

# Senior Insights

## UPCOMING EVENTS

Caregiver Support Information meetings are held monthly:

Andrews Senior Center—  
3rd Tuesday @ 1:00

Big Spring Senior Center—  
2nd Tuesday @ 10:30

Fort Stockton Senior Center—  
2nd Wednesday @ 10:30

Dawson County Senior Center,  
Lamesa—3rd Tuesday @ 10:00

Memorial Health Care Center—  
Seminole—1st Wednesday @ 10:30

Manor Park, Midland—  
Last Thursday @ 10:00 and 2:00

Midland/Odessa—  
Parkinson's Caregivers -  
Call for Details

Midland Lutheran Church  
The Patio—2nd Thursday @ 2:00

Ward County Senior Center,  
Monahans—3rd Thursday @ 10:00

Odessa Regional Medical Center-  
South Campus  
4th Wednesday @ 2:00

Courtyard at Parks, Odessa—  
4th Tuesday @ 2:00 PM

Pecos Senior Citizens Center—  
2nd Wednesday @ 1:00

Rankin Senior Center—  
Call for Details

Martin County Senior Center,  
Stanton—2nd Tuesday @ 1:00

Permian Basin Aging Advisory  
Council Meetings are held at  
10:00am on the following dates:

February 20, 2019,  
May 15, 2019, August 21, 2019,  
November 20, 2019

at the Permian Basin Regional  
Planning Commission

## Medicare Coverage for Glaucoma

According to the National Institute of Health's National Eye Institute (NEI), glaucoma is a type of eye disease that may damage the optic nerve and cause vision loss or even blindness. In fact, according to the NEI, glaucoma is one of the leading causes of blindness. Some forms of glaucoma don't have any symptoms, so an individual may still have glaucoma even if he/she doesn't have any trouble seeing or feel any pain. The best way to control glaucoma is through early diagnosis and treatment. Because the chance of developing this eye disease increases as people age, it's important to learn about Medicare coverage for glaucoma.

January is Glaucoma Awareness Month, and it's the perfect time to check. A person is at high risk for glaucoma if one or more of these applies:

- If the individual has diabetes.
- There is a family history of glaucoma.
- If African American and 50 or older.
- If Hispanic and 65 or older.

Medicare Part B (Medical Insurance) covers glaucoma tests once every 12 months if a Medicare beneficiary is at high risk for glaucoma. The Medicare beneficiary will pay 20% of the Medicare-approved amount and the Part B deductible applies. In a hospital outpatient setting, the Medicare beneficiary will pay a copayment.

According to the Glaucoma Foundation, the treatment options for glaucoma may include prescription medications, surgery, or a combination of both types of treatment. With early detection and proper treatment, those with glaucoma may be able to minimize the effects of vision loss.

Medicare Part A and B covers treatment for eye-related conditions. If an individual gets glaucoma, their doctor may suggest medication, surgery, laser surgery, or more than one of these methods combined.

Part A will cover services or treatment if in an inpatient hospital or skilled nursing facility setting. Part B covers care in an outpatient setting, including office visits, doctor services, and lab tests.

The costs paid under Original Medicare, Part A and Part B, will depend on the type of treatment needed and whether the provider accepts Medicare assignment.

For further information or assistance, please contact Patti Lindsey or Valarie Loera, Benefits Counselors with the Area Agency on Aging at 432-563-1061 or 1-900-491-4636.

<https://www.medicare.gov/coverage/glaucoma-tests>



## 13 New Year's Resolutions for Caregivers

*Carol Bradley Bursack, Minding Our Elders*

It's human to want a fresh start. Even though I know that December 31 of one year is rarely that different from January 1 of the next, I greet each New Year's Day as a new beginning. I can't explain it, but the first day of January always gives me a psychological boost, be it ever so brief.

Like most caregivers, I always strove for perfection and I always wound up feeling like I fell short. There is no way that I know of to be a perfect caregiver. The needs of any care receiver can change in an instant. We can miss subtle signals. We are often so tired and stressed that we may absentmindedly forget to pick up a prescription, check an adult brief or do the laundry. All of these things can bring on a huge case of unearned caregiver guilt.

It is so easy to get wrapped up in the difficult feelings and the pressure. Every so often, caregivers need to remind themselves that they are doing their personal best. The New Year is a perfect time to take inventory of our lives and see what improvements we can make. My thought is that we can look at the coming year with fresh eyes, even though that freshness may only last a moment.

Let's make a list of New Year's resolutions and pretend we'll keep them all. Even if you only stick to one of them, remember that progress is good, no matter how small.

