



FALL 2021



SEAGO

Area Agency on Aging



Letter from the Director

Everyone must take time to sit and watch the leaves turn.

Elizabeth Lawrence

The Area Agency on Aging is continuously working to bring you the resources and services you need to stay connected, engaged, and most importantly, stay healthy.

In more notable news, the Southeastern Arizona Health Education Center (SEAHEC) and the Area Agency on Aging have partnered to address vaccine hesitancy and provide general education to our communities. The Covid-19 pandemic has changed the way we view life, as it has changed us in so many positive and negative ways. But, unfortunately, too many lives have been lost, and too much pain and suffering persist. It is time to show credible information, and SEAHEC is focused on doing this for Region VI. SEAHEC has partners throughout the region who are willing to help us take the message to our communities and help those who choose to take the shot to have the resources at their reach. The partnership will help our vulnerable population and their caregivers access vaccines for themselves and their family members. Yet perhaps the most salient point of this partnership will be to reduce misinformation by providing a robust network of information to those who may be inclined to seek a vaccine.

We find ways to meet the needs of our communities, and we continue to strive to implement changes that allow us the ability to grow, even during COVID. We are fortunate to have strong and supportive partners throughout the region—a good example to share. For the past five years, we have worked strategically to identify gaps in service and increase services in the underserved areas we cover. For example, the Area Agency on Aging sees the need to bring the case management program in-house rather than subcontracting it out. The change will allow us to monitor the case managers and their time with our clients and communities. The case managers are the gatekeepers in our communities; they are vital to providing home and community-based services as designated by the Older American's Act in their areas. By having the case manager work directly under the supervision of the AAA, we will ensure that all resources are provided to our members, partners, and the community as a whole.

Thank you for allowing us your trust and encourage us to continue forward in addressing your needs.

Sincerely,

Laura Villa





We at SEAGO AAA would like to Thank You for your support during the many changes at SEAGO AAA. As you have noticed, we missed a Newsletter for Summer 2021. We apologize for this as we know how important the newsletter is to you. We are back on track, and this newsletter is full of current information on things happening. We also would like to inform you of information that occurred over the summer. We are always open to suggestions for the newsletter, and your input is greatly appreciated. If you would like to provide any information or if you have a great story to share, please notify the AAA staff at 520-248-2528 or bschumacher@seago.org





SEAGO Area Agency on Aging attended the third annual World Elder Abuse Awareness Day (WEAAD) conference. This live event was hosted by the Arizona Department of Economic Security for individuals and professional organizations and communities to connect and advocate against abuse neglect expectations of older people, including individuals with disabilities, was a significant opportunity for those who serve in such communities. The event was two interactive days with keynote speakers, 10 tracks, and 24 breakout sessions with live speaker questions and answers. Attendees could access booths for resources and save them to a virtual swag bag.

Day 1

Mali McCarthy with the division of aging opening. The event was hosted by Dr. David Coon, with Arizona State University's first-day keynote speaker was K Francis, an author, and a motivational speaker. We went to breakout sessions such as abuse and neglect in long-term care facilities hidden from view, trauma-informed care strength resistance and Equality, State strategies to support family caregivers, The relationship between mental illness and intimate partner violence and abuse, age discrimination act, and standard of care plans and practice during COVID-19 public health emergency, resident Council's innovation and the value of varying perspectives within the ombudsman program, adult protection Service 101, caring for those who care, self-awareness and self-protection, The impact of sexual and domestic violence in the elderly population, your Social Security report and fraud,

Reclaiming what sacred addressing harm to indigenous elders is,

Day 2

Day two was also hosted by Dr. David Coon, with keynote speaker Bob Blanca to National coordinator for elder justice coalition and executive director of the National Association of nutrition and aging services program. On day two, we were offered breakout sessions such as. Theft of money, jewelry, and opioid pain medication at residential facilities, The right to high-quality healthcare, making space for resiliency, The challenges and triumphs of surviving abuse, legal issues affecting older adults during COVID-19, dealing with the stress Deescalating strategies, managing stress and avoiding burn out for adult protection services professionals, disability matters, civil rights for older Americans, consumer scams, insights into abuse of older adults living in rural areas.

The SEAGO Area Agency on Aging team enjoyed participating in the conference and knowing that we were bringing the knowledge that we learned on a state level back to our region for our seniors and our disabled

On September 28, the SEAGO AAA Staff and Case managers from our four-county regions gathered in person and via Zoom call to thank Areli Perrales for her nine years of service to the seniors of Santa Cruz County as a SEAGO AAA Case manager. Areli empowered seniors to remain safely and independently in their homes, providing them with options, Community resources, and access to our Home and Community-Based Services. Areli was presented with a plaque by AAA Director Laura Villa and treated to lunch with the AAA Staff. We all wish her the best in her new role as Santa Cruz County Public Fiduciary.



MEET ELSA CENTENO/SHIP COORDINATOR

Elsa is a native of Arizona who grew up in the Phoenix area. She is a Certified Nursing Assistant, Medical Assistant, wife, and mother of 3 exceptional children.

In her personal life, Elsa enjoys spending time with her family, short trips, and sitting around a fireplace drinking coffee while wearing her fuzzy socks.

Elsa's goal is to gather as much information on Medicare and other resources as to educate

herself and our communities to be a passionate advocate for the SEAGO-AAA clients.

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that she can be a passionate advocate for the SEAGO-AAA clients.

MEET LIZ CASTELLANOS / SANTA CRUZ COUNTY CASE MANAGER

Born and raised in Nogales, Arizona, I have worked in the medical field for over 20 years, first as a medical assistant. I slowly transitioned to home health and obtained my Associate's degree in Health Care Administration. Working in home health opened my eyes to the needs and lack of knowledge of resources in our small community. This knowledge created the drive, passion, and motivation to become more involved in the community I love so much. My spare time is dedicated to my two beautiful boys, my

husband, and concerts! I love attending concerts!!

My goal is to continue to learn and grow so I can continue to apply this to our community.

As a case manager for SEAGO-AAA, I will use my platform to create new relationships with local resources and better help my community.

AAA Older American Month May 2021

SEAGO Area Agency on Aging held an event in Clifton on May 12 and Safford on May 13 to celebrate Older Americans Month.

