



Genevieve N. Johnson
Senior Day Care Center
Soaring To Create Moments of Joy For Our Seniors

Genevieve N. Johnson Senior Day Care Center Advisory Council's Quarterly Newsletter™

Volume 6, Issue 2

April-June 2022 Edition

CHAIRPERSON'S MESSAGE

Greetings Fellow Zionites in the name of Jesus Christ our Lord and Savior!

We are very pleased to share with you our latest edition of the quarterly newsletter of the GNJ Senior Day Care Center's Advisory Council. Our purpose of printing this quarterly newsletter is to provide valuable news and information about the wonderful work that is being accomplished at the GNJ Senior Day Care Center and how you can take advantage of these great services and programs. If you have a good story about your experience at the GNJ Senior Day Care Center please feel free to share it with us and thank you in advance for your continued support of the GNJ Senior Day Care Center.

Elaine S. Saunders

Chair, GNJ Senior Day Care Advisory Council

MISSION OF THE GNJSDC ADVISORY COUNCIL

The mission of the Genevieve N. Johnson Senior Day Care Center Advisory Council is to provide advice and guidance to the staff of the GNJ Senior Day Care Center on ideas and initiatives that serve to enhance the awareness and utilization of a wide range of opportunities for the Center's participants and their family members as well as any interested members of Zion Baptist Church and/or the local community. In accordance with the DC Office on Aging and Community Living (DACL) grant to the GNJ Senior Day Care Center an advisory group has been established by Zion Baptist Church and the current advisory council members are as follows:

- Sister Elaine S. Saunders (chair)
- Deacon Norma Hutcheson
- Sister Linda Scope
- Brother Reginald Watson
- Trustee Roy Castleberry
- Sister Thelma Burless (ex officio)

We are continuing to conduct a comprehensive outreach review in order to better understand the demographic profile of eligible seniors at Zion Baptist Church so that we can not only improve upon the current services and programs but develop a strategy to market and offer additional services and programs. Accordingly, please feel free to offer any suggestions that you believe might be of interest and we will definitely do our best to consider if applicable. Also, if you would like to volunteer your knowledge, skills and abilities in support of our mission please let us know.

Contact Sister Saunders at esaunders80@outlook.com.

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OVERVIEW OF THE GNJ SENIOR DAY CARE CENTER

The Genevieve N. Johnson Senior Day Care Center Program ("Center") is an Adult Day Care Center domiciled in Zion Baptist Church's Family Life Center located at 4817 Blagden Avenue, N.W., Washington, D.C. 20011. The Center has been in operation for approximately thirty-nine years and incorporates quality day care services for the frail elderly as well as the recreation/socialization for the reasonably healthy elderly persons. The Center is located in Ward Four of the District of Columbia and serves residents age sixty years and older throughout the Washington metropolitan area. The Center is a one-of-a-kind program that combines adult day care services and senior center services.

The overall goal of the Genevieve N. Johnson Senior Day Care Center's Program is to provide an atmosphere designed to enable families to successfully manage the responsibility of quality care for an elderly or frail senior family member in their home environment. The Center provides various rehabilitative, social and recreational activities and services made possible to maintain a high quality of life and forestall early institutionalization. The participants at the Center enjoy recreation and friendship with their peers as well as receive health education, nutrition and family supportive services via counseling, comprehensive assessments and required resources and services after assessments as well as case management reviews and follow-ups.

The Center provides a very important outlet for family caregivers, as it offers socialization, activities, and necessary supervision to those individuals who are socially isolated or in need of essential care and assistance. Caregivers feel confident that their loved ones are in a safe environment and well cared for while they are at work or performing other necessary tasks. In addition, the Center offers a variety of programs and amenities, including medical screening, cognitive assessment, exercise programs, recreational activities, therapeutic services, transportation and escort services, and a diverse schedule of engaging activities as well as nutritious meals on a daily basis.

For many caregivers, the Center provides them with the adult day care services they need in order to adequately care for their aging spouse or relative. Whether they use the Center for respite services or for daily care so that they can work or tend to other responsibilities this is an important option for family caregivers.

