

Building an Age-Friendly Rhode Island

NEWSLETTER

*M*omentum and collaboration continue to be our focus. Age-Friendly Rhode Island's Strategic Plan calls for testing new models of supporting older adults in the community.

One of the innovative grant-funded projects currently underway is a six-month pilot program bringing behavioral health services into elderly housing. Partnering with Charlesgate and the Community Care Alliance this new model is now in place. All indications are very positive. This program is proving to be helpful in many ways.



Lauren Yabut, left, Administrator of Charlesgate and Kim Gardner, Community Support Specialist review a treatment plan.

Having on-site access to behavioral health services is closing gaps in care for residents as well as building bridges of support that extend into the community. Identifying problems as they arise allows for earlier intervention and keeps situations from escalating and becoming a full-blown crisis.

Through our collaborations with many partners, we continue to participate, assist and build awareness about age-friendliness throughout the state. Here is a sampling of some of the many events that have happened around the state in recent weeks.

More than 100 people gathered for The Third Age: The Role of Faith-Based Communities in Elder Care. The event brought

together people of all religious denominations to learn how to help their members stay safe and connected to their communities as they grow older.

Later in the month, a record crowd attended the Senior Health + Housing Forum. This conference looked at where the needs for healthcare and housing intersect. Topics included the current and growing need for affordable housing, the state of healthcare Medicare and Medicaid and innovative housing models and projects underway in other states.

Building power through community was the focus of the Senior Agenda Coalition of Rhode Island's tenth annual conference and expo. Keynote speaker Jaime Estades encouraged the more than 300 gathered to learn to organize their power to create change.

The Age-Friendly RI team continues to meet with local leaders most recently in Woonsocket, Pawtucket and North Providence as well as groups of older adults across the state to listen to their concerns and refine plans to bridge the gaps identified as well as inspire age-friendly initiatives in their communities.



Millison Barnett, center, shares a laugh with Sylvia Bernal and William Carl LaFleur at The Third Age Conference.



Marianne Raimondo meets with Pawtucket's Mayor Donald Grebien and key leaders from local government to discuss age-friendly initiatives. (Photos by Susan E. Bouchard)