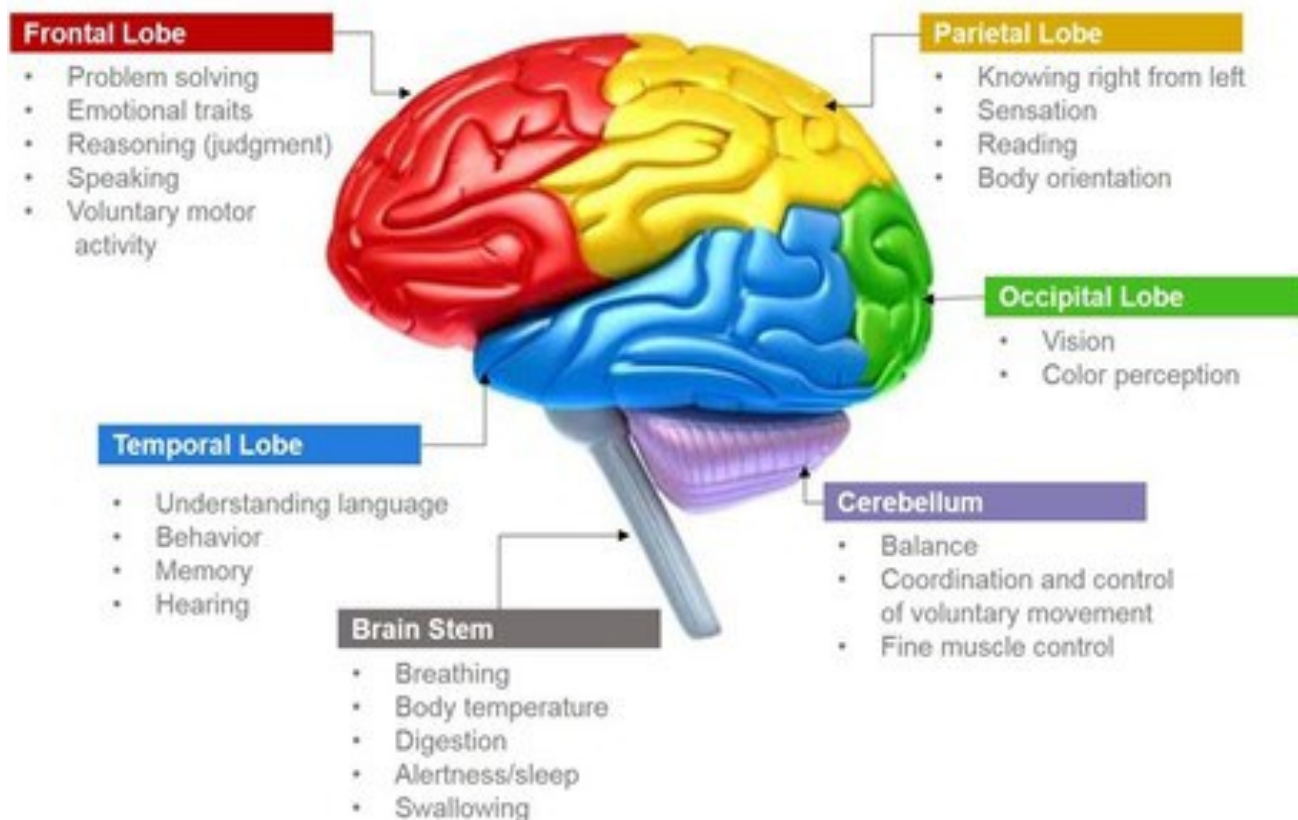
In 1963 Older Americans Month was established due to a meeting in April 1963 between John F. Kennedy and the National Council of Senior Citizens. Older Americans Month is celebrated every May to celebrate the contributions of past and current seniors in our country. Older Americans

Month is celebrated across the Nation through events, fairs, and ceremonies.

The 2021 theme for Older Americans Month was "Communities of Strength." The COVID-19 Pandemic has shown us the resilience and strength of seniors in our communities and emphasized the importance of the aging network, the power of connection, and engagement within our communities. The isolation of the pandemic

significantly impacted the rural regions of Arizona. Still, communities like Clifton and Safford banded together to connect with isolated seniors. They ensured that their aging residents continued to thrive. SEAGO Area Agency on Aging celebrated all older Americans. I was honored to celebrate this year's Older Americans Month in Graham and Greenlee Counties.

Brain Health and Aging



June was Alzheimer's and Brain Awareness Month. There are an estimated 47 million people living with Alzheimer's and other dementias worldwide. Those numbers are estimated to reach 76 million by 2030.

The term *Brain Health* refers to how the brain functions in several different areas:

Motor Function

Cognitive Health

Tactile Function

Emotional function

Motor Function – Represents how well we form and control movements, such as balance. Voluntary control over body movements is what allows us to interact with others and with our environment. Body movements are not just about controlling the legs and the arms. Our ability to visually explore the world requires the motor function of the head and eyes. The ability to show emotion and make facial expressions, as well as to communicate by moving the lips, tongue and mouth, are all part of our brain's motor functioning.

Cognitive Health - The ability to think, learn and remember. Genetic and environmental factors influence our cognitive health. Things such as high blood pressure, depression, poor diet, smoking, lack of physical activity, alcohol dependence, sleep issues and social isolation can all have an impact on our cognitive health.

Tactile Function – How we feel and respond to the sensations of touch, which includes temperature, pressure and pain. The tactile system represents our sense of touch through different sensory receptors in our skin and acts as a protective defense from dangerous and unpleasant things we may encounter in our environment.

Emotional Function – A group of interconnected structures located deep within the brain called the *limbic system* is responsible for our behavioral and emotional responses. Psychological research identifies 6 basic emotions: happiness, fear, sadness, disgust, anger and surprise.

The limbic system is a network of regions in the brain, which work together to process emotions, define mood and help us make sense of the world around us.

Brain health can be affected by many factors other than age-related changes. Mood disorders, substance abuse, traumatic brain injury and stroke often have negative repercussions when it comes to brain health. Not all factors affecting the health of the brain can be changed but focusing on certain lifestyle alternatives can change or improve your overall brain health. As we age, embracing those lifestyle changes may help prevent or slow the progression of Alzheimer's and certain other dementias.

What risk factors do you have that could be modified to protect your brain health as you age?

