

Need for specialized services continues to climb

In the fiscal year that ended June 30, 2011, Senior PharmAssist provided one-on-one assistance to 1,422 individuals – an 11 percent increase from FY10; many of these individuals were seen *three* times during the year. The surge in requests for our specialized care was largely fueled by the expansion of our Medicare insurance counseling to include medical as well as prescription coverage options. We helped 711 persons in just six weeks during Medicare’s annual election period, when beneficiaries can enroll in or change Medicare drug plans for the new year as well as adjust (private) Medicare Advantage health coverage.

Since Medicare’s drug benefit (Part D) began in 2006, we have worked closely with the

state Seniors’ Health Insurance Information Program (SHIIP), a division of the N.C. Department of Insurance, to provide reliable, objective advice about Medicare drug benefits and related governmental subsidies to Durham residents. Senior PharmAssist is unique in that **it is the only agency in North Carolina that helps individuals compare their annual Medicare drug plan choices under the supervision of pharmacists trained in geriatrics** – who focus on not only improving access to medicines, but also on medication safety and effectiveness.

In late 2009 at the request of state officials, Senior PharmAssist agreed to become an official SHIIP coordinating site for Durham

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Safety net more critical than ever

When Medicare Part D began in 2006, our staff helped all our participants enroll in Medicare-approved drug coverage, which replaced Senior PharmAssist as their primary payer for prescriptions. We also helped those eligible apply for governmental subsidies to further reduce their out-of-pocket medication costs. At the time we knew that many seniors with limited incomes would still struggle to afford their needed medicines despite this new assistance. To help such persons in Durham we became a secondary payer (after Medicare) for medications covered by our geriatric formulary.

The initial cost savings from these changes allowed us to expand eligibility for our financial assistance from 175% to 200% of the federal poverty level and lower the age to qualify from 65 to 60. The latter change enabled us to add participants who were too young for Medicare and had no other drug

coverage, making Senior PharmAssist their sole source prescription benefit.

Over the past five years our pharmaceutical expenses have steadily grown and are projected to exceed \$100,000 in FY12 – in large part because we’re enrolling more seniors in our program. Folks need our financial assistance with medications, especially in these challenging economic times. Mr. A is one of those seniors.

Mr. A is a 61-year-old Durham resident with a history of diabetes, hypertension, and kidney disease, among other chronic conditions. Earlier this year he lost his job – and along with it – his employer-sponsored health coverage. He has been struggling to make ends meet ever since, and his unemployment insurance doesn’t always stretch to cover his dozen prescriptions and the support he provides to his grandson who lives with him.

(see [Safety](#) on page 7)

Helping Durham seniors obtain & manage medications by focusing on prevention & practical help to improve lives.



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Plus our FY11 Annual Report

Senior PharmAssist

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Board graduation & the class of 2014

Senior PharmAssist bid farewell to four outstanding board members at the end of FY 2011. Three of those volunteers have rotated off our board after completing back-to-back three-year terms, and all remain strong supporters of our program. We thank **Johnny Bethea, Dan Hudgins, Cindy Kuhn, and Shajuana McMillan** for their invaluable contributions. We have also welcomed five fantastic new board members.

Amy Csorba is a private family physician with Integrative Physicians who believes that patients should be empowered in their own care – in part, through effective communication from healthcare providers. Amy is not new to working with nonprofits as she has also volunteered with the TROSA medical clinic and Urban Ministries.

Steve Dedrick is a long-time Durhamite and pharmacist who retired as director of the Duke Pharmacy in 2008. He is now the director of continuing education at the UNC Eshelman School of Pharmacy, president of the Durham-Orange Pharmaceutical Association and a board member with the NC Association of Pharmacists. Steve's wife is also a pharmacist, and they attend St Luke's Episcopal Church.

David Halpern is a primary care physician with Durham Medical Center and a physician consultant with Community Care of North Carolina. He is a member of the American Geriatrics Society and first learned about Senior PharmAssist while completing a geriatrics fellowship at UNC-Chapel Hill. David is also a gifted musician: he sang extensively in college and plays piano, cello, and dabbles in banjo!

Randy Mills is retired general manager of the Durham County Alcoholic Beverage Control Board and past director of finance at Lincoln Community Health Center. Randy describes himself as "analytical and a numbers person." He is a trustee at Mt. Vernon Baptist Church and also a board member with the Volunteer Center of Durham.

Rosa Nolen is an accountant and financial systems access coordinator at UNC-Chapel Hill. She has been involved with a number of organizations in Durham, including Habitat for Humanity, the Girl Scouts, and Alpha Kappa Alpha Sorority. Rosa believes that she can best strengthen Senior PharmAssist by helping with fundraising.



