centers recognized

Nineteen senior centers from across southwest have been recognized and designated a 2020 Focal Point by the SouthWest Kansas Area Agency on Aging (SWKAAA) according to Rick Schaffer, Executive Director. These centers were recognized for the programs and services that were provided October 1, 2019 thru September 30, 2020.

A Focal Point Center is a highly visible facility where anyone can obtain information and access to services for elderly individuals. To a family caregiver and older Kansans, it is a well known, accessible place to turn to for information, services in the community and social opportunities.

To be considered for a Focal Point by SWKAAA a senior center had to meet minimum standards in ten (10) different program areas. Outreach to the community, center management, supportive services offered by the center, and the center’s involvement in the community, were a few of the areas that were reviewed by SWKAAA staff during the yearly on-site visit.

“The needs of older adults in the community continue to change,” according to Schaffer, and this is a good measure of the center’s ability to stay current with these demands. Additionally, in this time of economic constraints elected officials and taxpayers are demanding a greater accountability of how their aging mill levy funds are being spent. This past year has been especially challenging and these Senior Centers deserve a big thank you”.

On behalf of SWKAAA’s board of directors and staff we extend

our congratulations to these focal point centers for their willingness and efforts to improve the lives of older Kansans in their community and we commend them for the services they provide.

**The 2020 Focal Point Centers are:**

- Dodge City Senior Center
- Ellinwood Heritage Center
- Go Getters Senior Center, Ransom

- GrayCo Over 50, Inc. Cimarron
- Great Bend Senior Center
- Jetmore Senior Center
- Joy Center, Dighton
- Kearny County Senior Center, Lakin
- Kiowa County Senior Center, Greensburg
- Leisure Years Center, Ness City
- Melven O. Kuder Senior Center, Tribune

- Satanta Aging Program
- Senior Center of Finney Co., Garden City
- Senior Citizens Center, Minneola
- Seward County Council on Aging, Inc., Liberal
- Spearville Senior Center
- Stafford Senior Center
- Sunflower Senior Center, St. John
- Wichita County Senior Center, Leoti

## Dementia Related Psychosis: four caregiver facts you need to know

(StatePoint) Approximately 2.4 million people or 30 percent of people living with dementia in the U.S. may experience hallucinations and delusions associated with dementia-related psychosis. These symptoms might include seeing something that isn’t there or believing something that isn’t true and can be frequent, persistent and recur over time.

According to advocates, improving management of these troubling symptoms starts with recognizing and understanding what patients are experiencing. To learn more, UsAgainstAlzheimer’s, the Lewy Body Dementia Association (LBDA) and Acadia Pharmaceuticals, surveyed patients and their caregivers. Findings highlighted important, infrequently discussed, considerations for caregivers:

**1. Symptoms can happen frequently:** The most common symptoms of dementia-related psychosis reported by surveyed

patients were visual hallucinations (89 percent), auditory hallucinations (54 percent) and distortion of senses (54 percent) and such symptoms can happen frequently. Of patients who reported recent visual hallucinations, 61 percent indicated they occurred at least weekly. In addition, the majority of care partners (77 percent) reported paranoid delusions as occurring at least weekly.

“Given their potential frequency, being prepared to recognize, report, and manage these symptoms is critical,” says Theresa Frangiosa of UsAgainstAlzheimer’s, one of the survey authors. “My mom experienced these kinds of symptoms associated with her Alzheimer’s disease and in talking with other caregivers, many people think this could never happen to their family until it does.”

**2. Dementia-related hallucinations and delusions**

**greatly impact a patient’s overall health and quality of life:** Most surveyed patients said their activities of daily living (75 percent), sleep (63 percent), family life (56 percent), and safety (about 56 percent) were affected by dementia-related hallucinations and delusions. Care partners reported that symptoms make it difficult for their loved ones to know what is real and what is not real, contributing to their anxiety, and impacting their personal relationships.