High Blood Pressure

Type 2 diabetes

Low Mental Activity

Low Physical Activity

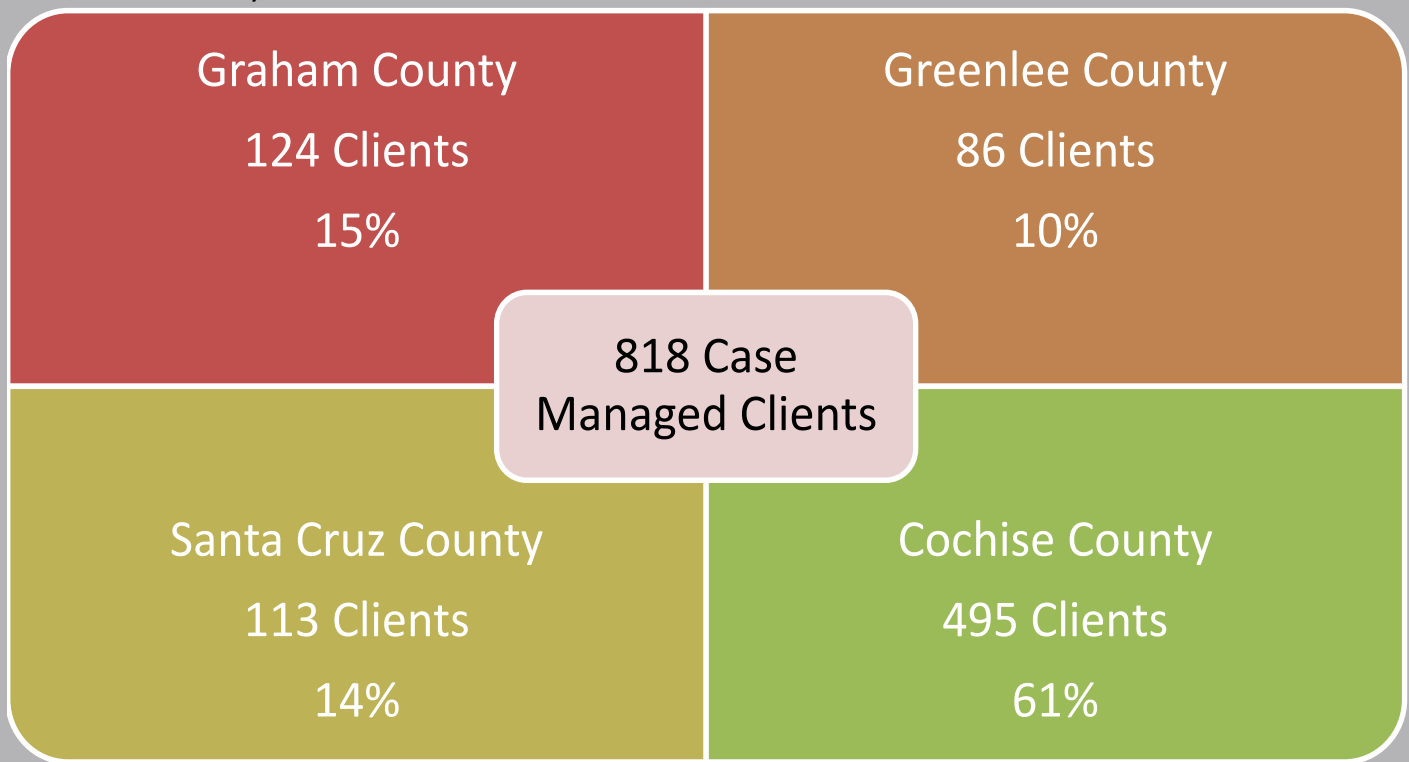
Smoking

Depression

A combination of physical activity, good nutrition, social engagement and increased mental activity has been proven to help promote brain health. Staying active can prevent a loss of physical mobility and help you stay independent longer. Cognitive brain health has also shown positive improvements as a result of regular physical activity. Get routine medical care and take care of your heart by watching your blood pressure, monitoring cholesterol levels and maintaining a healthy weight. Plan your meals and focus on a healthy diet. Build social support networks and participate in group activities to increase your mental activity and promote overall wellbeing. Challenge yourself to be proactive in maintaining your brain health and encourage your family members and friends to join you in those important lifestyle changes. A support network can help you stay motivated and make the process of change fun.

SEAGO AAA Case Management provides Home and Community-based services such as Home Delivered Meals, Attendant Care, Respite, and information or referrals to adults 60+, adults with disabilities, and their caregivers to help them remain safe and independent in their homes. SEAGO AAA's strength in providing these services is based on an assessment that traditionally takes place in a client's home. This approach gives staff a complete picture of a client's needs, including understanding the client's physical limitations; seeing the condition of the client's home to identify potential risks; connecting with caregivers living in the home, and seeing the client performing activities of daily living. As a result of the COVID-19 pandemic, to protect the health of clients and staff, SEAGO AAA Case Managers have substituted phone calls or virtual platforms for in-person visits since April of 2020. Case managers remain under these parameters currently as we continue to navigate through this ongoing pandemic.

SEAGO AAA currently has 818 clients being Case Managed for Home and Community-Based Services in our four-county areas.



If you or someone you know are in need of our Home and Community Based Services Please contact SEAGO Area Agency on Aging at (520)432-2528, or reach out to a Case Manager in your area.

Yolanda Thomas (520)805-5631 Douglas, McNeal, Elfrida

Carrie Gibbons (520)432-2528 Bisbee, Naco

Shirley Thomas (520)586-8192 (Benson Office)

Miracle Valley, Palominas, Hereford, Willcox, Sunizona, Pearce, Bowie Benson, St. David, Pomerene, Dragoon Tombstone

Seana Riffle (520)803-3950 Sierra Vista, Hauchuca City, Whetstone

Marylou Garcia (928) 428-3229 Graham County

Diane Leaman (928)865-2601 Greenlee County

Elizabeth Castellanos (520) 375-7896 Santa Cruz County

Stay Independent

Learn more about fall prevention



In 2016 in Arizona unintentional falls were the leading cause of injury-related mortality among residents 65+ years of age.

1 in 4 people 65 years and older fall each year.

Falls can lead to a loss of independence, but they are preventable.

Four Things You Can Do to Prevent Falls:

1 **Speak up.**

Talk openly with your healthcare provider about fall risks and prevention. Ask your doctor or pharmacist to review your medicines.

2 **Keep moving.**

Begin an exercise program to improve your leg strength and balance.

3 **Get an annual eye exam.**

Replace eyeglasses as needed.

4 **Make your home safer.**

Remove clutter and tripping hazards.

CONTACT

Cynthia Meyers

Health & Nutrition
Coordinator

SEAGO
Area Agency on
Aging

#520-432-2528

cmeyers@seago.org



IN HONOR OF CAREGIVER APPRECIATION MONTH

You're invited to a:

Caregiver Appreciation Mingle



**NOVEMBER 16TH, 2021
2:00 PM**

To register, go to:

<https://aarp.cvent.com/cochise>

For questions, call or email:

520-432-2528, x221

kenriquez@seago.org

Registration deadline:
October 27th

Virtual painting experience
hosted by AARP

Enjoy our event in the
comfort of your home or
join your hosts at:
Bisbee Senior Center
300 Collins Road, Bisbee

Refreshments provided

November is National Family Caregivers Month, and we're celebrating the family members who put their time, energy, and love into helping their loved ones in need.

Caregiving is one of the hardest jobs in the world and caregivers do it with love and courage. Being a caregiver to a family member is difficult and those that struggle every day deserve to be supported. Family caregivers are unsung heroes. There is little awareness of just how many people are caring for a loved one every day and how demanding the role can be.

