

March-April
2010

Elders First Adult Day Services

P.O. Box 332966, Murfreesboro, TN 37133 ☀ 615-542-4371 ☀ eldersfirst@dtccom.net

Located at New Vision Baptist Church – 1750 N. Thompson Lane – Murfreesboro, TN 37129

We invite you to visit ADS!



Mary Clark experiences the joy that is an essential ingredient of the day program!

Alzheimer's Association sponsored Early Stage Memory Loss Support Group Meets at NHC Healthcare
420 N. University Blvd., Murfreesboro, TN
For persons with memory loss who would like to talk & gain support from others who are facing similar concerns
March 18 10:30 – 11:30 am
April 15 10:30 – 11:30 am
Contact Tina ♥ 615-418-5587 ♥ for Information

Mark your calendar!
**The Art of Being Together:
The Best Friends Approach to
Dementia Care**
Presenter – Tonya Cox, MSW
**Tennessee Association of Adult
Day Services Annual Conference**
April 22-23

New Vision Baptist Church
1750 N. Thompson Lane
Murfreesboro, TN 37129
Registration Deadline April 12
Directions & information
www.TAADS.org

A Message from the Executive Director

The Tennessee Association of Adult Day Services was established in 1986 to provide support to those who provide a variety of day services to adults. What an honor it has been to serve as President of this Statewide organization for the past three years!

At our annual conference, all of us who are passionate about adult day services come together to connect with one another. The upcoming conference, **The Art of Being Together: The Best Friends Approach to Dementia Care**, will give us the opportunity to share information and exchange ideas, provide staff training to improve the quality of services, promote the public's understanding and support of day care for adults who need special care, provide information and support to members about policy and procedures of State licensing, and share ideas about how to promote adult day services legislation to State officials and policy makers.

I am truly thrilled to have Tonya Cox, MSW, as our featured speaker all day on April 22. Tonya began working in dementia care in 1995 at the Best Friends Day Center developing and leading activities for persons with memory loss. In 2004, she co-authored *The Best Friend's Book of Alzheimer's Activities* with Virginia Bell, David Troxel and Robin Hamon. Tonya has presented at numerous local and national conferences on activity programming, Alzheimer's disease and caregiving.

Tonya is currently the Vice President for Education and Programs for the Alzheimer's Association — Greater Kentucky & Southern Indiana Chapter where she develops programs and services for persons with dementia, their caregivers, and professionals. Tonya currently serves on the Kentucky Alzheimer's Disease Advisory Council and is a part-time faculty member of the Louisville Kent School of Social Work.

The Tennessee Association of Adult Day Services website, www.TAADS.org contains all the pertinent information in regard to fees, membership in TAADS, accommodation, directions, etc.

Persons who provide Adult Day Services tend to be those who are living Love in their daily work. They are putting their Love into action so that their connections with participants, families, staff members, and volunteers demonstrate what is in their hearts. You are welcome to come by our Elders First program any time to see our program in action!

♥ *Tina O'Brien*

News flash! Social Security Approved for Dementias Under 65

A new decision streamlines the Social Security application process for younger people with dementias such as Alzheimer's.

In its effort to improve and expedite the disability determination process, the Social Security Administration (SSA) has announced that it will add early-onset Alzheimer's disease to its Compassionate Allowances Initiative. The initiative identifies debilitating diseases and medical conditions that meet the SSA's disability standards for Social Security Disability Income (SSDI) or Supplemental Security Income (SSI). Inclusion in the initiative allows for faster payment of Social Security benefits to individuals with Alzheimer's disease.

The Alzheimer's Association applauds Social Security Commissioner Michael Astrue and the SSA for understanding that the cognitive impairment caused by Alzheimer's disease leaves individuals unable to maintain gainful employment and deserving of an expedited disability determination.

"As the leading research, advocacy, and support organization for Alzheimer's disease, the Alzheimer's Association has actively sought the inclusion of early-onset Alzheimer's in the Social Security Administration's Compassionate Allowances Initiative," says Harry Johns, President and CEO of the Alzheimer's Association. "Now, individuals who are dealing with the enormous challenges of Alzheimer's won't also have to endure the financial and emotional toll of a long disability decision process."

Until now, individuals with early-onset Alzheimer's disease have faced a myriad of challenges when applying for SSDI or SSI, including a long decision process, initial denials, and multiple appeals.