Currently, through an annual grant awarded from the D.C. Office on Aging and Community Living (DCAL), the Center provides: (a) Adult Day Care Services, (b) Recreational/Socialization Activities, (c) Health Promotion, (d) Comprehensive Assessment, (e) Counseling and (f) Case Management. These six components are accomplished through the provision of: (a) Transportation and Escort Services, (b) Congregate Meals, (c) Therapeutic Arts, (d) Inter-generational Activities, (e) Caregiver's Support Group, (f) Music Therapy, (g) Fit and Wellness Programs, and (h) Outreach to the Local Community.

The Center also makes referrals to other services offered to residents of the District of Columbia aged sixty years and older by the D.C. Office on Aging and Community Living (DACL) such as: (a) Caregiver Support, (b) Community and Home-Delivered Meals, (c) Information and Referral/Assistance, (d) Legal Assistance, (e) Long-Term Care Planning, (f) Medicaid Enrollment Assistance, (g) Nutrition Programs, (h) Safe at Home Resources and (i) Nursing Home to Community Living Transition. In addition, the Center collaborates with the D.C. Aging and Disability Resource Center (ADRC) for low-income seniors interested in receiving assistance in completing the necessary government forms for Medicaid benefits and the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP)

The GNJ Center's minimal admission criteria are as follows: self-toileting, self-feeding, independent mobility, ability to make routine decisions alone, present no threat to self or others, fully vaccinated, sixty years of age or older and a District resident.

For more information about the Genevieve N. Johnson Senior Day Care Center please contact Thelma Burless, the Executive Director of the GNJ Senior Day Care Center at (202) 723-8537 or 202-697-3017. Email: tburless@ziondc.org.

**CELEBRATING THE LEGACY OF
“MOTHER” GENEVIEVE N. JOHNSON**
By Elaine S. Saunders, Chair GNJ Center Advisory Council



On Sunday, May 15, 2022 Zion Baptist Church celebrated the legacy of Genevieve N. Johnson for being an exemplary champion of seniors within the District of Columbia. She was revered as Genevieve “Mother” Johnson and made a life following her maternal instincts, first with her four children and then for more than forty years with aging men and women in the District of Columbia. She served as President of the Council of Senior Citizens of the Greater Washington Area, was the Founder and First President of the American War Mothers and President of the DC Chapter of the National Council of Senior Citizens.

When the Medicare Act was signed into law in 1965, by President Lyndon Baines Johnson, Mrs. Johnson was in the Oval Office to witness the culmination of her long tireless hours with many others lobbying Congress for the passage of this landmark legislation. Mrs.

Johnson was one of the first seniors in the country to receive her Medicare Card and in 1995, she was invited to the White House by President William Jefferson Clinton to attend the ceremony commemorating the 30th Anniversary of the signing of the Medicare Act.

Mrs. Johnson served for many years on the Mayor's Committee for the DC Office on Aging now known as the Department on Aging and Community Living. She was an eminent and omnipresent figure focused on senior welfare concerns. It was said by city officials that when it came to senior issues, "she had no peer". She effectively lobbied and advised city officials on obtaining enhanced programs and services for seniors to include affordable housing, social security services, transportation assistance, and medical assistance. In addition, she helped establish the District of Columbia's Senior Citizen Hall of Fame.

In 1975, Mrs. Johnson was named "Mother of the Year" by the American War Mothers Association for the District of Columbia and Mayor Walter Washington presented the award to her and proclaimed May 2, 1975 as "Genevieve N. Johnson Day" in Washington, D.C. During the Barry Administration, she initiated the Annual Senior Boat Ride, Senior Christmas Party, and The Senior Prayer Breakfast (Now Mayor's Senior Luncheon) each year. A senior apartment building was built on Upshur Street, NW between 13th and 14th Streets that bore her name, "Johnson Towers" until the building was purchased and the name changed.