Jo Anne, 70, from Maryland, was surprised by her husband’s hallucinations. “Before Ed was diagnosed with Lewy body dementia, he would tell me that he saw mice or insects in the house so, of course, I’d go check! When these experiences increased in frequency, I knew

See **Four,**  
page 14



# 2020: the year that never was

**By Mary Jo Cunningham**  
*Ellinwood Senior Center*

In the year 2020, so many came to fear a variant type of a virus that was present throughout many different years in the past — Asian Flu, Hong Kong Flu, H1N1 and on. Medicine can even be found in area barns for the cattle who happen to have the COVID respiratory ailments in a number of previous years. As the year advanced, many who followed the mainstream media sources (now no longer journalists but mere commentators) became fearful of any meaningful communication it seemed. A lot of the recommendations from experts were in exact contradiction of other recommendations from other experts. If one listened carefully and added everything together, some sense could emerge from most of the situation.

In the meantime, some items were hoarded, others were never found again, and the prices began a steady climb. Many lost jobs, a number of smaller businesses closed, never to open again. Brewers made sanitizer liquid. Farmers gave away produce. For a period, students were everywhere except in school. Some towns were innovative and continued events while others just canceled everything. Big box stores seemed to have lost their ability to have the items people in the smaller communities needed to buy. As time went on, people got

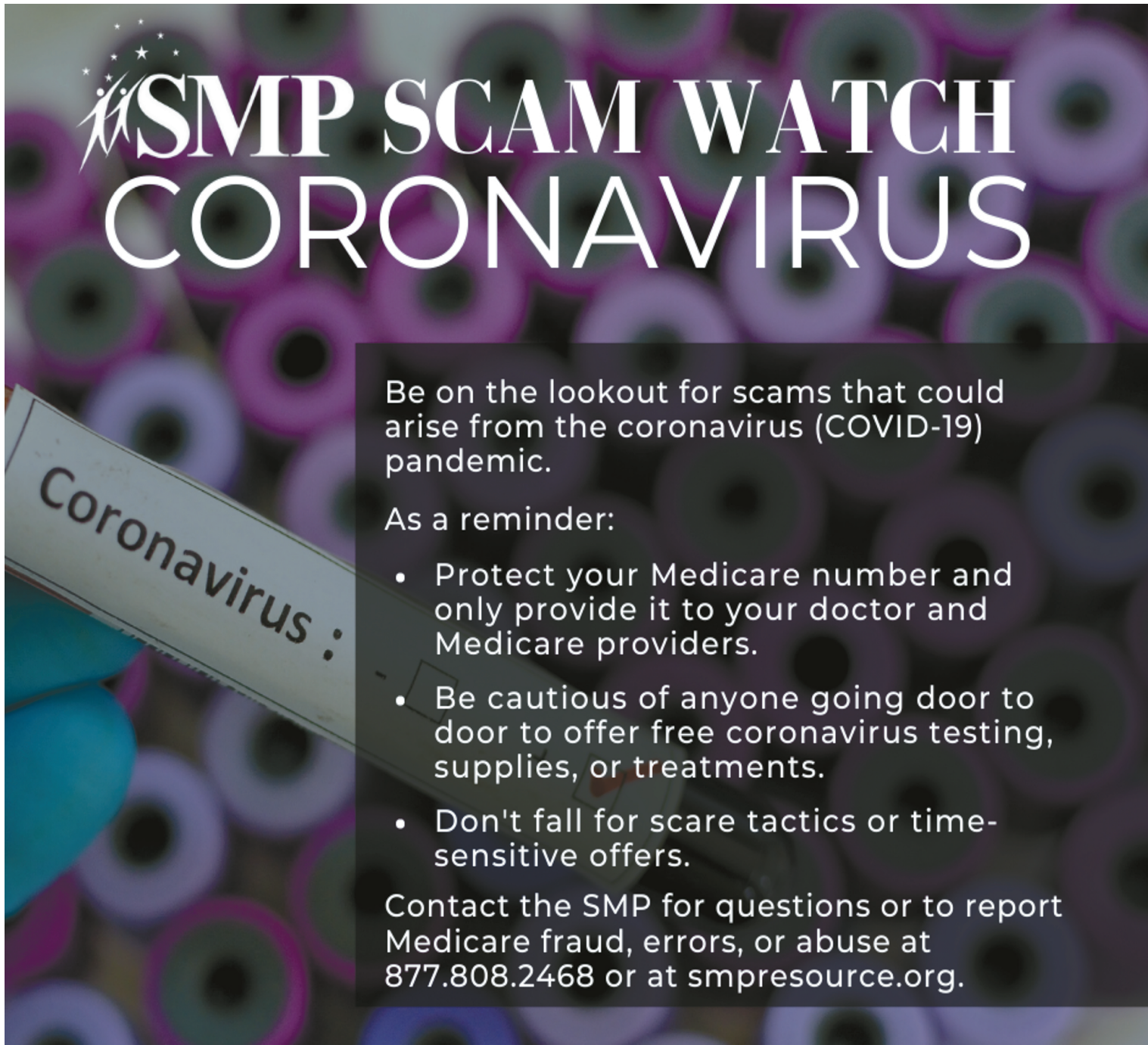
more fearful and this even affected the large stores and customers could find less and less of the items those stores could usually be counted on to provide. People kept staying in their homes and not venturing far.