Dan Hudgins (left) with the Howerton Award in hand, sitting next to the man celebrated by that honor. Tom Howerton was instrumental in the creation of the Durham County Hospital Corporation as well as Senior PharmAssist. He also eased the merger of Lincoln and Watts Hospitals in the early 1970s and supervised the construction of Durham Regional Hospital.

Dan Hudgins was the long-time director of the Durham County Department of Social Services and is now a faculty member at the UNC-CH School of Social Work. Senior PharmAssist's focus on geriatric care drew Dan to serve on our board for six years, where he distinguished himself as president for two years and then treasurer last year.

Dan recently received the **Thomas R. Howerton Award for Leadership** from Senior PharmAssist. This honor is presented by our program to an individual or organization for providing exemplary leadership to help Durham senior adults lead healthier and more independent lives through medication assistance and other preventive health measures.

Now is the time to invest in Senior PharmAssist

Senior PharmAssist is helping more seniors – and providing a wider range of assistance – than ever before. And **we're extremely grateful for ALL the donors who helped us touch more lives in FY 2011.** As you will see in our annual report, however, our revenue has not kept pace with increasing costs over the past few years. In FY11, we began to lay the groundwork for reversing this trend.

In addition to increasing fundraising from individuals, foundations, and community groups, we approached several companies with homes in Durham-RTP for significant investments in Senior PharmAssist. To promote this effort we created a new giving society of \$25,000 and up – the **Healthcare Catalyst Society.**

This focused business campaign for FY11 culminated with a luncheon

hosted by **Mez Restaurant** on June 23rd, our program's 17th anniversary. At that event we handed out our first-

to Mez General Manager and Co-Owner **Jamie LaForce** for donating the space and food for this special occasion.



Presenting our inaugural Corporate Citizenship Award (left to right): Senior PharmAssist Board President Dr. Maggie Gradison, Executive Director Gina Upchurch, GSK Director of Community Partnerships Mary Linda Andrews & GSK Director of U.S. Community Partnerships Bill Shore.

ever Corporate Citizenship Award to **GlaxoSmithKline** for its 13 years of generous support, including gifts matching GSK employee donations to Senior PharmAssist. A special thanks

SHIIP

continued from page 1

County; given our expertise, we consented to focus on the drug benefit only. Over time, however, we heard story after story of seniors, overwhelmed by aggressive marketing, enrolling in medical coverage that they did not understand and, too often, that did not meet their needs. We have witnessed how "out-of-network" coverage and insurance that doesn't include certain healthcare providers and agencies (home health, rehabilitation services, etc.) have created incredible financial strain for older adults in Durham.

In July 2010, Senior PharmAssist expanded its counseling to include medical coverage and became the only remaining SHIIP coordinating agency in Durham. We traveled a steep learning curve last year along with some fantastic volunteers affiliated with the SHIIP program and stay on top of ever-changing Medicare benefits

with help from state officials.

Our trained staff and SHIIP volunteers now help seniors and people with disabilities better understand their prescription *and* medical coverage so they can make informed decisions. This includes traditional Medicare A (hospital) and B (outpatient and physician services), supplemental coverage, Medicare C (Medicare Advantage, such as privately administered HMOs and PPOs), Medicare D (medications) and other retiree medical benefits. **The tailored, unbiased information we provide helps Medicare beneficiaries enroll in health and drug coverage suited to their specific needs and ability to pay.**

The expansion of our SHIIP services in FY11 stretched our capacity to the limit, particularly during Medicare's annual election period. We have responded by

Our business campaign in FY11 resulted in a \$15,000 donation from **Talecris Biotherapeutics** (now **Grifols**) and a \$20,000 commitment from **Merck** that arrived in our current fiscal year. We are ramping up these efforts even further in FY12 as we aim to raise more than \$205,000 from businesses and corporations this year.

We feel there is a sound business case for corporations to add Senior PharmAssist to their giving

portfolio. Our interventions:

- help seniors remain engaged in our community

(see [Invest](#) on page 6)

recruiting more volunteers and creating a new position: associate director. **Rodney Murphy** has been hired to fill that post. Rodney has a master's degree in public administration with a focus on healthcare administration from the University of San Francisco and extensive direct service and management experience. He will be supervising most of our day-to-day operations, including SHIIP services, and helping to strengthen community outreach. **We want to rise to the challenge of assisting the growing senior population and be a resource regarding healthcare options for the people of Durham.** This fiscal year, we project to help over 1,600 individuals.

Thanks again to all the supporters who are donating their time, talent, and/or treasure to help make Senior PharmAssist's expansion possible.

Senior PharmAssist would like to recognize the following individuals and organizations that contributed to our program between July 1, 2010 and June 30, 2011.