There are currently an estimated 5.3 million Americans with Alzheimer's disease. Although the majority of Alzheimer cases are individuals age 65 and older, a significant number of people under age 65 are also affected by this fatal disease and have few financial options other than the Social Security disability program.

In addition to Alzheimer's disease, mixed-dementia and Primary Progressive Aphasia (a type of frontotemporal dementia) were also added to the Compassionate Allowances Initiative under the SSA's recent decision.

"The diagnosis of Alzheimer's indicates significant enough cognitive impairment to interfere with daily living activities, including the ability to work. This decision will help a significant number of Alzheimer families," says Johns.

Source: Alzheimer's Weekly online

http://www.alzheimersweekly.com/Planning_for_the_Future/social-security-approved-for-dementias-under-65-a682.html



New Vision Baptist Church

We continue to give thanks for the wonderful pastors, staff, and members at NVBC! Their friendship and providing a location for Elders First is much appreciated by the Board, our staff, and the entire community.



Gordon and Pat Adams are enthusiastic partners from the community who serenade staff and participants each month

Elders First is a Nonprofit Program

Open Monday through Friday

8:00 AM to 5:00 PM

615-542-4371 eldersfirst@dtccom.net

www.eldersfirst-ads.org

Located at New Vision Baptist Church

1750 N. Thompson Lane

Murfreesboro, Tennessee 37129

Inclement Weather

When **Murfreesboro City Schools** are closed due to **snow & ice**, Elders First Adult Day Services will also be closed.

Costs

Full Day (up to 9 hours) \$ 30.00

Half Day (up to 4 hours) \$ 20.00

Transportation - Families provide transportation, Mid-Cumberland Human Resource Agency Public Transportation at **615-890-2677**.

Good Times are Our Specialty!



Participants help each other enjoy many activities each week to keep minds alert!

Understanding the Booming Business of “Brain Boosters”

by Lisa Snyder, MSW, LCSW

A growing number of supplements and nutritional drinks are being marketed as elixirs that can stimulate thinking abilities, prevent or treat memory loss, or boost brainpower. For most consumers, it can be hard to tease out fact from fiction about these claims. Given that the current treatments for Alzheimer’s are limited and clinical trials of promising drugs can be painfully slow, it is likely that more and more people are going to seek out supplements in the hope of boosting brain function.

Supplements and Nutraceuticals

Many brain boosters found in health food stores or through other distributors are mixtures of vitamins, herbs, and other substances that may have been studied individually in people with Alzheimer’s without promising results. For example, many brain boosters include Omega 3 fatty acids (specifically DHA) or ginkgo biloba even though neither of these compounds has been shown in large, well conducted clinical trials to be effective in treating Alzheimer’s. It is unclear whether a combination of these ingredients taken together can produce a more encouraging outcome, but supplements can be expensive and consumer caution is warranted.

The Food and Drug Administration (FDA) does not review data on the effectiveness of nutritional supplements or “nutraceuticals.” The manufacturers of nutritional supplements are not required to provide the FDA with any evidence of a product’s safety or ability to provide significant treatment. Thus consumers may be enticed by the effective marketing of claims based on little or no research. The makers of a supplement cannot advertise that

the product can treat a specific disease such as Alzheimer’s (because this has not been rigorously proven), but they can, however, make more general claims about the supplement’s benefit to “memory function” or “brain health.”

To add to the confusion, a substance may have undergone clinical trials to determine efficacy in treating Alzheimer’s, but when results are found to be negative, it may then be marketed as a supplement that does not require FDA approval. For example, Alzhemed, a promising drug for treatment of Alzheimer’s underwent a series of large and reputable clinical trials to determine both safety and efficacy. The drug disappointed many when the clinical trial outcomes ultimately did not reveal significant benefit compared to placebo and therefore there was no justification in approving the drug for treatment. The makers of Alzhemed went on to reintroduce the drug to the public as a supplement called Vivimind™ that now sells in Canada and over the internet as a brain booster.

Because there is no FDA oversight, the purity or potency of supplements and nutraceuticals can vary considerably between manufacturing brands and there is currently no scientifically based recommended dose of these supplements for people with Alzheimer’s.

Many people assume that if something is “natural”, it can’t be harmful, but some supplements do have side effects or inter-actions with other medications that could compromise your health. Individual response to supplements can vary. Some consumers may feel they are benefiting from a particular supplement by feeling more alert or energetic. Sometimes just the thought that you may be doing something beneficial for your brain can lead to a feeling of improved mood or thinking. To date, however, there is limited scientific evidence that any marketed brain booster can significantly alter the course or symptoms of Alzheimer’s, and certainly there is no supplement that can provide a cure.

