

# OLDER ADULT BEHAVIORAL HEALTH INITIATIVE SUMMER 2024 NEWSLETTER

*Lane, Linn, and Benton Counties*

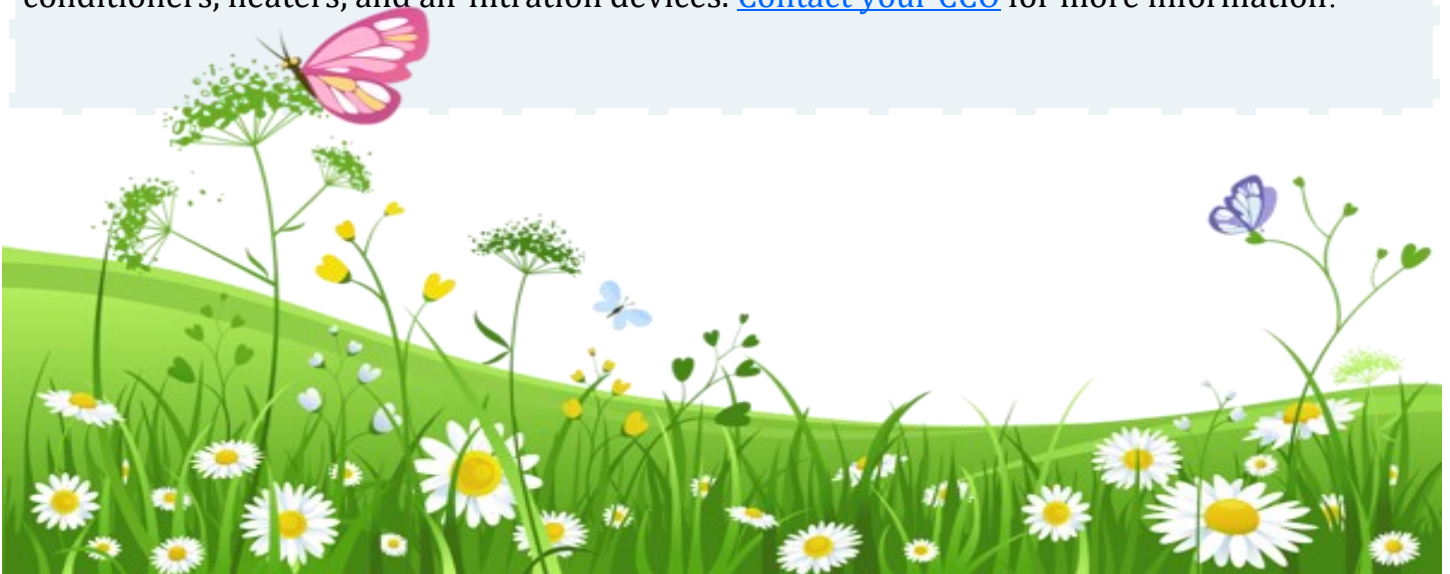
## WELCOME, SUMMER!



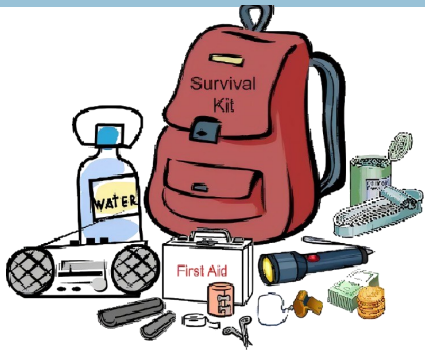
### WHY ARE OLDER PEOPLE MORE SENSITIVE TO HEAT?

From [NPR](#): As people age, their bodies become less adept at handling heat. That's because of both physical changes and social or cultural ones. Physically, older people sweat less effectively, and their instincts to drink water also drop, which can lead to dehydration—and then less sweating. On top of that, older patients don't have the cardiac pumping mechanism necessary to move blood as efficiently from their core to blood vessels near the skin, where it could be cooled by sweating. Older adults may also want to check the Air Quality Index (AQI) [www.airnow.gov](http://www.airnow.gov) before heading outside to check on pollen, smoke, and pollution levels.

**Climate Resources for OHP Members:** Starting March 1, 2024, Oregon Health Plan (OHP) members can [apply](#) for access to climate-related resources through a new benefit called health-related social needs (HRSN) services. OHP members facing certain life transitions may be eligible to receive devices that maintain healthy temperatures and clean air, including air conditioners, heaters, and air filtration devices. [Contact your CCO](#) for more information.



## Disaster Preparedness



Everyone should have a “Go-Kit” ready to grab and run if they need to leave their home quickly. Put a few days of medications, a bottle of water, some packaged granola bars or other instant foods, a pack of cards or a book, and paper towels or tissues into a bag or backpack, and keep it on a hook near the door. More information on Go-Kits can be found at <https://www.ready.gov/kit>.

## Volunteer Opportunity

A research team at Portland State University’s [Institute on Aging](#) is looking for volunteers to participate in a focus group on an initiative that serves older adults with mental health and substance use needs. If you are over 65 and have received mental health services in Oregon, you can receive a \$35 gift card to participate. Call (503) 725-6265 or email [ehews@pdx.edu](mailto:ehews@pdx.edu) to take part.

## Kay’s Korner

### ***Summer Drinking—Fun, but Dangerous!***

For aging seniors, alcohol use brings many risks and should be carefully considered. While it is enjoyable to drink a sugary cocktail, enjoy a pint of brew, or sip a glass of wine, recent studies reveal many negative side effects for older adults who are drinking even small amounts of alcohol, including:

- ◆ Loss of strength in muscles, loss of balance and reduced coordination, increased risk of falls.
- ◆ Worsening of health issues including liver damage, diabetes, heart or blood pressure, cancer and stomach problems.
- ◆ Causing or worsening of mental health problems such as confusion, memory loss and depression.
- ◆ Harmful interactions with medications, which don’t work as well when taken with alcohol.
- ◆ Increased risk of certain brain disorders including dementia, pseudo-Parkinsonism (trembling, etc.) and peripheral neuropathy (tingling or numbness in the hands and feet).



***New studies advise the safest amount of drinking is none! Consider zero proof alcohol alternatives, non-alcoholic beers, fruit fizzes, sparkling waters, and other healthy alternatives!***

## OABHI



Oregon  
Older Adult Behavioral Health Initiative

### Your Specialists:

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Community Resilience Toolkit: [Older Adults and People with Disabilities](#)

## Meeting

### The Older Adult and People with Disabilities Collaborative Network

WHEN: Second Thursday of each month from 1:45pm-3pm  
(Agenda is 2pm-3pm, join early for networking!)

WHERE: Zoom

CONTACT: [Christopher.eilers@lanecountyor.gov](mailto:Christopher.eilers@lanecountyor.gov) to acquire  
zoom link and invite.