In 1979, Zion Baptist Church purchased the Holy Family Ukrainian Catholic Parish located at 4817 Blagden Ave. N.W. across the street from the Church and renamed it the Family Life Center after plans to create a Senior Residential Center could not come to pass. In 1982, the Senior Day Care Program was formed to serve seniors in Wards 1 and 4 as well as members of Zion Baptist Church and was named by the DC Office on Aging "The Genevieve N. Johnson Senior Day Care Program" in recognition of her tireless efforts on behalf of seniors in the community. The Center remains in operation to this day and is a testament to her enduring legacy for caring about seniors.

On Genevieve N. Johnson Sunday, Mrs. Thelma Burless, the Executive Director of the Genevieve N. Johnson Senior Day Care Center, introduced the staff of the GNJ Center as well as a brief video on the Center's program was showcased. In addition, official recognition letters were read by the Honorable Anita Bonds, At-Large DC Councilwoman who serves as the chair of the Committee on Housing and Executive Administration and chair on the Committee for Senior Affairs and Mrs. Jessica Smith, CEO of the DC Department on Aging and Community Living. Brother Reginald Watson, the grandson of Genevieve N. Johnson, represented the family in accepting these recognition letters as well as others from the Honorable Muriel Bowser, Mayor of the District of Columbia and the Honorable Janeese Lewis George, DC Ward Four Councilmember. The members of the Board of Directors of Zion Community Enterprise are to be commended for spearheading "Genevieve N. Johnson" Sunday, May 15, 2022 at Zion Baptist Church and pursuing their vision toward establishing the Genevieve N. Johnson Senior Residences for seniors seeking affordable housing in Ward Four.

WEEKLY CARE GIVER LOUNGE HELD EVERY WEDNESDAY AT THE GENEVIEVE N. JOHNSON SENIOR DAY CARE CENTER by Thelma Burless, Executive Director GNJ Center

On Wednesday, June 8th, we had an amazing time in the Genevieve N. Johnson Senior Day Care Center's Care Givers Lounge at our Care Givers Support Group Kick-Off Celebration. Ms. Reba Pittman-Walker, Program Manager for GNJ Care Giver's Lounge, led us into the program with relaxing music, engaging conversations and an opportunity for everyone to share their stories and gain helpful resources. Each guest left with a special bag of strength that will be filled with goodies during every session. The refreshments and networking were also a huge highlight. If you missed it, please join us in the lounge any Wednesday evening from 5pm to 7pm at GNJ Senior Center. It's an evening that will allow for some well-deserved respite and networking. Please note: You do not need to be a caregiver at GNJ to participate. This group is open to all DC Caregivers and please see attached flyer for additional details and registration. Hope to welcome you in the lounge soon!





**ALL DC
CAREGIVERS
ARE INVITED
TO JOIN US...**



In the GNJ Caregiver's Lounge

For

- ✓ Weekly support groups
- ✓ Respite Time
- ✓ Real Talk
- ✓ Health Presentations
- ✓ Snack bags and gift give-aways
- ✓ Special Guests
- ✓ Referrals and Resources

**Every Wednesday
5:00pm – 7:00pm**

WHERE: Genevieve N. Johnson Senior Center
4817 Blagden Avenue, NW WDC 20001

Website: www.GNJ2seniordaycare.com

Email: info-gnj2seniordaycare.com

Phone: 202-723-8537



SEVEN COMMON HEALTH PROBLEMS THAT CAN STRIKE AFTER AGE FIFTY | By Rachel Nanina | AARP | May 2, 2022

Some chronic conditions tend to start cropping up in midlife. Here's what to do about them

Although age is just a number, being fifty and older means new vigilance toward health concerns. What changes (either pros or cons) have you noticed since turning fifty? There's a lot to celebrate when you hit the big five-oh. Discounts start to kick in, investments begin to mature and — how does the saying go? — with age comes wisdom. But for all the money saved and knowledge earned, there's a small price to pay: It's time to really tune in to your health.

"What we see is that some chronic health conditions are frequently diagnosed starting at age fifty," says Renuka Tipirneni, M.D., an internist and assistant professor in the Division of General Medicine at the University of Michigan. The good news is that many of the conditions that creep up in midlife can be managed. And if they're caught early and treated promptly, you can "prevent complications that are more serious," Tipirneni explains. Here's what you need to look out for after you turn fifty.