SEAGO Area Agency on Aging has partnered with AARP and Cochise County Health and Social Services to host a **Caregiver Appreciation Mingle** via Zoom on November 16th at 2:00 pm in support of all informal family caregivers. Caregivers are invited to a hybrid in-person/virtual painting experience event including information from their hosts. An artist from Pinot's Palette will lead participants, step by step through painting a pre-selected image while on Zoom. After two hours they will have completed a masterpiece! To register, go to: <https://aarp.cvent.com/events/aarp-az-caregiver-appreciation-mingle-bisbee-az-11-16-21/event-summary-443b5408c63b4aaf86775507ca8e09fd.aspx>

Guests have the option of participating from the comfort of their home or have the option of attending in-person at the Bisbee Senior Center, 300 Collins Rd, Bisbee, AZ 85603.

The deadline to register is October 27th, 2021 and Attendance is limited to the first 40 registered guests.

We also extend a very grateful thank you to the Arizona Department of Economic Security, Aging and Adult Services (DAAS) for their support and donations. Please be sure to attend their Virtual Caregiver Celebration set for November 1, 2021 from 10am - 12pm.

To register: <https://azdes.zoomgov.com/meeting/register/vJlftu-vrijwvHJl6GaBFnPfl3kxMX4ycVJO>
Join us for a Zoom celebration!



Creating Communities of Learning and Engagement

Helping older adults stay connected to their communities-and to one another-has always been critical and has become even more important following the COVID-19 pandemic. Activities that promote social engagement have become tools to reduce social isolation.

With many caregivers devoting 20 or more hours per week providing care to someone in need – often times in addition to holding down a full-time job – it’s not surprising that they are looking for their own support. Many family caregivers are finding themselves more isolated, stressed and confused during this crisis. Much of the support is being provided by technology which ultimately results in a better social support network.

Seniors can be easily overwhelmed by all of the new technology around us. We are surrounded by devices, whether its smartphones, social media, tablets, banking machines, or laptops. You can’t avoid it, so shouldn’t we learn how to use all of these technological advances to make life easier?

Getting some simple training in using computers, tablets, and smartphones can help seniors to stay connected with their families, friends, and communities. This is especially important for seniors who want to live independently and age at home.

SEAGO AAA has responded to the needs of older adults and adults with disabilities by expanding options for virtual programming and service delivery. Providing resources and education online has made classes and support groups more accessible. From FaceTime to Zoom, older adults can use technology to overcome social isolation and loneliness.

If you already have access to a computer and can use the Internet then there are several online services offered by SEAGO AAA that offers technology lessons and instruction while allowing you access at your own pace.

Get SetUp:

This platform provides live online sessions on tech tools, apps, health and wellness, and many more topics geared towards older adult learners. Classes teach tools like how to use your smartphone, healthy meals in 30minutes or less, and how to host events on Zoom to ensure confidence, ease of use, and independence. The Classes are taught in an interactive, self-paced hands-on setting with peers who have been there and done that! A simple and social way to learn how to use iPhone apps, Instagram, Twitter, plus learn to use your smartphone and tablet to live a more connected life. Our GetSetUp Guides help you learn in a community. Every class is free to SEAGO Area Agency on Aging members. Just use the coupon code: SEAGO at www.getsetup.io/partner/SEAGO



Try a FREE Online Class Today!

Learn Anytime, Anywhere

SEAGO Area Agency on Aging is proud to offer free, virtual classes to older adults in partnership with GetSetUp. Visit www.getsetup.io/partner/SEAGO for more information.

Take Classes From the Comfort of Your Home

 Internet  Computer  iPad/Tablet  Smartphone

Every Class Is Engaging - Choose from 170+ Classes!

- | | |
|--|---|
|  Basics of Zoom |  Google Photos |
|  Recipe Swap |  Meditating Together |
|  Creating Playlists |  Power of Gratitude |

For Help Contact GetSetup:

 1-888-559-1614

 info@getsetup.io



SEAGOAAA Mobile App:

“Is there an app for that?” SEAGO Area on Aging continues to find ways for our growing population with the newest technology in mind. We built a mobile app that is fast, easy, and convenient to use to connect you to virtual health classes, insurance information, and resources 24/7. Download our new Phone app for local resources <http://app.seago.org/app/c2f51>

Trualta:

Trualta is an e-learning platform built specifically for caregivers offering skill-based instruction and heavily dementia based learning. Participation is by invitation and offered free to caregivers. For more information please contact Karen Enriquez, Family Caregiver Program Support Program Coordinator (520) 432-2528 x221

Senior Connect-

Access to technology remains the central challenge. For older adults who do not have access to the internet or lack computer literacy, creating social connections takes a more traditional approach.

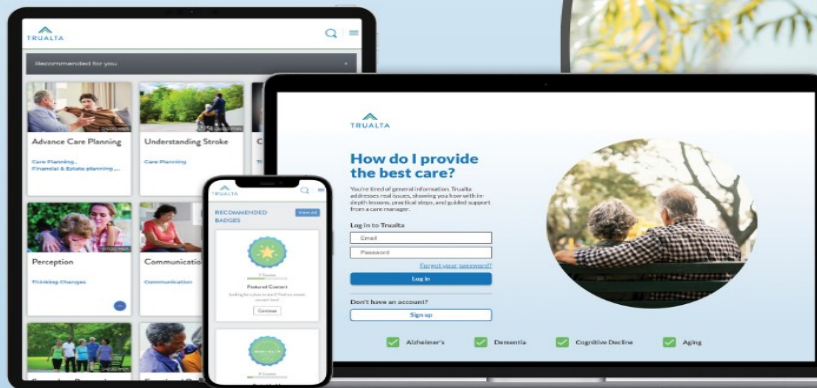
To help promote social connections and connectivity among older adults, the SEAGO Area Agency on Aging has partnered with public libraries in our four county region to bring seniors together for support, education, and resources.

Libraries provide valuable services, programs, and initiatives that enhance the quality of life of their community members. Known for their amazing on-staff assistance, and support services, libraries also allow us to literally eliminate the technology and connectivity barriers for our senior community by providing access to Wi-Fi, computers, and devices available for public use.

Leveraging partnerships with the libraries fosters a shared goal, to enrich the quality of life of our older population in a variety of ways, targeting computer literacy, social isolation, and senior education, but most importantly building communities of support with a direct connection to the Area Agency on Aging services and resources.

Skills for families to confidently manage care at home

Scan me with your camera!