As the months advanced instead of the virus being the major factor harming the residents, it began to be

evident the mental stress was more harmful to many than the virus was. When one person mentioned he didn't know if he would be alive tomorrow, and another did not remember a major location in the town it was extremely important to encourage citizens to venture out to a safe location for communication with others,

laughter, mind exercises and a lot of caring both back and forth, in other words, life. They had to live life to be alert and stay alive.

2020 seemed to be only a prelude of more to come and perhaps a much worse situation in 2021 and the future years. It may be best to live, listen carefully, learn and think for yourself.



## SMP SCAM WATCH CORONAVIRUS

Be on the lookout for scams that could arise from the coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic.

As a reminder:

- Protect your Medicare number and only provide it to your doctor and Medicare providers.
- Be cautious of anyone going door to door to offer free coronavirus testing, supplies, or treatments.
- Don't fall for scare tactics or time-sensitive offers.

Contact the SMP for questions or to report Medicare fraud, errors, or abuse at 877.808.2468 or at [smpresource.org](http://smpresource.org).

Coronavirus:



# Staying social when you live alone — or are in the middle of a pandemic

By Lynne Hewes

While there can certainly be some advantages to living alone, there are also downsides to cope with.

First, let's talk about the upsides: Perhaps for the first time in our lives, we can wake up at 3:00 A.M., turn all the lights in the house on, and do noisy things such as shampoo carpets, play our favorite music, or, as my friend Caroline once did, take down a non-support wall.

On a quieter side, we can, like my neighbor, Pearl, used to do, bake. Honestly, I'm not sure if Pearl was actually doing that, but when I woke up early, early one morning, looked across the street, and saw Pearl's house totally lit up, I asked her sister Peggy, "What's Pearl doing up so early with all her lights on?"

"Baking pineapple upside-down cakes," was Peggy's answer.

So, yes, there are perks to living alone. However, there are some not-so-great aspects, many of which have to do with a lack of social interaction.

Smart empty-nesters start making neighborhood connections. My mother-in-law, a smart woman, formed a connection with seven of her close and not-so-close friends.

"I made a calling tree," she told me. "We call each other every morning, just to make sure we're all still alive. Actually, besides that, it starts my day off. The calls take less than 30 minutes usually, but by the time I hang up, I am in such a good mood

for the rest of the day."

Marjorie, a former neighbor, once told me that she believed her project of delivering her friends to doctor and hair appointments did more for her than for her friends.

"It doesn't take much time," she said. "Actually, I have a lot of time these days, and chauffeuring my friends around helps fill that time — and it makes me happy when I do it."

The National Institute on Aging, in an article called "Aging in Place: Growing Older at Home," says that "Family, friends, and neighbors are the biggest source of help for many older people. Talk with those close to you about the best way to get what you need. If you are physically able, think about trading services with a friend or neighbor. One could do the grocery shopping, and the other could cook dinner, for example."

Delia, another of my neighbors, talked to me about when she and her neighbor Ida used to take turns cooking dinner at least one evening a week.

"We don't eat much at this stage," she said. "So, most nights both of us were just having a bowl of cereal or some canned soup. Then one day we were talking and decided we both like to cook, so how about once a week one of us makes a complete meal — meat, potatoes, salad — and delivers half to the other one? Sometimes we would eat together, sometimes we ate separately in our own houses across the street from



each other. The food was good — and it also gave us something to look forward to, the planning as well as the eating."

Staying social during the pandemic has been especially hard for many of us. Most careful citizens all but stopped having get-togethers, but a few figured out how to improvise.