1. High Blood Pressure. A common condition health care providers see among patients in their fifties is high blood pressure, which is a major risk factor for heart disease and stroke. One reason high blood pressure is so prevalent in this age group is that the vascular system changes as we age. Arteries become less elastic, and the pressure inside them builds. The extra weight and stress that often accompany middle age can also contribute to creeping numbers.

The good news: High blood pressure is manageable with medication and lifestyle modifications, including diet and exercise. Because the condition often lacks symptoms, it's easy to miss. In fact, nearly one in three adults with high blood pressure don't know they have it, according to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. That's why Tipirneni recommends getting your blood pressure checked "more regularly" — at least every year — once you hit age fifty.

If you have a blood pressure cuff (they cost about \$30), you can check it yourself. And pharmacies and health fairs often offer blood pressure checks for free, Tipirneni points out. Of course, your health care provider can take it for you. What you want to see is a reading at or below 120/80, which is considered normal by the American Heart Association. Anything over 130 on that top number (the systolic reading) is considered high and warrants a conversation with your doctor about possible treatments.

2. High Cholesterol. Another contributor to heart disease is high cholesterol, which can build up on the inside of the blood vessels over time and form plaque that slows or blocks blood flow. This plaque can also break loose and cause a blood clot — even a heart attack or stroke. Similar to high blood pressure, your risk for developing high cholesterol increases with age. It also comes with no symptoms or warning signs, which is why it's important to check your numbers regularly throughout midlife with a routine blood test

that can be done at the doctor's office. Diet and exercise can help lower cholesterol, as can medication.

3. Diabetes. While you're getting your blood checked for cholesterol, your health care provider may also screen you for diabetes — another common condition that creeps up in your fifties and can wreak havoc on your health. More than thirty-four million Americans have diabetes — the vast majority have type 2 diabetes — and those in middle age are most at risk, according to the CDC. Diabetes can often be managed with lifestyle changes, including a healthy diet and physical activity.

“Sometimes we need to add some medications as well” to help control blood sugar (glucose) levels, says Kate Lorig, professor emeritus at the Stanford University School of Medicine and a partner at the Self-Management Resource Center. As with high blood pressure and cholesterol, the warning signs of diabetes are often silent, which is why it's important to get screened. If left untreated, diabetes can lead to a host of health conditions, including kidney disease, vision loss and heart disease. One thing to know: Emerging research has linked COVID-19 with an increased risk of developing diabetes.

It's not yet clear how a coronavirus infection could trigger the condition, though it “might be attributed to the effects of SARS-CoV-2 infection on organ systems involved in diabetes risk,” the authors on a recent CDC study write. Experts say the link is yet another reason to take precautions that can reduce your risk of a coronavirus infection. If you're concerned about your diabetes risk after COVID-19, talk to your doctor about getting screened.

4. Arthritis. One condition that pops up in your fifties but is regularly overlooked or dismissed is arthritis — especially osteoarthritis, which Tipirneni refers to as “the wear-and-tear-type of arthritis” that occurs when the joint cartilage between bones is damaged or breaks down. “It can be very aggravating even younger than age fifty, but especially over age fifty, we see pain associated with that is coming up more and more,” she says.

If you notice joint pain or stiffness from daily activity, talk to your health care provider. You'll want to make sure it's not rheumatoid arthritis, which is an autoimmune and inflammatory disease. Treatment for osteoarthritis runs the gamut. Increasing physical activity can help prevent further pain or disability, Tipirneni says. Your health care provider may also recommend over-the-counter or prescription pain relievers to alleviate discomfort.

5. Osteoporosis. Women in particular need to pay attention to their bone health once they hit fifty — that's when osteoporosis, or the weakening of the bones, becomes most common. In fact, almost twenty percent of women fifty and older have osteoporosis, the CDC says. That's because one of the risk factors for osteoporosis is being post-menopausal, explains Lucy McBride, M.D., a Washington, D.C.-based internist.

“When you stop making estrogen, your bone density typically goes down,” she says. The average age for menopause among women in the U.S. is fifty-one, according to the Mayo Clinic. Weight-bearing exercises — walking and upper-body strength training, for

example — can help reduce your risk for developing osteoporosis. So can paying attention to your calcium intake and vitamin D levels.