SEAGOAAA.Trualta.com

Access **FREE** caregiver training and resources

provided by the
SEAGO Area Agency on Aging

SEAGO AAA Trualta Testimonials and Comments

"Thank you for introducing me to Trualta during our Pinkie's up, Caregiver's Mingle. Just a note to let you know how it has positively affected my care giving after viewing Teepa Snow's -Dementia Care Provisions. Teepa is a wonderful presenter and educator. She is funny yet serious about the material at the same time. I felt such a heavy burden before I watched it. The information lifted some of that heaviness. I have learned so much about the possible process a head of me. I'm not as afraid because of the information that I was able to retain from the video, identification from group members and suggestion from our group. Thank You so much for your service."

"First, I would like to thank you for the opportunity for all the information and especially the access to Trualta to further my education and hopefully sharpen my caregiver skills. As Alzheimer's Disease keeps challenging patients, providers and caregivers, it is comforting knowing this Trualta program exists to better prepare us all for that challenge.

The subjects covered are far reaching and packaged in a way which for the busy caregiver are doable. Yes, there are presentations exceeding 60 minutes, but having 24/7 access makes it much easier to plug away at your own pace rather than tethered to a specific time frame to view. I have watched a couple more than once. So much great information.

Wish there was more time in each day for Trualta, but as stated prior will keep chipping away at the content knowing that in the end this will make me a better caregiver with a much better knowledge base than before. I told my sister while visiting us (she works in a skilled nursing facility in another state) about this program and she was going to pass along to her administrator after viewing one of the lectures with me. She was very impressed!

In closing, thanks again for this opportunity. What strikes me most is that you do not even have to be a caregiver to appreciate this program. It teaches sensitivity, awareness and patience for those suffering from AD, dementia, other memory disorders or debilitating diseases. May potentially make us better individuals."

Brain Boost Exercises- (Daily Care Tasks Skills to manage symptoms)

Comment: My mother taught me to quilt. This weekend we will be setting up our sewing room to start sewing small quilting projects. This is something she loved to do and is very excited to start again. I am hoping it will help her. These tips are very helpful and I will try them out on both of my parents

Gratitude for Wellness-(Anxiety & Depression)

Comment: I feel like this could be a good way to start a conversation with my folks to keep them engaged and aware of the good parts of life.

Caregiver Guilt-(Anxiety & Depression Care Planning Daily Care Tasks Diagnosis & Symptoms Family Dynamics Work & Caregiving)

Comment: I am trying to figure out how to manage both my aging parents while working full time and guilt is definitely what motivated me to take these courses. The guidance is very helpful in trying to figure out how to organize my tasks and work with the emotional aspects of caregiving.

*Calling all Caregivers:
Ladies and Gentlemen!*



*You are invited to
“Pinkie’s Up,
Caregiver Mingle”*

*Who says support has to be serious?
The SEAGO Area Agency on Aging
invites you to phone or Zoom in
every Tuesday afternoon at 2:00 pm
for conversation, company, compassion,
and of course,
for Tea!*

*Register on Facebook: SEAGO Area Agency on Aging -Events
or call Karen Enriquez (520) 432-2528 x 221
(If you are unsure of how to Zoom we can help!)*

Pinkie's Up

Everyone needs words of encouragement, advice, or someone to vent to from time to time. Caregivers often can't leave their homes or are hesitant to venture out in public for fear of COVID. We have a solution!

Caregivers from all over Graham, Greenlee, Cochise, and Santa Cruz are invited to Zoom in for virtual support. Join us for "Pinkies Up" every Tuesday afternoon at 2:00. The "Pinkie's Up, Caregiver Mingle" is a perfect way for caregivers to take time for themselves, have a cup of tea with others in their situation, and just chat, all from the comfort of their homes.

Because caregivers are so often socially isolated and unable or uncomfortable asking for help, the Mingle could be the perfect solution. We are trying to build caregiver communities and link them. Our caregivers can share whatever they are experiencing, and it can help reduce their stress, validate their experiences and provide a much-needed social connection. We all need to know that we are not alone and what we are feeling is entirely normal.

Join Karen Enriquez, Family Caregiver Support Program Coordinator, and Delcia Acosta, a caregiver, and volunteer, as we facilitate the virtual meeting every Tuesday at two. On occasion, we have "pop-up" guests attending to share caregiver resources. On the third Tuesday of each month, Maria Ramirez-Trillo, AARP- Associate State Director, Community Outreach, zooms in to share excellent free classes and AARP resources.

Participants are asked to register by calling Karen Enriquez at 520-432-2528 or through Facebook: SEAGO Area Agency on Aging-Events.





Are you a family caregiver?

If you provide care for a loved one, what you do matters.

Join us November 1, 2021 from 10:00 a.m. to 12:00 p.m. to learn more about what resources and support are available to you. [Register Today.](#)

<https://azdes.zoomgov.com/meeting/register/vJlftu-vrjwvHJl6GaBFnPfi3kxMX4ycVJ0>

How to know if you're a Family Care Giver

Sharing a home

Moving a family member into your home, or moving into their home to better care for them.



Providing home care

Helping a loved one with household chores, home organization, or other care tasks.



Making Medical Appointments

Scheduling medical appointments. Driving a loved one to appointments, or managing their medications.



Shopping

Going to the grocery store, pharmacy, or picking up necessities for a loved one or family member.



Manage Finances

Organizing payments for utilities, or a loved one's living situation. Making sure their money is managed.



There are resources for you!

If you've checked off any of these boxes, you are a family caregiver. Let us help you as you care for those you love.





SHIP

State Health Insurance
Assistance Program



Become a SHIP volunteer.

Help others navigate Medicare with your local State Health Insurance Assistance Program (SHIP).

SHIP provides unbiased support to Medicare beneficiaries and their families so they can make informed decisions about their care and benefits. Navigating Medicare can be complicated, but SHIP can help by answering questions and providing personalized guidance to those who need it.

You know your community best. That's why we want your help to support your friends and neighbors as they enroll in Medicare for the first time, review plan options, or troubleshoot problems. Your local SHIP has many volunteer opportunities, both virtually and in-person. Whether it's conducting one-on-one counseling, speaking to groups, or providing office support, SHIP can find a role that's just right for you.

As a SHIP volunteer, you can:

- Give back to your community.
- Stay engaged and connected.
- Sharpen and build your skills.

"What I am doing now is a good reason for me to get up in the morning. It makes me feel good about myself. It lets me know that I am helping people make their lives better."

-SHIP volunteer

SHIP screens, trains, and certifies all volunteers as Medicare experts so you don't need a background in health insurance to get involved. All you need is integrity, a willingness to learn, and a desire to help others.

Learn more at: shiphelp.org/volunteer or call 1-877-839-2675

We're always looking for multilingual volunteers. Reach out to your local SHIP for opportunities.



SHIP is supported through state and federal partnerships that are not reimbursed by private health insurance plans or entities. SHIP is not paid per enrollment.

SHIP is a national program of the Administration for Community Living, an operating division of the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services. Learn more at ACL.gov.