"It's not like it used to be," Lena says, "but during the summer I would invite a couple of friends over to sit outside under my pecan tree. Everyone brought her own glass of iced tea and came in through my back gate. We got to visit, but we were in the outdoors, spaced apart from each other."

During the winter, hosting social gatherings like Lena's has become harder.

An online article called "How to Stay Socially Connected While Social Distancing" recommends

connecting with friends online. The article mentions online games such as Words with Friends, Minecraft, and JackBox Games, saying that "If you don't know how to get started setting up or playing video games, this is a perfect time to flip the tables and let a younger person be the expert."

That same article also recommends online exercise programs for people who miss getting together for daily walks or exercise classes. The author says, "A lot of major exercise franchises have made all or part of their platforms free in response to the pandemic. Whether you do CrossFit, yoga, dance cardio or Pilates, you and your workout partner can still arrange to meet

See **Staying,**  
page 14

# Top tips for organized tax filing

(StatePoint) 2020 was a particularly stressful year — but filing its taxes doesn’t need to be. With the following tips, you can stay organized and cool-headed throughout the process.

## File Early

File early so you check this major to-do off your list and relax. The good news is that the sooner you file, the better. This is true no matter what your circumstances are. If you owe money, you’ll have that much more time to plan your payment. If you’re due for a refund, filing sooner means you’ll have your money sooner, money which can be used to pay bills, be invested or be added to a rainy day fund. To that end, take some time to glance at your overall financial picture so

you can make a smart game plan for directing your refund usefully.

## Check Your Work

A multi-functional printing calculator with a 12-digit display can help you check your work and track and manage any necessary calculations, while ensuring your figures aren’t truncated. Look for a model that prints in two colors, such as Casio’s HR-170RC, so you can quickly see both positive and negative numbers to avoid reading errors. If you have any

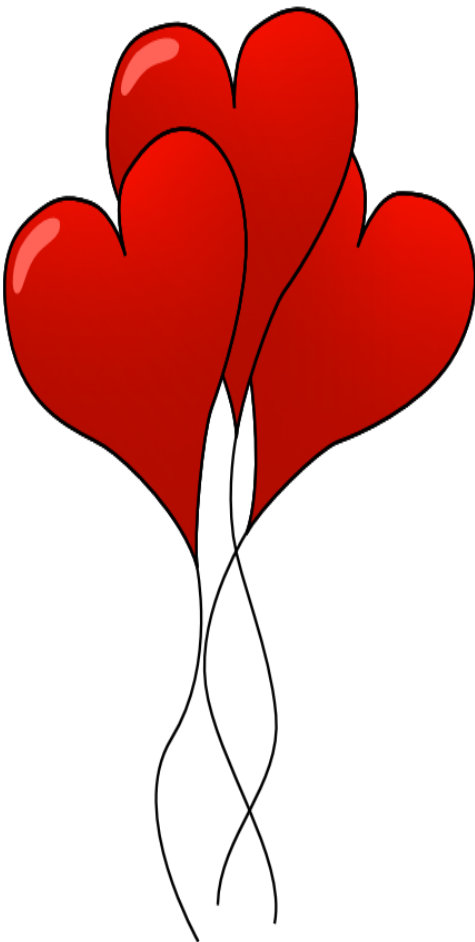
international holdings, this is a must-have tax season tool, as its functions include currency exchange. This model also has a built-in tax feature that lets you store a frequently-used rate and pull it up when needed, as well as a check function that allows you to scroll up to 150 steps of previous calculations.

## Stay Secure

Your financials and personal data are especially vulnerable during tax season. Be sure to keep

all the paperwork associated with your taxes organized securely. As forms arrive by mail, file them neatly in one place that’s locked and secure. Sensitive information can easily be misused if it falls into the wrong hands. If you’re storing information electronically, be sure to use strong passwords and work only on a secure network.

By giving yourself the right tools and plenty of time, you can better ensure timely, accurate tax preparation.



