



NEWS RELEASE – Area Agency on Aging District 7, Inc.

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Area Agency on Aging Recognizes Chillicothe VAMC

The Area Agency on Aging District 7 (AAA7) recently presented the Chillicothe Veterans Affairs Medical Center (VAMC) with the “Community Partnership of the Year Award” at its recent Appreciation Brunch that is held annually to recognize individuals and organizations who help the AAA7 achieve their mission and vision.

The Chillicothe VAMC and National Church Residences’ Heritage Adult Day Care Center both received the award for their work with the Ohio Department of Aging and the Area Agency on Aging District 7. Together, all collaborated in a coordinated statewide approach to provide Music and MemorySM to Ohio’s Veterans, their caregivers, and others with cognitive impairment in home and community-based settings. Music and MemorySM is an innovative approach to care developed by New York social worker Dan Cohen that uses personalized playlists on digital music players to help people with dementia and other chronic conditions focus and reconnect with the world around them.

Nationally, the primary focus has been on implementing Music and MemorySM in nursing homes and other care facilities; however, Ohio’s effort has been the first effort of its’ kind in this country to make the program available to individuals and families in home and community-based settings.

The Area Agency on Aging District 7, Shawnee State University’s Master of Occupational Therapy students, and the Veteran-Directed Home and Community-Based Program staff at the AAA7 provided on-site Music and MemorySM training for the staff of the Chillicothe VA Medical Center and Heritage Adult Day Care Center to enable the facilities to implement this program with their clients. Since the implementation of this grant program, the Chillicothe VA Medical Center has placed iPods and individualized playlists into the hands of 21 veterans, and Heritage Adult Day Care Center has provided this specialized approach to 20 individuals. Both agencies are continuing to work with these individuals and adding participants to the program.

The Ohio Department of Aging and the Area Agency on Aging District 7 is proud of this collective effort to improve the quality of care for all Ohioans, regardless of where they call home.

In addition to this year’s Community Partnership of the Year Award, the Chillicothe Veterans Affairs Medical Center was also presented with the Trailblazer Award at the 2013 AAA7 Appreciation Brunch, and in 2014, shared national recognition as a partner with the AAA7 when the Agency received an Aging Achievement Award from the National Association of Area

Agencies on Aging. Both awards recognized the Chillicothe VA Medical Center's efforts working with the AAA7 on the Veteran-Directed Program that allows veterans to self-direct the care they receive in their home. The Veteran-Directed Care Program started in 2012 and grew very quickly into a model program throughout the nation. Both the Chillicothe VA Medical Center and the AAA7 have assisted other states in developing and implementing Veteran-Directed Care Programs.

Your local Area Agency on Aging District 7, Inc. provides services on a non-discriminatory basis in ten counties in Southern Ohio including Adams, Brown, Gallia, Highland, Jackson, Lawrence, Pike, Ross, Scioto and Vinton. These services are available to help older adults and those with disabilities live safely and independently in their own homes through services paid for by Medicare, Medicaid, other federal and state resources, as well as private pay. The AAA7's Resource Center is also available to anyone in the community looking for information or assistance with long-term care options. Available Monday through Friday from 8:00 am until 4:30 pm, the Resource Center is a valuable contact for learning more about options and what programs and services are available for assistance.

Those interested in learning more can call toll-free at 1-800-582-7277 (TTY: 711). Here, individuals can speak directly with a nurse or social worker who will assist them with information surrounding the programs and services that are available to best serve their needs. The Agency also offers an in-home assessment at no cost for those who are interested in learning more. Information is also available on www.aaa7.org, or the Agency can be contacted through e-mail at info@aaa7.org. The Agency also has a Facebook page located at www.facebook.com/AreaAgencyOnAgingDistrict7.

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The Chillicothe Veterans Affairs Medical Center (VAMC) was recently presented with the Community Partnership of the Year Award by the Area Agency on Aging District 7. Pictured left to right, Kaye Inoshita, Pam Matura and Merritt Sessor of the AAA7; Mandy Kenz of the Chillicothe VAMC; Chelsey Wemmer of the AAA7; Keisha King of the Chillicothe VAMC; Vicky Abdella of the AAA7; and State Senator Joe Uecker.