



RESILIENT AGING

CLINTON COUNTY OFFICE FOR THE AGING NEWSLETTER

Beat the Winter Blues

Many people go through short periods when they feel sad or unlike their usual selves. Sometimes, these mood changes begin and end when the seasons change. Many people feel "down" or have the "winter blues" when the days get shorter in the fall and winter and feel better in the spring when longer daylight hours return.

Sometimes, these mood changes are more serious and can affect how a person feels, thinks, and behaves. If you have noticed significant changes in your mood and behavior when the seasons change, you may be experiencing seasonal affective disorder (SAD).

SAD is a type of depression characterized by a recurrent seasonal pattern, with symptoms lasting about 4-5 months out of the year. The signs and symptoms of SAD include those associated with depression as well as disorder-specific symptoms that differ for winter-pattern versus summer-pattern SAD. Symptoms include: Persistent sad, anxious, or "empty" mood most of the day, nearly every day, for at least 2 weeks; Feelings of hopelessness or pessimism, Feelings of irritability, frustration, or restlessness; Feelings of guilt, worthlessness, or helplessness; Loss of interest or pleasure in hobbies and activities; Decreased energy, fatigue, or feeling slowed down; Difficulty concentrating, remembering, or making decisions; Changes in sleep or appetite or unplanned weight changes; Physical aches or pains, headaches, cramps, or digestive problems that do not have a clear physical cause and do not go away with treatment; Thoughts of death or suicide or suicide attempts. (See page 2)



IN THIS ISSUE

- **Message from the Director**
- **Caregiver Corner - Home Safety**
- **Home Safety Checklist**
- **Program Spotlight - EISEP**
- **Fall Prevention**
- **and more**



MESSAGE FROM THE DIRECTOR

BY: DARLEEN COLLINS

In this December issue, we bring you information about programs that can help you remain independent. While you are visiting with family during the holidays, talk about your future - make a plan to stay active and engaged in your community, and take steps to keep yourself safe from falls, injuries, and illnesses.

Things to consider include: Does your home meet your needs now and into the future? Will you need to consider home repairs or modifications? Will you need to move to a different living environment at some point in the future? Do you or will you have transportation needs?

We have provided many Aging In Place resources throughout this year. It's time to put your plan together!



Continued from page 1.

For winter-pattern SAD, additional symptoms can include: Oversleeping; Overeating, particularly with a craving for carbohydrates, leading to weight gain; and Social withdrawal (feeling like “hibernating”).

Treatments are available to help people with SAD. They fall into four main categories that can be used alone or in combination:

- Light therapy
- Psychotherapy
- Antidepressant medication
- Vitamin D

Talk to your health care provider if you have symptoms.

If you or someone you know is struggling or having thoughts of suicide, call or text the 988 Suicide and Crisis Lifeline at 988 or chat at 988lifeline.org. In life-threatening situations, call 911.



Source:

www.nimh.nih.gov/health/publications/seasonal-affective-disorder.



CAREGIVER CORNER

Home Safety

As people age, the risk of falls and injuries increases. Home environments that once felt safe can become dangerous as mobility, balance, and vision decline. Home safety becomes a priority. Making homes safer promotes independence, reduces the risk of injury, and provides peace of mind for both the individual and their family.

5 quick and easy home modifications you can make on your own

1. Secure some support: Buy a shower seat, grab bar, and adjustable-height handheld shower head to make bathing easier and safer.
2. Light it up: Replace burnt-out bulbs with bright, non-glare lightbulbs.
3. Have a seat: Place a sturdy chair in your bedroom so you can sit while getting dressed.
4. Clear the way: Keep items off the stairs, and fix simple but serious hazards such as clutter and throw rugs.
5. Store for success: Keep frequently used items between your waist and shoulder height.

Silent or forgotten dangers in your home can be easy to overlook but may lead to serious injury or even death. Hazards like carbon monoxide and chemical poisoning are especially dangerous because they often go unnoticed until it's too late.