SOUTHWEST KANSAS SENIOR CITIZENS LAW PROJECT			
AAA SCHEDULE 2017-2021			
2 <sup>nd</sup> Quarter (January-March 2021)			
Kansas Legal Services			
DATE	SENIOR CENTERS	ATTORNEY	TIME
2-4-21	Larned Senior Center	Tom Lasley	11:00am
2-4-21	Great Bend Senior Center	Tom Lasley	1:30pm
2-5-21	Ulysses Senior Center	Tom Lasley	1:00pm
2-12-21	Dodge City Senior Center	Tom Lasley	10:00am
2-19-21	Liberal Senior Center	Tom Lasley	10:00am
2-19-21	Garden City Senior Center	Tom Lasley	1:00pm
DATE	SENIOR CENTERS	ATTORNEY	TIME
3-4-21	Great Bend Senior Center	Tom Lasley	1:30pm
3-5-21	Scott City Senior Center	Tom Lasley	11:00am
3-12-21	Dodge City Senior Center	Tom Lasley	10:00am
3-19-21	Liberal Senior Center	Tom Lasley	10:00am
3-19-21	Garden City Senior Center	Tom Lasley	1:00pm
* An attorney will visit only if appointments are scheduled. Please contact your local Senior Center or Kansas Legal Services (620-227-7349) if you would like to setup an appointment.			
* DUE TO COVID-19, MASKS ARE MANDATORY DURING IN PERSON APPOINTMENT. TELEPHONE APPOINTMENTS CAN BE SCHEDULED BY CALLING KANSAS LEGAL SERVICES AT (620) 227-7349.			



# Stimulus payments for people, not nursing homes

**By Lois C. Greisman**  
*Elder Justice Coordinator, FTC*

If you, or someone you care about, lives in an assisted living facility or nursing home, read on. Because the bill funding the second round of Economic Impact Payments (EIPs) has now been signed into law. The money — right now, \$600 per person who qualifies — is being sent out over the next few weeks. And, like last time, the money is meant for the PERSON, not the place they might live.

In the first round, which I'll call EIP 1.0, we know that some nursing facilities tried to take the stimulus payments intended for their residents... particularly those on Medicaid. Which wasn't, shall we say, legal, and kept some attorneys general busy recovering those funds for people.

Now, with EIP 2.0, we would hope those facilities have learned their lesson. But, just in case, let's be clear: If you qualify for a payment, it's yours to keep. If a loved one qualifies and lives in a nursing home or assisted living facility, it's theirs to keep. The facility may not put their hands on it, or require somebody to sign it over to them. **Even if that somebody is on Medicaid.**

It would be worth a quick chat with management of the facility in question, just to remind them that the rules are the same this time through.

And if you hear about a nursing home or assisted living facility being grabby about Economic Impact Payments, tell your state attorney general right away. And then tell the FTC at ***www.Report-Fraud.ftc.gov***.

**SCAM  
ALERT**

**Durable  
Medical  
Equipment  
(DME) scams**

**have been going around for years, warns the Area Agency on Aging.**

Now, scammers and rogue medical providers are using the coronavirus pandemic to take advantage of people and to bill Medicare fraudulently. They contact seniors using the pandemic to lure them into giving their Medicare number for a "free" COVID-19 test or supplies, and then the scammers use that information to bill Medicare for DME supplies.

**People should know the following:**

- Most scams originate with a phone call; however, you may receive a text, email or see an ad on TV, tricking you into getting a "free" brace with your Medicare number or other personal information
- Because Medicare requires a prescription for DME, some medical providers are accepting kickbacks in exchange for prescribing DME, as well as lab tests

for COVID-19 and antibody testing.

- Scammers are putting a twist on the old FAX SCHEME. Providers are receiving unsolicited, legitimate-looking faxes, with the logo appearing to be from a well-known major pharmacy, requesting a prescription for COVID-19 personal protective equipment or supplies for a patient.

**Tips**

- Know that most scams originate from a phone call, and the goal of a scammer is to get your personal medical information or financial information

- Don't respond to deceptive TV ads. If the product looks like something you may need or want, call your doctor for a prescription and the name of a reputable company.

- Do not provide your Medicare number or Social Security number to anyone, except your trusted medical providers.

- Medicare and Social Security will not call you and ask for personal information

**How to Respond**

- Hang up if anyone calls offering you free products or claiming to be from Medicare to obtain personal information.

- Do not reply to any postcards you receive in the mail offering free braces, creams, pain medication, or other

products, especially related to the coronavirus/COVID-19.

- Do not accept or open any packages you did not order; and return them to the delivery company. Keep a return receipt.