### **New Year's Resolutions to Consider**

1. I give myself permission to not keep the following resolutions or to keep them only partway.
2. When I feel I am imperfect, I will remember that guilt is not an option as long as I know I did the best I could, given the circumstances.
3. I will find time alone for myself, even though that seems impossible. That may mean asking for help from people and sources I've never considered before.
4. Regardless of how deserving the source, I will say no to requests for my time when I know I can't add any more to my plate.
5. I will remember that family members and friends who are not care receivers deserve some of my time. This may mean a little less of my attention will go to my care receiver, and that is okay.
6. I will follow through with my own health care appointments and screenings, including dental cleanings and eye exams.
7. I will find a way to monitor my own energy levels so I can recharge my batteries before I hit the point of exhaustion and burnout.
8. I will remember that seeking advice from professionals, organizations and fellow caregivers is a sign of strength, not weakness.
9. I will remember that my care receiver didn't choose the illness or disability that he or she is living with.
10. I will remember that I didn't choose this life for my care receiver either, so I won't be a martyr to their illness.
11. I will remember that taking care of my own needs isn't selfish. Taking care of myself benefits everyone I love.
12. I will get appropriate help for myself if depression, anxiety or other mental health issues become apparent to me, my friends or my family.
13. I will be open to alternative ways of caring for myself. This can include massage, aroma therapy, some form of meditation, exercise, attending a support group, seeking out respite care, or meeting with a therapist.

This list is merely a starting point. What resolutions would you add for yourself? Which would you delete? If you print out this list and hang it in a prominent place, you can work toward these goals a little bit every day. Even looking at it once a month will help you view your situation with a fresh perspective.

Remember, happiness isn't about perfection—it's about having realistic expectations. We all have room to adjust our expectations to more closely match reality, and that change alone can help us have a happier and more productive year.

Original article: <https://www.agingcare.com/articles/caregiver-new-years-resolutions-143643.htm>

**For more information, contact Susan Frederickson, Caregiver Program Specialist with the Area Agency on Aging at (432) 563-1061.**

## New Year, New Opportunities

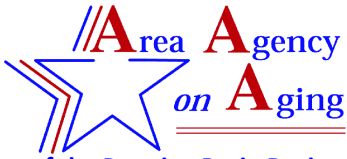
A new year is here. For many it is a time of reflection, renewed vigor, and resolutions for the upcoming year. Many of us were fortunate enough to have spent time with family and loved ones during the holidays. These visits sometimes bring about conversations regarding health issues and long-term care discussions. If you ever wish that there was somewhere to go to get answers regarding long-term care questions and concerns, your local Long-Term Care Ombudsman may be just the person to talk to about these issues.

Your local Ombudsman serves as an advocate for residents of long-term care facilities which include nursing homes, assisted living facilities, and residential care facilities. The Ombudsman is also available to provide information and assistance regarding a wide range of long-term care topics including how to pay for long-term care, how to choose a facility, resident rights, etc.

This is also a time when some people make resolutions to be more active in their communities and explore volunteer opportunities. The Long-Term Care Ombudsman program relies extensively on ombudsman volunteers. If you are interested in visiting with long-term care residents and advocating on their behalf, this could be the opportunity you are looking for.

Area Agency on Aging of the Permian Basin Regional Planning Commission is looking for dedicated and compassionate people to volunteer and advocate for residents of nursing facilities and assisted living facilities. There is no experience needed and the Local Managing Ombudsman provides training FREE of charge.

*To learn how you can make a difference in the lives of nursing home and assisted living facility residents, please contact the Managing Local Ombudsman at (432) 563-1061.*



of the Permian Basin Regional Planning Commission  
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[www.aaapb.com](http://www.aaapb.com)



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### ***This Is A Laughing Matter***

Q: What happens to a frog's car when it breaks down?

A: It gets toad away

Q: *What did the duck say when he bought lipstick?*

A: *"Put it on my bill"*

Q: *Did you hear about the kidnapping at school?*

A: *It's ok. He woke up.*

Q: *Why couldn't the leopard play hide and seek?*

A: *Because he was always spotted.*

### **Classic Look**

"Even at age 88, my mother was vain about her looks. At a party, an old friend exclaimed, "Edith, you haven't changed in 20 years."

"Oh," said Mom, horrified. "I hope I didn't look like this 20 years ago."

### **From the Mouth of Babes**

One of my fourth graders asked my teacher's assistant, "How old are you, Mrs. Glass?"

"You should never ask an adult's age," I broke in.

"That's okay," Harriett said smiling. "I'm fifty."

"Wow, you don't look that old," the boy said. I was breathing a sigh of relief when another child chimed in, "Parts of her do."

*If you wish to stop receiving this newsletter, please call  
Marydyth Taylor at 1-800-491-4636 or 432-563-1061 or  
e-mail [mtaylor@aaapb.com](mailto:mtaylor@aaapb.com)*