MEDICARE



**OPEN
ENROLLMENT**

**October 15th through
December 7th**

**SEAGO—Area Agency on Aging's
SHIP/SMP Team**

**is ready to help you explore the options for
2022 and choose
the best plan for you.**

**Appointments are filling up fast!
Contact us now to set your appointment
Call us at 520-432-2528 ext. 222
Email us at shiphelp@seago.org**

MEDICARE
OPEN ENROLLMENT

OCTOBER 15th
TO
DECEMBER 7TH

WHAT YOU NEED TO KNOW

Medicare Open Enrollment is coming!

Medicare Open Enrollment or the Annual Enrollment Period runs from October 15 through December 7. This is the time of year when you can make changes to your Medicare coverage. You should take the time every year to review your plan and make sure that your plan is still the best plan for you.

Beginning in September, you will start to receive notices from your Medicare Advantage or Prescription Drug plan describing any changes to your coverage for the coming year. These are the Annual Notice of Change and the Evidence of Coverage documents. Pay attention to changes in your plan's provider network, the plan's costs, and the plan's formulary/list of covered drugs.

Remember, if you are unhappy with your current project or with any changes to your plan, Open Enrollment is the time to explore your options and see if there is a better plan out there for you. The new Medicare&You handbooks are sent out in September every year. These are sent out to everyone enrolled in Medicare and included information about Medicare-covered services. There is also a list of the Medicare Advantage and Part D plans in Arizona by county.

You may also receive a Plan Non-Renewal notice if you are enrolled in a plan that will no longer be available through Medicare. You should enroll in a new plan during Open Enrollment to ensure continuous coverage in 2022. A Consistent Poor Performance Notice will go out to you if you are enrolled in a plan that has received a low rating/fewer than three out of five stars for three or more years in a row. The notice lets you know that you might want to look for a better option for 2022.

If you have been on Medicare for a while, you know that starting in September, you will be bombarded with mail from all of the different insurance companies telling you about the plans they offer. Companies must follow specific rules when marketing their plans. Some examples of marketing violations include:

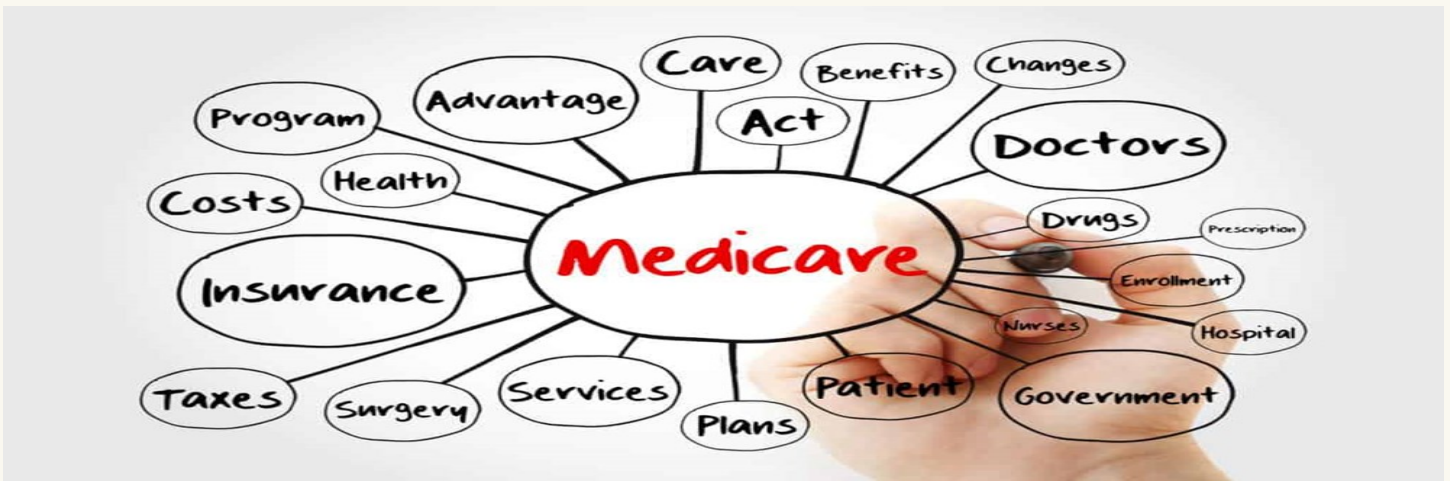
A plan cannot tell you or suggest to you that Medicare prefers their plan.

A plan cannot call you, email you or drop in on you at home if you did not ask them to or have not had a plan with them before.

A plan cannot leave flyers or door hangers on your car or home if they do not have an appointment with you.

A plan representative or insurance agent cannot come to your home without an invitation from you for an appointment.

If you feel that a company has violated Medicare marketing rules or is using questionable sales tactics, call your Senior Medicare Patrol to report the incident: 520-432-2528 ext. 222 or email us ^{at} shiphelp@seago.org.



How to Choose a Medicare Plan

Medicare plans change every year. Review notices you receive from your project and pay attention to coverage, cost, and formulary changes that could affect you in 2022. Open Enrollment begins on October 15th and ends on December 7th. This is the time of year when anyone with Medicare can make changes to their health and prescription drug plans for the following year. Any changes made during this enrollment period will take effect on January 1st.

It would help if you looked for plans in your area that may:

Cost less

Cover your prescription drugs

Include your doctors, specialists, and pharmacy in their network.

Offer additional benefits.

Let's break these down so you can decide what's most important to you.

Costs

Consider all of your out-of-pocket costs, not just your monthly premium. Make sure your plan comparison includes an estimate of your total charges. A plan with a higher premium might offer lower deductibles, zero copayments, or lower drug prices.

If you don't go to the doctor often or take any prescriptions, look at the monthly premium to see how much you would be paying if you don't get any health services.

Ensure you have a current list of your prescriptions, dosage, and quantity, along with how much you are currently paying for each one to compare with a new plan accurately.

If you go to your doctor and specialist regularly, take a look at the maximum out-of-pocket costs listed with each plan to get an estimate of your total annual cost and compare with other plans to find the lowest maximum cost. Once you meet this maximum out-of-pocket expense, the plan will pay your health costs for the remainder of the year.

Prescription Drugs

Make sure you have a current list of your prescriptions with dosage amounts so you can make sure the plan you choose covers them and at what cost.

If you don't take any prescriptions, look for low, or zero-premium Prescription Drug or Medicare Advantage Plans with the lowest deductible for drugs.

Look for preferred pharmacies in the plan's network that are convenient for you so that you are paying the lowest price for your prescriptions.

Provider Networks

Make sure you get care from doctors, hospitals, and other health care providers and facilities within your plan's network.

If keeping your current providers is essential to you, make sure they are in the plan's network before you enroll in a plan. Talk to your provider billing office to ensure they are in the network. Network directories in print and online are often out of date.