Healthcare Catalyst Society (\$25,000 and up)

Durham County Government
Sisters of Mercy of North Carolina
Foundation
The Stewards Fund

Mortar & Pestle Society (\$10,000 and up)

Carolyn G. Louis



Blue Cross Blue Shield of NC
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C.M. Herndon Foundation
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& Mary Lynam*
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The Forest at Duke
The Rite Aid Foundation

Apothecary Society (\$5,000 to \$9,999)

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Senior PharmAssist would like to recognize the following individuals and organizations that contributed to our program between July 1, 2010 and June 30, 2011.

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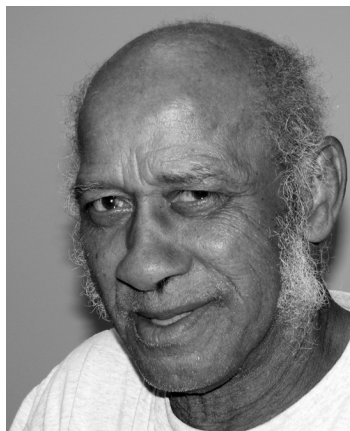
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Senior PharmAssist would like to recognize the following individuals and organizations that contributed to our program between July 1, 2010 and June 30, 2011.

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 Kristen B. & William A. Pleasants *in memory of Buddy Lynam*
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 Drs. David Tendler & Susan Spratt

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 Carolyn M. Warden *in memory of Buddy Lynam*
 Janette & Frederick Warsaw
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Vaguely Reminiscent
 Willing Workers Class – Grey Stone Baptist Church

In-Kind Contributors

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 Gina Upchurch
 MEZ Contemporary Mexican Restaurant
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Senior PharmAssist is not permitted to publicly acknowledge supporters who contribute through the State Employees Combined Campaign, though we thank the many donors who give in this manner. We do not sell or share our donor contact information with any other organization. If you note any errors in the preceding list please contact Dyana Morgan at 919-688-4772.

Invest

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- reduce healthcare costs
- help ensure that seniors stretch their healthcare dollars, which can then be used for other necessities
- and help working adults care more effectively for older family members

Working caregivers face enormous stress in helping older adults navigate the complexities of Medicare, medication use, and healthcare services. Caregiving can require time away from the job and diminish productivity at work. **We want local companies to view Senior PharmAssist as a resource they can share with their employees so we can help ease those burdens.**

Volunteers are indispensable in our fundraising efforts, and we want to

acknowledge those who served on our Development Committee last year, with special recognition to **Kathy McKee, Rich Burton, and Maggie Gradison.**

All of our board members, as always, assisted with fundraising, and we also benefited greatly from the participation of special volunteers, whom we'd like to thank:

Andy Barada, Mark Baumgartner, Ted Carter, Jeff Cawley, Susan Chesser, David Cocchetto, John Daniel, Barbara Haight, Warren Jones, Margaret Keller, Ruth Mary Meyer, Mike Miller, Vic Moore, Betty Nies, Susan Sorrells, and Bob Yowell.

THANKS AGAIN TO ALL THOSE WHO SUPPORTED SENIOR PHARMASSIST IN FY 2011!

Workplace campaign notes

Senior PharmAssist is participating again this year in the **State Employees Combined Campaign (SECC Charity Code 2536)** and **City of Durham Seven Stars Campaign**. Although we are not a partner agency with the **United Way of the Greater Triangle**, donors to that annual campaign may still designate support to Senior PharmAssist – please be sure to include our address.

If you pledge through one of these fund drives please contact **Joe Daly (956-5812)**, so we can track your designation.

And when making *any* donation to our program **please check to see if your employer will match your support**. This is an easy way to double the impact of your generosity. Thanks so much!

Making tech-knowledge-y work for us

In the 21st century, it's hard to function without technology. And for nonprofits looking to shave expenses wherever possible, volunteers with tech savvy are especially priceless. Senior PharmAssist is fortunate to have two such individuals who are extremely engaged in helping us run efficiently and better gather information to more easily evaluate our work.

David Farrell's generosity and talents have been highlighted in these pages before. He has been an invaluable friend to our program since day one and most recently has been transforming our participant database – which he built. Thanks to David's expertise and countless hours of donated time, Senior PharmAssist has now fully converted to an electronic health record. This should improve efficiencies and the quality of the care we provide.

Specifically, the electronic health record decreases interview times, lessens the potential for translation errors, simplifies program evaluation, and allows us to

report specific data more accurately and securely. As healthcare reform continues to roll out we hope our jumping on the electronic bandwagon will be beneficial to all stakeholders. When David isn't volunteering with us, he is delivering Meals on Wheels, playing with his family, or running his health information business, People Designs.

Al Stone is a jack of all trades electronic. Most recently, he has worked with **Jennifer Kim** to organize our efforts to painstakingly transfer handwritten notes into our now enhanced database. He does this several hours a week when he's not performing many other "duties as assigned," like helping us merge data files or troubleshoot other IT needs.



