



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

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AAA7 and Shawnee State University

“Fall-Free Fridays” Episode Features “Facts About Falls”

During the month of September, National Falls Prevention Week is observed, a national campaign to educate older adults, their caregivers, and health professionals about the dangers of falling and the steps to prevent falls.

According to the National Council on Aging, falls remain a leading cause of injury for people aged 65 and older. Falls threaten older adults’ safety and independence and generate enormous economic and personal costs. The good news is that they are preventable and there are proven steps people can take to reduce their risk.

This past Friday, the Area Agency on Aging District 7 (AAA7) began featuring “Fall-Free Fridays”, a live, weekly interview with two Shawnee State University (SSU) Occupational Therapy students who provide community education on a falls-related topic and information about falls, risk factors, and helpful prevention tips. The series will take place every Friday at 10:00 am through December 4th on the AAA7 Facebook page.

The first episode on September 11th featured the topic “Facts About Falls”, presented by SSU Master of Occupational Therapy students John Alvey and Brian Harrington.

The students shared stats and data about falls specific to older adults and how often falls occur for those over the age of 65, as well as causes and the rate of hospitalizations each year for falls. Also discussed were areas in the home that can cause a fall, such as clutter, protruding objects, and insufficient lighting. Areas in the home where falls occur the most include the stairs, bathroom, garden and outdoor areas, living room, driveway, and bedroom.

Some health-related conditions that could cause a fall include low vision, hearing and balance problems, decreased muscle strength and range of motion, previous head injuries, low bone density, and blood pressure issues.

Tips for preventing falls in the home include installing grab bars in the bathroom and having a shower seat or walk-in shower. Other tips include stapling down loose carpet or rugs, making paths clear, assuring there is proper lighting, and installing hand rails on stairways. In the community, it is important to be cautious when getting in and out of the car, being aware of slippery conditions in the rain, ice or snow, and to be aware of all objects in the environment.

The students concluded their education with “Ten Simple Steps to Prevent Falls”:

- 1) Learn about factors that may increase your risk of falling and steps to reduce.
- 2) Complete a fall risk self-assessment and discuss the results with your family and care providers.
- 3) Learn about exercises and physical activities you can partake in.
- 4) Create your own personal exercise plan – try new exercises that you can enjoy individually.
- 5) Identify and remove fall risks in and around the home.
- 6) Complete a home hazard walk-through and checklist.
- 7) Learn how a healthy diet can help lower the risk of falling.
- 8) Create a meal plan to prevent falls – the timing of when you eat may increase or decrease the risk of falls.
- 9) Learn how to talk to your doctor and healthcare professionals about falls and any fear you may have about falling.
- 10) Complete a medication inventory and discuss with your healthcare provider and pharmacist.

If you missed the live broadcast on September 11th, a recorded version is available on the AAA7 Facebook page or a dedicated page on the AAA7’s website for the Fall-Free Fridays education. To find the educational information, log on to www.aaa7.org, click on the “Fall-Free Fridays” box mid-way on the Home Page, and find the date you are looking for.

The next Fall-Free Fridays episode on Friday, September 18th at 10:00 am will discuss how to evaluate your own fall risk. Two new SSU Master of Occupational Therapy students will present on the topic and be available for questions during the live presentation.

For more information about Fall-Free Fridays, call the AAA7 at 1-800-582-7277 or info@aaa7.org, or Dr. Christine Raber with the Shawnee State University Occupational Therapy Program at (740) 351-3530 or craber@shawnee.edu.

Your local Area Agency on Aging District 7, Inc. provides services on a non-discriminatory basis. 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 specially-trained Resource Specialist 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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Fall-Free Fridays
with the Area Agency on Aging District 7 and
Shawnee State University Occupational Therapy Program

**Fridays at 10:00 am
from September 11th
through December 4th**

AAA7 Facebook Page



FALLS
Prevention
Awareness

The graphic is a rectangular box with a red border. It features a background of faint, overlapping silhouettes of people. The text is arranged in a clear, readable layout. The logo on the right includes a stylized figure of a person falling, with the word 'FALLS' in large, bold, green letters, and 'Prevention Awareness' in smaller red text below it.