Additional Benefits

According to television and radio commercials, many plans offer dental, vision, and hearing benefits. They neglect to say in that 30-second commercial that most often, these benefits are only included in Special Needs plans or as a package that can be added to your plan for an additional cost.

Some plans offer additional dental, vision, and hearing benefits at no extra cost, but limits do apply. This is an area to pay special attention to when choosing a new plan for 2022.

How to Get Help Making a Choice

Call 1-800-MEDICARE (1-800-633-4227). Help is available 24 hours a day, including weekends. Support is available in English and Spanish. If you need help in another language, ask the customer service representative.

Contact the SEAGO – Area Agency on Aging SHIP/SMP program for assistance. You can reach us at 520-432-2528 ext. 222

shiphelp@seago.org

Please message us on Facebook <https://www.facebook.com/seagoareaagencyonaging>.

Contact us through our webpage <https://www.seago.org>

Again this year, we will only be doing telephone/google meet appointments for plan reviews during Medicare Open Enrollment. Please call us starting Monday, September 20, 2021 to set up your appointment. Please book your appointment early because our schedule gets full rapidly.

KNOW YOUR Rights!

If you live in a nursing home or assisted living, you have:

The right to information, in a language you understand.



The right to participate in all aspects of your care.



The right to privacy and confidentiality.

The right to make **INDEPENDENT CHOICES** based on your needs and preferences.



The right to participate in social, religious, and **COMMUNITY ACTIVITIES.**

THE RIGHT TO...

- safe and appropriate transfer and discharge, including the right to appeal decisions.
- complain without fear of repercussions.
- be free from discrimination, abuse, neglect, and restraints.



The right to organize and participate in resident groups or councils.



The right to information about living in the community.

The right to adequate medical care and treatment.



The right to **VISITS** from friends, family, providers and other people of your choosing.



Long-Term Care Ombudsman programs act as advocates for residents of nursing homes; board & care, and assisted living facilities; and similar residential care facilities. Find your local program: acl.gov/ombudsman or 800-677-1116





Mom's vaccinated:
WHEN CAN I VISIT HER NURSING HOME?

It is so great that your mom, dad or other loved ones have received their COVID-19 vaccine. This is an important step towards protecting their health, achieving herd immunity and returning to normal life.

Both CMS and CDC recognize the importance of visiting your relatives as part of staying healthy. You can now visit your loved ones inside when the positivity rate in your nursing home's county is less than 10%. In addition, if the positivity rate in your nursing home's county is more than 10%, and less than 70% of residents in the facility are fully vaccinated, then only residents who are fully vaccinated should receive visitors.

In the case of an outbreak at a facility, indoor visitation is still possible, as long as COVID-19 transmission is contained to a single area of the facility.

If your loved one is fully vaccinated, they can choose to have close contact (including touch) with you as long as they are wearing a well-fitting face mask.

Outdoor visits are also safer when weather is good. You can check with your nursing home or local health department to find out more information on visiting your loved one. More information on CMS' visitation guidance can be found [here](#), including compassionate care visits and visitor vaccination.

We are constantly weighing the risks of spreading COVID-19 with the risks of expanding visitation. There are a few more steps before nursing homes can allow even more visitors.

Some nursing home residents and staff are not vaccinated or haven't received their second doses. **So, not everyone in a nursing home is protected from COVID-19 yet and could be infected by visitors.**

Also, **although a vaccinated person may not "feel" sick from COVID-19, they could be infected and/or spread the virus to others.** For example, if a vaccinated resident contracts the virus from a staff member or visitor, that resident will likely be protected from the disease, but could put an unvaccinated resident or staff member at serious risk.

For now, nursing home staff, patients, residents, and visitors need to **continue practicing the 3W's: Wear a mask, Wash your hands, Watch your distance.** And, nursing homes must continue to implement all current CDC [infection control guidance](#) and adhere to CMS' regulations and guidance for [testing](#). **As vaccination increases and COVID-19 cases decrease, we look forward to more visitation and social interaction among residents, friends, family, and loved-ones.** We will continue to learn and make updates to visitation over the coming months.

So what can you do in the meantime? Get the vaccine when it's available to you. And do what you can to slow the spread of COVID-19. If you are vaccinated, then if asked, explain why you chose to be vaccinated.

The sooner we have more people vaccinated and fewer people getting sick, the sooner we can visit and hug the nursing home residents we love.

FOR MORE INFORMATION, VISIT:

<https://www.cdc.gov/vaccines/covid-19/toolkits/long-term-care/downloads/answering-residents-loved-ones-questions.pdf>

March 2021



Advance Healthcare Planning Guide

- ✓ **Advance Care Planning** is for **adults at any age** or **stage of health** to understand and share personal values/wishes regarding **future** medical care. We hope to be in good health but never know what the future brings. By preparing now, we can make it easier for ourselves and loved ones later on. When you haven't made your wishes known, it leaves those who matter to you and your medical providers guessing as to what you would want and what is most important to you.
- ✓ There is no 1 standard form to complete – there are many that are **legal forms** in Arizona: **Arizona Hospital and Healthcare Association (AzHHA)** has a short advance directive form (including a Living Will and Healthcare & Mental Healthcare Power of Attorney) or the very user-friendly AzHHA/Prepare for your Care Advance Healthcare Directive. The **AZ State Attorney General** has a Life Care Planning Packet with advance directive forms. See our website: <https://www.seago.org/advance-care-planning> for links to these websites, for more info or to get these free downloadable forms
- ✓ **Who** will speak for you if you are unable to speak for yourself if you are badly injured or very ill? Consider choosing a **Healthcare Power of Attorney (medical decision-maker)** and a **Mental Healthcare Power of Attorney** now. It is easy to put this off but it can make such a difference in your future.
- ✓ If you want your **wishes known and honored** – have conversations and complete a **Living Will** to document your wishes based on what matters most to you.



Have a say in your healthcare.

Conversations matter!

- Before completing advance directive forms, you may want to reflect on what matters most to you, both in your current health and if you were so sick that you may die soon. Your main goal may be to have a focus on quality of life and being comfortable. Or perhaps, your main goal may be to live as long as possible no matter what. Here are some resources that can help you reflect on what you want and how to have conversations.
- **Prepare for Your Care** – see their link on our website as they have a very helpful Guide for advance directives which includes short videos of real-life

(Over)



stories of people talking about their situations and their wishes with loved ones and also healthcare providers. It is also in Spanish.