Volunteer Al Stone

Al worked as a computer programmer for more than 25 years at Duke Medical Center and has become an indispensable on-call IT resource. He began volunteering with us two years

ago when we needed more help to handle all of the requests we received for Part D "sorting" assistance. Since that time he has become one of our key SHIIP volunteers, counseling participants on Medicare-related medical and prescription coverage. He also represents Senior PharmAssist at community events when needed.

And if that's not enough, Al is involved in helping neighbors help neighbors through the relatively new effort called Seniors Staying Put. Apparently, his PhD in modern Japanese history prepared him for a life of service to others!

In addition to Al and Jennifer, we would like to thank our newest office volunteers, **Carole Cranor** and **Derek Yates**, who are also helping us enter information from interviews over the last two years into our new electronic health record.

Safety

continued from page 1

Recently, a community pharmacist told Mr. A that he should give us a call, and he did. We screened him over the phone and determined that he likely qualified for our prescription coverage. We made an appointment for him to see us for a full medication review. At that visit we confirmed that we can cover six of his 12 prescriptions at a total cost of \$12/month to Mr. A. We provided him with tailored information for drug company assistance programs that can help him obtain other medicines at little or no cost. Finally, we helped him obtain a diabetes meter and testing strips, which he badly needed.

We always ask participants to bring all their medicines – prescription, over-the-counter, and herbal remedies – to their medication review. Jessica, one of our pharmacists, reviewed Mr. A's 12 prescriptions and one OTC medicine. She noticed that two new

prescriptions to control blood pressure were not the proper dosage. Had this detail not been caught it could have resulted in elevated blood pressure for Mr. A. Jessica contacted his provider who immediately changed the instructions.

Mr. A can now obtain the medicines he needs to manage his chronic conditions. We will continue to see him every six months for comprehensive medication reviews to ensure he is using his medicines as safely, effectively, and cost-effectively as possible. And our staff will refer Mr. A to community resources to address other needs if required.

In the meantime Mr. A continues to look for a job that will provide medical and prescription coverage, and Senior PharmAssist continues to reach out to seniors who are too young for Medicare but are struggling mightily in this economy.

The proof is in the publishing

In May the **Journal of the American Geriatrics Society** published an article we wrote – in conjunction with faculty at the **UNC Schools of Pharmacy and Public Health** – on the Part D savings we achieved for Durham seniors 65 and older in 2010. Nearly two-thirds of the seniors we counseled needed to switch drug plans, and the overwhelming majority did, for a **mean projected savings of \$522 (median of \$343)**.

Our participants realized strikingly similar savings when making decisions at the end of 2010 during the 2011 annual election period. We have worked with former intern **Christine Kearsley** and faculty at the UNC School of Public Health to submit these findings to the **Journal of the American Pharmacists Association**.

S E N I O R

PHARM *Assist*

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Noteworthy News

Set your Medicare clocks ahead!!

Medicare's annual election period is now **Oct. 15 through Dec. 7**, a month earlier and a week longer than previous years. This applies to the selection of stand-alone Part D drug plans as well as Medicare Advantage coverage with or without drug benefits. In a related note: **Senior PharmAssist's annual continuing education training** – to prepare Durham pharmacists and pharmacy technicians for Medicare-approved drug benefits in the new year – **will be held on Tuesday, Oct. 11, 2011**. This session is worth two credit hours and will take place from 5:30 to 8 p.m. at the East Regional Branch of the Durham Public Library. The cost is \$25 and dinner will be provided; please pay in advance. **To make a reservation contact Executive Assistant Lesley Williams by Oct. 4th at (919) 682-4962 or at lesley@seniorpharmassist.org.**

Stewards Fund Challenge

Senior PharmAssist has submitted a **\$50,000 challenge grant** proposal for FY12 to **The Stewards Fund**. This effort represents a necessary vault from our successful \$40,000 matching effort in FY11. This year's challenge will strengthen our capacity to meet the increasing need for our specialized care by raising new support from individuals, businesses, civic groups and faith communities, and foundations. New support includes first-time gifts, donations from past donors who did not give in FY11, and increases in support from those who DID contribute last fiscal year. **To earn matching dollars donations or pledges must be made in response to the challenge, which will be conducted from Nov. 15, 2011 through March 15, 2012.**

Storytelling made easier

Senior PharmAssist thanks the **Center for Documentary Studies at Duke** and **DurhamCares** for teaming up to create video and audio-only clips featuring some of our participants sharing their stories.

Special acknowledgments go to video directors **Claudia Johnson** and **Virginia Scruggs** as well as **Nicole Triche** of Duke CDS for "The Part of the Blanket That Keeps You Warm," and to **Jennie Kiffmeyer** and **Jennifer Nolan** for "Prescription for Caring."

You can enjoy both five-minute documentary clips by visiting www.seniorpharmassist.org.