You may be curious about the marketed benefits of certain products or perhaps you have experienced a positive outcome from their use. The use of supplements is a personal decision, but it is important to inform your doctor or other health care provider of any nutritional supplements you are taking so any positive or negative effects can be monitored.

The Emergence of “Medical Foods”

A medical food (a category defined by the FDA) can be marketed as treatment for a specific disease and aims to provide a nutritional means of treatment that cannot be derived from regular food consumption. For example, levels of glucose (an energy source) are reduced in the brains of people with Alzheimer’s. A product called

(continued on page 4)

Care Corner - Take Time to Chuckle! Puns!

1. A bicycle can't stand alone; it is two tired.
2. He broke into song because he couldn't find the key.
3. Time flies like an arrow; fruit flies like a banana.
4. A backward poet writes inverse.
5. In a democracy it's your vote that counts; in feudalism, it's your Count that votes.
6. A chicken crossing the road: poultry in motion.

“Brain Boosters” (continued from page 2)

Axona™, a powder mixed with water to make a beverage, aims to compensate for this reduction by providing an alternative source of energy to the brain. Axona is marketed as a medical food to treat Alzheimer’s. A controlled clinical trial of Axona in persons with Alzheimer’s suggested that there may be a cognitive benefit at 90 days, but this was not apparent after 180 days of treatment.

Medical foods require a prescription from a doctor. Medical foods are regulated by the FDA to some extent for safety in that they consist of ingredients “generally recognized as safe” (GRAS), but do not need to undergo the rigorous trials for safety and efficacy that drugs do. At present, the Alzheimer’s Association does not endorse the use of Axona as a treatment for Alzheimer’s, but some physicians are beginning to prescribe the medical food to patients who are seeking any possible benefit. Use of Axona can produce side effects including diarrhea, so ongoing medical observation is important.

Other medical foods aimed at the treatment of Alzheimer’s will likely become available in the near future. There is a clinical trial currently being conducted on Souvenaid™, a once-a-day milkshake formula made up of ingredients (including DHA and anti-oxidants) said to help maintain healthy neurons (brain cells) and synapses (the connections between brain cells). It is important to consult with your doctor about any possible risks or benefits of these products. The use of nutraceuticals and medical foods may interfere with your participation in other hopeful clinical trials aimed at treating or slowing the progression of Alzheimer’s, so it is important to weigh your decisions carefully when exploring alternative therapies.

Article written by Lisa Snyder, MSW, LCSW of the University of California San Diego Shiley Marcos Alzheimer's Disease Research Center. Reprinted with permission from Perspectives - A Newsletter for Individuals with Alzheimer's or a Related Disorder. For a free electronic newsletter subscription

contact Lisa Snyder at lsnyder@ucsd.edu

Elders First ADS is important to us!



Staff Members of Elders First Adult Day Services
Cheryle Zachery Smith, Program Director
Tina O'Brien, Executive Director
Angelina Baxter, Activities Assistant

The staff is ready to answer your questions and listen to your suggestions. We love our work!

ABOUT ELDERS FIRST ADS EXECUTIVE DIR.
Tina O'Brien, M.A., LPE

Tina O'Brien, a Duke University graduate, earned a Master's Degree in Clinical Psychology at MTSU in 2001. The American Public Health Association awarded an Honorable Mention in 2002 to her thesis study, "The Effects of the Wellness Group Methodology in an Adult Day Care Setting".

It has been Tina's life goal to help elders remain at home and have a high quality of life. She led the start-up of a senior center adult day services program in 1999 and was director of that program for seven years prior to initiating Elders First in 2005. The program has offered services since November 2007.

Tina served for twenty years as a geriatric counselor for groups and individuals in nursing homes with The Guidance Center in Murfreesboro and also directed the adult day care program there. She is the President of the Tennessee Association of Adult Day Services (TAADS). She is a Licensed Psychological Examiner and facilitates a local support group for persons with memory loss as an Alzheimer's Association volunteer.

“The true measure of society is in how it cares for those who cannot care for themselves. Those in the dawn of life, the children; Those in the twilight of life, the elderly; And those in the shadows of life, the sick, the needy, and the handicapped.” Hubert H. Humphrey.