- **The Conversation Project** – see their link on our website - free Conversation Guides (in many languages) that can help you talk with important people in your life about care through the end of life.
 - **Go Wish website** (link on our website) to play a game for free (English only). You can print out the values that have priority for you and share them with those close to you.
-
- ✓ Neither an attorney nor a notary is required to complete advance directives. A **proper witness IS** required (see forms). You may choose to use an attorney and/or notary.
 - ✓ Once you have completed your forms, copies should be shared with family, healthcare providers, caregivers and the **AZ Advance Healthcare Directives Registry** (for easy access). For more information on the Registry, see <https://healthcurrent.org/> and search for Healthcare Directives Registry.
 - ✓ Know that if your wishes change or you want to change your decision-maker, you can review, complete new forms and share the new copies with those mentioned above.
 - ✓ **If you would like to learn more about Advance Healthcare Planning or would like free assistance (Cochise, Graham, Greenlee and If Santa Cruz Counties in Arizona), please contact us. To learn more about upcoming workshops, resources, download forms and view our short videos, *Have a Say in Advance Care Planning (English and Spanish)* -**

Go to: <https://www.seago.org/advance-care-planning>

For more info or help, contact:

Veronica "Ronnie" Squyres, *Community Education Coordinator, SEAGO Area Agency on Aging*
feelwellsleepwell@gmail.com 520-355-5226 or 520-432-2528

Rev. 10.5.2021



Mortgage Assistance Program

SEAGO CARES



HAVE YOU FALLEN BEHIND ON YOUR MORTGAGE
BECAUSE OF COVID?

SEAGO CARES CAN HELP!

Homeowners in **Cochise**, **Graham** and **Greenlee** Counties that have suffered economic hardship due to the pandemic may qualify for mortgage and utility assistance from SEAGO Cares.

Eligible household is defined as:

- Qualified for unemployment or has experienced a reduction in household income, incurred significant costs or experienced a financial hardship due to COVID;
- Demonstrates a risk of experiencing homelessness or housing instability;
- Has a household income at or below 80% of the area median

These funds will be on a first come, first served basis and all requirements must be met.

Pre-Qualification @

[HTTPS://SEAGO.ORG/CARES](https://seago.org/cares)

For more information:

Email or Call

CARES@SEAGO.ORG

520-432-5301 X 203

Santa Cruz County Arizona Assistance Programs.

Help for foreclosures

If you are struggling with paying your mortgage, the **Santa Cruz County government** has a program that may be able to help. In a partnership that was formed with the Arizona Department of Housing, the local Santa Cruz government is offering free, emergency short-term financial grants and cash assistance to eligible residents of un-incorporated county areas who need some form of help in order to stay in their homes.

The program is known as the CDBG Emergency Assistance Program, and applicants for this aid must be income qualified. The assistance is targeted at low to moderate income families and individuals.

If you are interested in applying or learning more, application packets and further details are available at local public libraries or you may call (520) 285-7967 for more information on the CDBG Emergency Assistance Program.

Information on energy bill programs

The **Arizona Community Action Program** ((928) 428-2872) has several programs that can both help people pay their utility or summer cooling bills, and also conservation programs that people can use to reduce their energy bills. The programs are administered in Santa Cruz County and Nogales Arizona by Southeastern Arizona Community Action Program, or SACAC.

The Home Energy Assistance Fund is the formal name, and it was created as the result of a partnership formed by the Community Action Agencies, private individuals, utility companies, local, state and federal government agencies. The Fund was created mainly as a solution to the demand for energy bill assistance that low income, the elderly, and others who may be struggling need.

Grants may be issued to clients as part of this service. The Home Energy Assistance Fund leverages resources from these various organizations through partnerships, advocacy, and various group collaborations to maximize funding and the amount of financial aid that is available to the low income community.

SACAC in Santa Cruz County provides other assistance as well. They are a source of information on job training, child care services such as Head Start, and referrals to loan programs for paying rent or other bills. They also focus on addressing the causes of poverty, such as assisting with employment and credit counseling needs of the community.

Weatherization and conservation programs

So you can get financial assistance from the program mentioned above, but in addition utility companies and the government offer options to help people lower their energy bills. Weatherization and resources offered by your utility company can help here. These options will assist customers in managing their utility bills, and weatherization can help people save \$500 or more per year. Many of the programs are free to qualified applicants, and these programs range from discount and conservation programs to bill assistance programs if people commit to these options. Contact the Southeastern Arizona Community Action Agency as they can refer you to these as well.

Santa Cruz Catholic Charities - Churches, charities, and non-profits work with the Nogales Catholic Charity organization. Various social services and emergency assistance programs are offered for the poor, low income, and seniors in Santa Cruz County. Some examples of the assistance programs are below.

- Free food and meals may be offered, in particular for seniors.
- Low cost transportation for doctor appointments or job interviews can be arranged.
- Health care checkups can be performed at the Saint. Elizabeth's center. Variable rate billing is in place, and the uninsured may even receive free medical care.
- Basic needs such as rent, housing, funds for utility bills, and clothing can be met by Catholic Charities.

Other resources including referrals, case management, and applications for government aid can be processed.

Those are just some examples of the resources offered for low income families in Santa Cruz Arizona. The charity will do what it can to support the less fortunate in the community.



Area Agency on Aging

Serving Cochise • Graham • Greenlee • Santa Cruz Counties

VISIT US

 **SEAGO**
AREA AGENCY ON AGING
COCHISE, GRAHAM, GREENLEE, SANTA CRUZ
AREA AGENCY ON AGING
300 Collins Road
Bisbee, AZ 85603

<https://www.facebook.com/seagoareaagencyonaging/>
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STAY CONNECTED

LOCAL
RESOURCES AT
YOUR FINGERTIPS



This program was funded through a Contract with the Arizona Department of Economic Security. “Under Titles VI and VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 (Title VI and Title VII) and the Americans Disabilities Act of 1990 (ADA) Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 and the Age Discrimination Act of 1975, SEAGO Area Agency on Aging prohibits discrimination in admissions, programs, services, activities or employment based on race, color, religion, sex national origin, age, and disability. The SEAGO Area Agency on Aging must make a reasonable accommodation to allow a person with a disability to take part in a program, service, or activity. Auxiliary aids and services are available upon request to individuals with disabilities. For example, this means that if necessary, the SEAGO Area Agency on Aging must provide sign language interpreters for people who are deaf, a wheelchair accessible location, or enlarged print materials. It also means that the SEAGO Area Agency on Aging will take any other reasonable action that allows you to take part in and understand a program or activity, including making reasonable changes to an activity. If you believe that you will not be able to understand or take part in a program or activity because of your disability, please let us know of your disability needs in advance if at all possible. To request this document in an alternative format or for further information about this policy please contact: SEAGO Area Agency on Aging at 520-432-2528.” Para obtener este documento en otro formato u obtener informacion adicional sobre esta politica, SEAGO Area Agency on Aging 520-432-2528. This program was funded through a Contract with the Arizona Department of Economic Security.