Being ready for emergencies is one of the most overlooked but vital caregiver tips for aging in place. Keep emergency contact numbers visible near phones. Create a medical file with medications, allergies, health history, and insurance info. Make sure smoke detectors, carbon monoxide detectors, and fire extinguishers are functional. Consider using a medical alert system for quick access to emergency help.

See pages 4 & 5 for a Home Safety Checklist to help you conduct a more thorough assessment of your loved one's home environment. By reducing injuries and falls, you can increase quality of life for both you and your loved one.

If you need support or resources during your caregiving journey, call the Clinton County Office for the Aging Caregiver Resource Center at 518-565-4620.



Worksheet: Home Safety Checklist

The following room-by-room checklist can alert you to potential hazards in an older person's home. Use it to identify any changes or repairs needed to help keep them safe. Keep in mind that it may not be necessary to make all of the suggested changes. It is important, however, to reevaluate home safety every so often as the person's behavior and needs change.

Throughout the home

- ☐ Are any repairs needed?
- ☐ Is the house well lit, inside and out, particularly at the top and bottom of stairs? Do any lightbulbs need to be replaced?
- ☐ Are emergency phone numbers (ambulance, Poison Control, doctors, hospital, etc.) and the person's home address near all telephones?
- ☐ Is there clutter, which can cause disorientation and confusion and increase the risk of falling?
- ☐ Is mail, recycling, or trash piling up? Do there need to be more trash and recycling containers around the house?
- ☐ Is each bottle of prescription medicine clearly labeled with the person's name, name of the drug, drug strength, dosage frequency, and expiration date?
- ☐ If there are guns in the home, are they locked up and unloaded, with ammunition stored separately?

Floors

- ☐ Are there any tripping hazards at exterior entrances or inside the house (throw rugs, for example)?
- ☐ Are there non-slip strips or mats on tile and wood floors or surfaces that may get wet? Are carpets fixed firmly to the floor?
- ☐ Are all walking areas free of furniture and extension and electrical cords?
- ☐ Have smoke and carbon monoxide alarms been installed near the kitchen and in all bedrooms? Have the batteries been checked recently?

Stairs

- ☐ Are the stairs manageable, or is a ramp or gate needed?
- ☐ Could handrails be installed on both sides of the staircase?

☐ Is there at least one stairway handrail that extends beyond the first and last steps on each flight of stairs?

☐ Are any outdoor steps sturdy and textured to prevent falls in wet or icy weather? Mark the edges of steps with bright or reflective tape.

Bathrooms

☐ Are there grab bars near toilets and in the tub or shower?

☐ Have nonskid adhesive strips, decals, or mats been placed in the tub and shower? If the bathroom is uncarpeted, consider placing these strips next to the tub, toilet, and sink as well.

☐ Have a plastic shower stool and a hand-held shower head been installed to make bathing easier?

☐ Is the water heater set at 120° F to avoid scalding tap water?

☐ Is there a night light to make overnight trips to the bathroom safer?

Kitchen

☐ Are there safety knobs and an automatic shut-off switch on the stove?

☐ Is there enough food in the fridge? Is any of it spoiled? Are there staple foods (such as cereal, sugar, canned soup) in the cabinets?

☐ Has a drain trap been installed in the kitchen sink to catch anything that may otherwise become lost or clog the plumbing?

Outdoors

☐ Are there secure locks on all outside doors and windows?

☐ If a walker or wheelchair is needed, can the entrances to the house be modified — perhaps by putting in a ramp to the front door?

☐ Is there a small bench or table by the entry door to hold bags and packages while unlocking the door?

☐ Is outside lighting adequate? Light sensors that turn on lights automatically as you approach the house may be useful.

☐ Have bushes and foliage been pruned away from walkways and doorways?

☐ If there is a swimming pool, is it safe? Restrict access to a swimming pool by fencing it with a locked gate, covering it, and closely supervising it when in use.

☐ Have you addressed any uneven surfaces or walkways, hoses, and other objects that may cause a person to trip?



