



**NEWS COLUMN – Area Agency on Aging District 7, Inc.**

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## **Home for the Holidays**

**by Debbie Gulley, AAA7 Interim Executive Director**

**December 2023 Monthly Column**

To help older adults stay healthy this winter season, the Area Agency on Aging District 7 (AAA7) is participating in “Home for the Holidays”, a national campaign led by the Eldercare Locator and USAging, the AAA7’s national association. This year’s campaign connects older adults, caregivers and families with information on vaccinations.



Staying up-to-date on vaccinations is a vital part of healthy aging. Vaccines serve as a safe and reliable defense against serious illness, protecting the health of individuals, their loved ones, and others in their community. This is especially true for adults age 60 and older, as aging gradually weakens immune systems and makes older adults increasingly vulnerable to numerous illnesses.

A new “Home for the Holidays” brochure, “Start Your New Season of Wellness: A Guide to Vaccinations for Healthy Aging”, and a vaccine fact sheet, highlight the important and potentially life-saving role vaccines play in helping older adults stay healthy. And they connect older adults to local, community-based resources that can help them get vaccinated. The AAA7 has this information conveniently located on our website at [www.aaa7.org](http://www.aaa7.org). Once on the Home Page, click on the special “Vaccine Information and Resources” box for more details.

This is a time of year when many people gather with family or friends. To stay healthy, it’s important for older adults to get vaccinated against the flu and other diseases. The AAA7 can share information about vaccines older adults may need and help find services, such as free vaccine clinics, transportation if needed, in-home vaccinations, and onsite consultations with health care professionals.

Additionally, the Holidays are also a good time of the year to pay close attention to aging parents and relatives to make sure they are living safe and healthy. If you notice changes, make note to assess the situation and determine if intervention is needed. This could include changes with a loved-one’s hygiene and physical appearance, new or altered behaviors, and their living environment.

If changes are noticed, a conversation with your loved one is vital to discuss your observances. Try to remain open and curious, not making assumptions or judgments. The AAA7 is available to provide information and answer questions about a number of care needs and options that are available. After speaking with one of our specially-trained staff members concerning your family member’s needs, an in-home consultation to assess your loved one’s situation can be provided at no cost to identify risks and determine what assistance or preventive measures could improve their quality of life. Call us toll-free at 1-800-592-7277 or e-mail [info@aaa7.org](mailto:info@aaa7.org) for further information about in-home consultations or vaccine resources.

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