**What you should know about the COVID-19 vaccines**

As vaccines become more widely available, it's important to keep taking steps to slow the spread of COVID-19.

- Limit gatherings with others.
- Practice social distancing.
- Wash your hands frequently.
- Wear a mask in public.

Once the COVID-19 vaccine becomes available to you, **here's what you should know:**

- **You will need 2 doses of the COVID-19 vaccine for it to be effective.** When you receive your first dose, make sure to schedule your second dose.

- **Medicare covers the COVID-19 vaccine**, so there will be no cost to you.

- State governments are handling the distribution of COVID-19 vaccines. **Look for updates from your state and local officials** as more doses of the vaccine become available for additional priority groups.

Visit **CDC.gov** for additional trustworthy information on the COVID-19 vaccines.

# Tough Choice

By Randy Clinkscales

Recently my wife and I ventured to Wichita so that we could spend some time with our two grandchildren. Max is new to the being a grandchild scene, having only been born in May. Alex, on the other hand, is three and really has this “being a grandson” role down to an art. He is also growing up and is being potty trained. That means he wears “big boy” underwear (but still is wearing pants that are roomy enough for Pull Ups – kind of like a diaper).

On this particular day, Alex spent most of his time with Barb and I. We took him everywhere, including the zoo, shopping, playground, and lunch. He was so good, and always appropriately and timely asked to use the restroom.

About 3:00 p.m., we decided to head home (I don’t know if it was because he was tired or we were tired!). As a celebration of a great day, we stopped for takeout ice cream. I gave Alex his ice cream cone while he was sitting in his car seat. By the time we got to his parent’s home, a portion of the ice cream had melted, covering Alex’s hands and arms. I carefully lifted him out of the car seat, keeping my distance from the ice cream mess. I stood Alex on the ground. He took a step or two, and his too big pants fell down to his ankles.

Alex looked down to his pants around his ankles, then he looked at the ice cream cone in his hands, and finally to me. He then repeated that process.

I could tell he was trying to figure out what to do, and if, perhaps, I had a solution. How could he keep his ice cream cone and his dignity?

What was most important?

I thought about that experience with Alex for several weeks. I know there is a lesson there, if not several lessons.

Here’s one: It is okay to ask for help so you can keep what is precious to you.

Too many times people have something special, but they don’t know how to protect it. It could be

a business, farm, savings — but even more fundamentally, to stay independent and to stay at home.

But they are afraid to ask for help. And things work until they don’t.

I think one of the best parts about what I get to do is helping families decide what is really important to them, and then showing them how we can protect and keep it.

Let me go back to Alex. What did

he do with the ice cream cone? After looking the situation over a couple of times, he decided to just keep on walking with his pants around his ankles and eating his ice cream cone. My wife and I could have helped, but we were laughing too hard.

Don’t be afraid to ask for help to keep your ice cream cone. You can have your ice cream and dignity both!

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## Four, from page nine

that we needed to talk to his doctor about why he was having persistent hallucinations.”

Research shows that these kind of neuropsychiatric symptoms may pose challenges. For example, studies show that presence of psychosis in Alzheimer’s patients was also associated with 1.5 times increased likelihood of death.

**3. Care partners are affected too:** Dementia-related hallucinations and delusions are symptoms that can be associated with all forms of dementia such as Lewy body dementia, Alzheimer’s disease, Parkinson’s disease dementia, vascular dementia, and frontotemporal dementia. Unfortunately, caregivers of people with dementia compared to non-caregivers can experience high rates of emotional and physical stress as well as depression, an increased likelihood of comorbid conditions, hospitalizations, and doctor visits. In fact, caregiver burden is associated with increased desire to place people with dementia in long-term care.

**4. Getting help as early as possible is key:** Living with dementia-related hallucinations

and delusions takes a toll on both patients and caregivers. That’s why advocates urge caregivers to get educated about what to expect from dementia-related psychosis and find support.

“If you see your loved one exhibiting new symptoms, then take the initiative to tell their health care provider, who can offer advice on how to cope,” urges Frangiosa.

For more information, visit

**usagainstalzheimers.org.**

UsAgainstAlzheimer’s is an advocacy and research-focused organization pushing for expanding treatments and research for Alzheimer’s disease. Additional education is available from LBDA at **www.lbda.org**.