National Institute
on Aging

Stay Safe, Stay Steady: Fall Prevention for Older Adults

By Eric Gadway, RN – CVPH Trauma Program Manager

Falls are the leading cause of injury-related deaths among adults over 65, and 1 in 4 seniors report falling each year. At University of Vermont Health: CVPH, over 600 trauma patients in 2024 were seniors who experienced same-level falls—tragically, 22 of those individuals passed away. But the good news is that many falls are preventable with simple, proactive steps.

Why Fall Prevention Matters

Preventing falls helps older adults maintain independence, avoid hospitalization, and improve overall quality of life. A few small changes can make a big difference.

What to Do If You Fall

If you do fall, stay calm. Take a few deep breaths and assess the situation. Check yourself for injuries. If you're hurt, call for help or use a medical alert system like Lifeline. If you're able to get up safely, roll to your side, get on your hands and knees, and use a sturdy piece of furniture to rise slowly. Make sure you're not dizzy before standing.

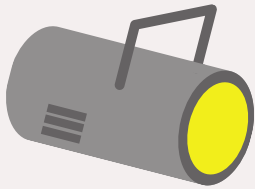
Tips for Preventing Falls

- **Stay Active:** Regular exercise improves strength and balance. Local senior centers offer classes like Tai Chi, Zumba Gold, and yoga.
- **Wear Proper Footwear:** Choose non-slip, supportive shoes.
- **Make Your Home Safer:** Remove tripping hazards like throw rugs, electrical cords, and clutter. Install grab bars and railings, and ensure good lighting throughout your home.
- **Manage Your Health:** Schedule regular check-ups, and review medications with your healthcare provider to avoid side effects like dizziness. Keep your vision and hearing up to date.
- **Use Community Resources:** The Clinton County Office for the Aging offers safety assessments, home modifications, and mobility equipment loans. Programs like “Matter of Balance” help reduce fear of falling and encourage activity.

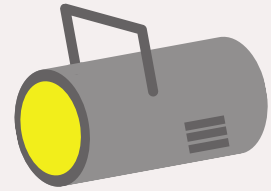
Local Support

- Senior Citizens Council of Clinton County: (518) 563-6180 – www.seniorsinclintoncounty.com
- Plattsburgh YMCA: (518) 561-4290 – www.plattsburghymca.org
- Clinton County Office for the Aging: (518) 565-4620 – www.clintoncountyny.gov
- CVPH Trauma Department: (518) 562-7378 – CVPHTraumaDepartment@cvph.org

Fall prevention is a community effort. Let's work together to keep our seniors safe, steady, and thriving.



Program Spotlight



Expanded In-home Services for the Elderly Program

The Expanded In-Home Services for the Elderly Program (EISEP) provides case management and non-medical in-home services such as housekeeping and personal care to frail/disabled residents. In-home services are provided through North Country Home Services, HCR, and Seniors Helping Seniors. Social Adult Day Care is also available at the Third Age Center at SUNY.

Individuals receive a comprehensive in-home assessment to determine a person's needs and circumstances. Case Managers work with the client and family to develop a care plan, then authorize services. Case Managers provide information and referral, client monitoring, and follow up.

Non-medical in-home services provided include Personal Care Level 1 and Personal Care Level 2. Level 1 provides assistance with light housekeeping, meal preparation, running errands, and food shopping. Personal Care Level 2 provides all tasks in Level 1 care plus bathing, grooming, dressing, toileting, transferring and ambulation, and feeding.

Eligibility requirements:

- 60 years of age or older
- Functionally impaired in at least one activity of daily living (ADL) or two instrumental activities of daily living (IADL)
- Ineligible for the same or similar service under other public programs
- Able to be maintained safely at home

ADLs are self-care tasks such as bathing, dressing, toileting, continence, transferring, and eating.

IADLs include housekeeping, shopping, preparing meals, managing money, laundry, using transportation, telephoning, and getting outside the home.

For more information, call Clinton County Office for the Aging at 518-565-4620.

Robots for older adults aren't coming; they are here now!

