HEALTH RESOURCES for SENIORS in GREAT BARRINGTON

Adults today are likely to live into their 80s and 90s or beyond, but whether a long life will be a healthy life is dependent on many factors. Some factors are genetic and environmental, but many are under an individual’s control. Among these are regular medical check-ups, healthy eating, exercise, sound sleep, and a good social support network. Also important are preventive medicine and medical insurance.

The following local resources can help seniors with these important aspects of their lives.

**Medical programs & services**

- **Medicare** is proof that turning 65 has its benefits. This government program offers no- or low-cost coverage for inpatient hospital expenses and outpatient medical treatment, and now covers more preventive care. Government-subsidized insurance programs now also cover prescription drugs. It’s important for seniors to sign up for drug insurance as soon as you become eligible because premiums increase significantly for those who enroll later.

  Under the new health care law, Medicare Part B recipients receive a free annual check-up, plus screening for cancer, diabetes, and other illnesses. For benefit and application information, see www.medicare.gov or call 800-MEDICARE.

- **SHINE** is a program for seniors which provides free health insurance counseling by trained volunteers. Topics covered include Medicare, “Medigap” and retiree insurance, and public benefit programs. SHINE counselors are available by appointment at the Claire Teague Senior Center. For an appointment call 413 528.1881 or see www.seniorconnection.org/shine.htm.

- **CHP (Community Health Program)** operates a Neighborhood Health Center at 444 Stockbridge Road. The Center provides preventive and primary care and wellness and nutritional counseling, for free or at reduced-cost to those who qualify. CHP accepts most insurance plans. See www.communityhealthprograms.org or call 413 528.8580.

- **CHP** also operates a dental clinic at 343 Main Street. Dental services include X-rays, cleanings, fillings and denture care. See www.communityhealthprograms.org or call 413 528.5565.

- **VIM (Volunteers in Medicine)** operates a clinic at 777 Main Street. Local health care practitioners, including doctors, nurses, dentists, optometrists, psychologists and dietitians, provide free health care for those in the Berkshire area who are uninsured or underinsured. See www.vimberkshires.org or call 413 528.3996.

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**Information Station**
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**Claire Teague Senior Center**
917 Main Street
Great Barrington, MA 01230
413 528.1881
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Home care services

Home care services available on a temporary or permanent basis include physical therapy, nursing care, help with personal grooming, and companionship. Medically prescribed services are often covered by health insurance.

The local organizations listed below accept Medicare and/or private insurance. For medical home care services, a referral from a primary care physician or hospitalist is required.

● Berkshire Home Health Care
  Lee
  413 243.1122
  www.berkshirehomecare.com

● Home Instead Senior Care
  Pittsfield
  413 442.0907
  www.homeinstead.com

● Interim Health Care
  West Springfield
  800 606.4519
  www.interimhealthcare.com

● Berkshire VNA
  Great Barrington
  413 528.1048
  www.vnna.org

● Lee Regional VNA
  Lee
  413 243.1212
  www.leeregionalvna.com

ElderServices in Pittsfield provides home care for eligible seniors priced on a sliding scale. Their Meals on Wheels program supplies lunch and a wellness check. Call for information or to request a caseworker home visit.

● ElderServices
  Pittsfield
  413 499.0524
  www.esbci.org

Web sites

● Medicare
  www.medicare.gov

● SHINE
  www.seniorconnection.org

● Mass. resources
  www.massresources.org

● VIM
  www.vimberkshires.org

This isn’t intended to be a comprehensive list of web sites. Some sites have minimal online information, and some sites aren’t listed because their web addresses are too long for easy copying into a browser window.