While the symptoms of dementia-related psychosis can be hard to recognize at first, reporting symptoms is the first step to finding support.

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## Staying, from page eleven

at a certain time, log in together and do your workout.”

And then, of course, there are those ubiquitous Zoom meetings with co-workers, family members, and friends.

One friend from work used to invite several people over to her house for informal monthly cocktail parties. Now she does it via Zoom.

Human beings are social creatures. We are also enterprising. In spite of living alone, in spite of world-wide pandemic, we can

and do figure out how to remain connected.

### Sources:

“Aging in Place: Growing Older at Home.” *National Institute on Aging*. <https://www.nia.nih.gov/health/aging-place-growing-older-home>.

“How to Stay Socially Connected while Socially Distances.” *Scripps*. [https://www.scripps.org/news\\_items/6943-how-to-stay-socially-connected-while-social-distancing](https://www.scripps.org/news_items/6943-how-to-stay-socially-connected-while-social-distancing).





## New Employee: Robert Lininger

Robert retired from SWKAAA in January 2013. He was originally hired as the Transportation Director and then given the additional responsibility of OKEP Director. After 13 years, he changed programs and became the Family Caregiver Coordinator and a SHICK Counselor. He continued to volunteer with the SHICK program for a few years after retirement and then devoted his attention to full time retirement and his golf game. Robert learned about the opening in the OKEP Department and agreed to come back to the program he spent so much time with. He is looking forward to the challenges of assisting older workers to find employment in this time of a pandemic. We welcome Robert back to the team here at SWKAAA.

## Eye, from page four

a seller — the place where you’re buying your glasses or lenses — permission to get a physical copy from your prescriber. If you do, your prescriber has 40 business hours to respond and provide it.

### What has to be in my prescription?

State law determines what information is needed in a prescription for glasses.

Your eye doctor may include the distance between your pupils (called pupillary distance) in your

prescription. To buy glasses online, you will need that measurement. Many states do not require that pupillary distance information be included in a prescription, but many doctors do not charge for the pupillary distance measurement.

If your doctor does charge to provide this information, some online sellers will refund you that cost.

The Contact Lens Rule says your contact lens prescription must include:

- your name

- the date of your exam
- when your prescription was issued, and when it expires
- the name, mailing address, phone number, and fax number of the doctor
- the power, material, and/or manufacturer of the prescribed lens
- the base curve or appropriate designation of the lens
- the diameter of the lens, when appropriate

If your doctor prescribes private label contact lenses, the prescription should include the name of the manufacturer, the brand name, and the name of any identical lens from the same manufacturer, if that applies.

### My prescriber’s office says they can’t release my prescription because of the Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act (HIPPA). Is that right?

No. HIPAA doesn’t stop an eye care prescriber from giving a glasses or contact lens prescription to a patient, nor to a seller who has been instructed by a patient to act as their authorized agent.

### Can my prescriber make me pay for the exam or fitting *before* giving me my prescription?

Your prescriber can, and probably will, charge you for the eye exam or contact lens fitting. But the only way the prescriber’s office can require you to pay for the eye exam, contact lens fitting, or evaluation *before* giving you a copy of your prescription is if they require immediate payment from *all* eye exam patients.

### Cosmetic Contact Lenses

All contact lenses — even cosmetic ones that only change your appearance — require a prescription. Businesses that sell cosmetic lenses without getting a copy of your prescription, or verifying

your prescription information with your eye care prescriber, are selling them illegally.

### I’m only changing the way my eyes look, not correcting my vision. Why do I need a prescription?

Contact lenses, including cat eyes or lenses that change your eye color, can harm your eyes unless they’re properly fitted. An eye care prescriber needs to examine your overall eye health and give you a proper contact lens fitting before you wear lenses. Otherwise, you might face serious injuries or complications like:

- eye pain or discomfort
- red or swollen eyes
- blurred or decreased vision
- corneal abrasion (cut or scratch on top layer of eye)
- allergic reactions (itchy, watery, red eyes)
- infection
- blindness

If you’re in the market for cosmetic contacts, see an eye care prescriber for an eye exam and prescription. Only buy contacts from sellers who require your prescription — or will leave a verification request with your prescriber. Your sight may depend on it.