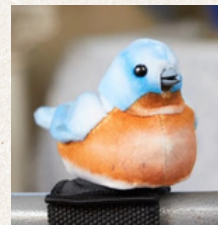
By Ray Alexander

During recent decades our society has been aging, and this trend will continue. Lifespan on average is increasing by 3 months per year, and the fastest growing segment of our population are those that are 80 years plus. This has led to an unprecedented demand for caregiving and support activities. While robot technology is still in its infancy the technology is developing fast. Two of the most common are service robots and socially assistive robots (SARs).

Service Robots: These are already around us everywhere. Your first thought might be to think of some kind of android walking around (those are still in the experimental phase). At this point in time they do not take the form of a humanoid. Those large machines that you see cleaning the floors at Sams Club are robots! So are the Roombas that vacuum the living room. Other examples are manufacturing robots, lawn mowers, surgical robots and self-driving vehicles.

Socially Assistive Robots: SARs have been identified as a potential solution to address the challenges associated with caring for the aging population. These robots are designed to interact with people and assist them in various ways, including providing social companionship, cognitive stimulation, and physical support. Studies have shown SARs can help alleviate feelings of loneliness and depression in older adults, as well as improve their cognitive functioning and overall well-being.

To find examples of this look no further than your Clinton County Office for the Aging. The animatronic pet program provides seniors with a variety of robotic pets including a dog, cat or bird. These pets are designed to interact with



their owner with realistic sounds and motions, providing comfort and companionship to older adults that suffer from isolation. Data shows that these pets are making a positive impact. Over 75% of the clients receiving these pets reported a reduction in loneliness as well as a 75% decrease in pain.

The other robot (available through Office for the Aging) is known as ElliQ. ElliQ is a digital care companion specifically designed to help older adults remain active, engaged and independent. It is designed for individuals that spend most of their day alone, ElliQ empowers older adults to take control of their physical, mental, and social health. ElliQ proactively offers health and wellness support, entertainment, communication features and help with a wide variety of daily activities. Here are just a few of the things that ElliQ can assist with.

Connection to Family & Friends

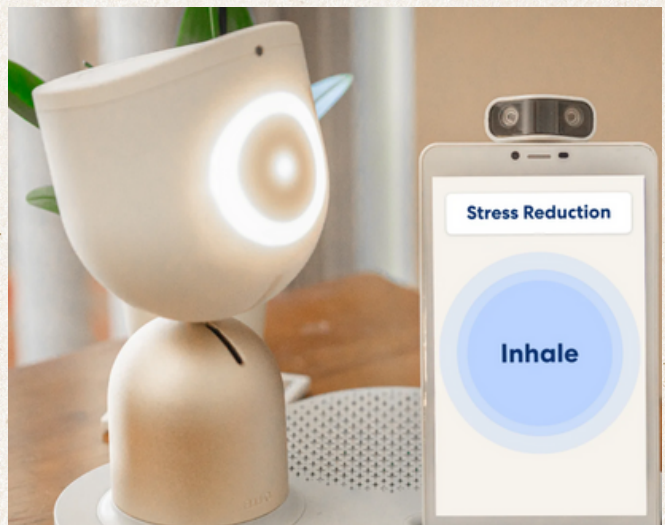
- Video calling
- Photo sharing
- Audio and Text messaging

Health & Wellness Support

- Medication reminders
- Fitness videos
- Wellness tips

Entertainment & Companionship

- Music streaming
- News updates
- Small talk and Jokes
- Trivia and cognitive games
- Weather reports & Daily reminders



The animatronic pets and ElliQ robotic companion are available free of charge through the Clinton County Office for the Aging (for eligible older adults). Call Ray Alexander at 518-565-4629 with any questions that you may have.

MEALS ON WHEELS

45 Veterans Lane
Plattsburgh, NY 12901
(518) 561-8320



This menu is approved by a
registered dietitian.
Menu is subject to change.