### What should I do with my prescription once I have it?

If you want to buy glasses or contacts from someone other than your prescriber, the easiest and most accurate method will be to provide a copy of the prescription to the seller to fill your order. Online sellers should tell you how to send or upload a copy of your prescription.

If you don’t give the seller your

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# Eye, from page 15

actual prescription, you'll need to give them information about it — for example, the brand or manufacturer of the recommended contacts, power, base curve, or diameter. You'll also need to tell the seller how to get in touch with your prescriber to send a request to verify the information.

It's important to give the seller the correct information. If you don't, and your prescriber doesn't respond to the seller's request within eight business hours, the seller can sell you those lenses, but you may wind up with lenses that aren't your prescription. If you're not buying glasses or

contacts anytime soon, keep a copy of your prescription in a safe place. Or take a picture of it and save it on your phone or computer. You want to be able to find it if you need to order glasses or contacts quickly.

## Can I order a different brand of contact lenses than the one written on my prescription?

Not without your prescriber's

approval. Talk to your prescriber if you want to change things like your contact lens brand, or how often you change them (for example, moving from bi-weekly to daily contacts). There's one exception, though: if the brand you wear is the exact same contact lens as the one written on your prescription, just manufactured under a different name (for example, private label — sometimes referred to as "store brand" — lenses).

# STAY WARM. STAY CONNECTED.



## Cold Weather Rule November 1 – March 31

The **Cold Weather Rule** is designed to keep your utilities connected during the winter months, even when you're unable to pay your bill in full. Contact your utility company to see if you qualify to make payment arrangements under the Cold Weather Rule.



### How do I sign up?

If you can't pay your entire bill, call your utility company to make pay arrangements:

- Agree to pay 1/12 of the overdue amount of your bill, plus 1/12 of your current bill, all disconnection and connection fees plus any applicable deposit owed to the utility, and agree to pay the remainder in equal payments over the next 11 months; or
- Negotiate a payment plan to pay the overdue amount off quicker than 12 months.

Remember, you must also pay your full bills for any new service you use while paying off the overdue amount.

If you are behind in a previous payment plan and cannot catch up, you need to make a new payment agreement with the utility.

### What will the utility company do?

Utilities must inform you of the Cold Weather Rule payment plan as well as other available payment plans. Remember, under the Cold Weather Rule, you always have the option of spreading your payment over a total of 12 months.

Utilities must send written notice to customers 10 days before disconnection, plus attempt a phone call or personal contact the day before.

Utilities must tell customers about agencies that may have funds to help pay utility bills.

### Can I be disconnected during the Cold Weather Rule?

A utility cannot disconnect you when the local National Weather Service forecasts that the temperature will be below 35 degrees Fahrenheit within the following 48-hour period.

A utility may start the final notification and disconnection process if there is a 48-hour forecast of temperatures above 35 degrees. If the 48-hour forecast changes before the period ends and there is a forecast of below 35 degrees, the utility cannot disconnect until there is another 48-hour forecast of temperatures above 35 degrees.

To prevent disconnection when it is 35 degrees or above, or to be reconnected regardless of temperature, you must make pay arrangements with your utility.

### Please Note

The Cold Weather Rule applies only to residential customers of electric, natural gas, and water utility companies under the Kansas Corporation Commission's jurisdiction.

#### For more information:

Call your utility company or the Kansas Corporation Commission at (800) 662-0027.

## How long is my prescription good?

State law determines when your prescription for eyeglasses or contact lenses will expire. Eyeglass prescriptions usually are good for a year or two, but state laws vary. The Contact Lens Rule says that prescriptions must be good for at least a year, unless your prescriber has a medical reason for making it shorter. Don't try to buy glasses or contact lenses with an expired prescription. Your eye health changes over time, so it's important to have regular comprehensive eye health exams.

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) has good advice about healthy contact lens wear.

## Report Rule Violations

**What should I do if my eye care prescriber won't give me a prescription, makes me ask for it, charges me for it, or won't give it to me unless I sign a waiver or release?**

If you think an eye care prescriber is violating the Eyeglass Rule or the Contact Lens Rule, report it to the FTC at [ftc.gov/complaint](https://www.ftc.gov/complaint). FTC attorneys and investigators — and hundreds of other law enforcement agencies — use these reports to bring cases against companies and people who don't follow the law.