Monday

Tuesday

Wednesday

Thursday

Friday

1 Swiss Steak
Egg Noodles
Peas
Wheat Bread
Pears

2 Sausage, Peppers, &
Onions on a Bun
Whole Potatoes
Sliced Carrots
Sugar Cookie

3 Salsa Chicken
Rice & Beans
Fiesta Corn
Fruit Parfait

4 Roast Beef w/ Gravy
Mashed Potatoes
Red Slaw
Dinner Roll
Butterscotch Pie

5 Honey Mustard Pork
Chop
Baked Potatoes
Spinach
Rye Bread
Fresh Fruit

DINE-IN
SITES:
SENIOR CENTER
518-561-7393

**BEEKMAN
TOWERS**
518-561-5360

ELLENBURG
518-594-7311

DANNEMORA
518-310-9089

LAKEVIEW
518-561-8696

ROUSES POINT
518-534-1852



8 Chicken Alfredo
Diced Carrots
Italian Bread
Peaches

9 Meatloaf w/ Gravy
Red Smashed Potatoes
California Blend
Veggies
Molasses Cookie

10 Scalloped Potatoes w/
Ham
Beets
Wheat Roll
Fruited Jello

11 Michigan on a Bun
Baked Beans
Broccoli & Corn Salad
Birthday Cake

12 Turkey w/ Gravy
Mashed Potatoes
French Green Beans
Dinner Roll
Fresh Fruit

15 Sloppy Joe on a
Bun
Roasted Potatoes
Capri Blend Salad
Mandarin Oranges

16 Sweet & Sour Chicken
w/ Rice
Peas & Carrots
Wheat Bread
Almond Cookie

17 Roast Pork w/ Gravy
Mashed Potatoes
Harvest Blend
Black Forest Cake

18 Lasagna
Wax Beans
Italian Bread
Vanilla Pudding

19 Beef Tips
Egg Noodles
Chef's Choice Veggie
Rye Bread
Fresh Fruit

22 BBQ Pulled Chicken
Home Fries
Broccoli
Corn Muffin
Fruit Cocktail

23 Baked Chicken w/
Gravy
Red Smashed Potatoes
Peas w/ Pearl Onions
Carrot Cake

24 Spaghetti w/ Meat Sauce
Italian Blend Veggies
Sourdough Bread
Tapioca Pudding

25 CLOSED

26 Baked Fish
Rosemary Potatoes
Mixed Veggies
Wheat Bread
Fresh Fruit

29 Macaroni & Cheese
Stewed Tomatoes
Rye Bread
Pears

30 Chicken Divan
Spiral Noodles
Sliced Carrots
Wheat Bread
Chocolate Chip Cookie

31 Baked Ham w/ Raisin
Sauce
Mashed Potatoes
French Green Beans
Apple Crisp

1 Closed
New Years Day

2

Funded by Clinton County Office for the Aging
and New York State Office for the Aging.

Senior Citizens Council of Clinton County, Inc. Nutrition Program

Clinton County Office for the Aging is pleased to provide you with services. Programs for the Office for the Aging are funded by the Older Americans Act, New York State, Clinton County and your contributions. There is no fee for services; however, in order to provide continued quality services, the Older Americans Act requires us to allow voluntary, confidential contributions from participants. Individuals with self-declared incomes at or above 185 percent of federal poverty level (\$2,412 monthly income for a single person) are encouraged to contribute at levels based on the actual cost of services. Your contributions are used to improve upon and support the programs.

Any amount you contribute is greatly appreciated. If you are using a check, please make the check **payable to: Clinton County Treasurer** and **mail to** Clinton County Office for the Aging, 135 Margaret St, Suite 105, Plattsburgh, NY 12901. You will not be denied service because of an inability or unwillingness to contribute.

Please return with your contribution

\$_____ Home Delivered Meals	\$_____ Congregate Meals
\$_____ Caregiver Services	\$_____ Transportation
\$_____ Health Insurance Counseling	\$_____ Lifeline (PERS)
\$_____ Health Promotion (Exercise Classes)	\$_____ Legal
\$_____ Housekeeping/Personal Care	\$_____ Other _____



Clinton County Office for the Aging
135 Margaret St, Suite 105
Plattsburgh, NY 12901

The Clinton County Office for the Aging assists people and caregivers to empower and sustain their independence and to advocate for themselves by developing a continuum of opportunity, support and care.