6. Cancer. Because advancing age is the biggest risk factor for cancer, keeping up with routine screenings becomes important in your fifties. Women in this age group should get a mammogram at least every two years to screen for breast cancer, and men should talk to their health care providers about prostate cancer screenings. Colon cancer screenings should also become more regular — for both men and women.

7. Anxiety/Depression. Whether it's teenagers, work or aging parents that keep you busy in midlife (or all of the above), chances are, you're stressed. And all that stress can take a toll on your mental health, which in turn affects your physical health. "Because at the end of the day, your blood pressure, your weight, your cholesterol, your cancer risk — all those biometric [measurements] are rooted in your behaviors. And those behaviors are rooted in your emotional health," McBride says.

About twenty percent of people age fifty-five or older experience some type of mental health concern, according to the CDC, and anxiety and depression are among the most common. The coronavirus pandemic has only amplified this crisis. During the pandemic, about four in ten (forty percent) American adults have reported symptoms of anxiety or depressive disorder, a Kaiser Family Foundation poll found. Before the pandemic, this number was only one in ten (ten percent).

McBride's advice? "You really need to make sure you're bringing your "whole self to the doctor" and talking to your health care provider about your stress levels and your relationship with food and alcohol, she says. "Your brain is just like any other organ. We have heart health, we have breast health, we have skin health, and we have kidney health. We also have mental health. It needs to be addressed," McBride adds.

Mind Your Immune System. Another thing to bring up with your health care provider once you turn fifty is immunizations. "Vaccines become much more important, because at this age group, our immune systems start to wane a little bit, and so you're more at risk for infections," Tipirneni says. In addition to the annual flu shot, your provider may suggest a shot that prevents pneumonia. There's also a vaccine recommended for adults fifty and older to prevent shingles and the complications from the disease. Finally, two vaccines have been approved by the Food and Drug Administration to help prevent the worst outcomes of COVID-19, which has been especially deadly in adults fifty-plus.

Editor's Note: Rachel Nania writes about health care and health policy for AARP. Previously she was a reporter and editor for WTOP Radio in Washington, D.C. A recipient of a Gracie Award and a regional Edward R. Murrow Award, she also participated in a dementia fellowship with the National Press Foundation.

AND NOW A FEW WORDS FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR OF THE GNJ CENTER

Dear Friends of GNJ,

Happy Summer! It is my hope that this new season finds you well as we enter into a time of hope and prosperity.

On behalf of the Team at GNJ, we would like to thank you for your financial support this past year. Your generous donations at regular intervals have helped us support over 75 senior participants through our activity programs, home services, and special events. We sincerely appreciate your desire to help us to soar and we look forward to continuing the mission of Mrs. Genevieve N. Johnson who was committed to enhancing the quality of life for seniors throughout the District of Columbia area for over 75 years of her life!

As many of you know, the Genevieve N. Johnson Senior Day Care Center is a growing center with limited resources. However, through a grant provided by the Department of Aging and Community Living (DACL), we are still able to offer **free** geriatric daycare services to DC residents over the age of sixty. The programs include but are not limited to art therapy, therapeutic yoga, music therapy, fit and wellness classes, live entertainment, jewelry design and daily recreational activities. In addition, we offer transportation to and from the center, congregate meals, Caregiver's support, Alzheimer's Support, health promotions, case management, and counseling. We recently added weekly community bus trips to the museums, parks, and restaurants as well as shopping excursions and so much more!

While we are most grateful for the DC Grant, it is not sufficient to cover all the needs of the senior program in line with our vision to soar and expand our services for our participants. Therefore, it is our hope that you will continue to make contributions on behalf of the senior program in order to allow us to continue to bring exceptional programs and services to our beloved seniors and their caregivers.

Please consider making a donation today! No amount is too small. Every dollar will go towards creating moments of joy for our seniors to enhance their quality of life and keep them functioning at their highest level possible while they age in place at home.

In closing, please know that we are still soaring to keep our seniors happy, healthy and functioning at their highest level possible. With your financial support, we will be able to continue our mission.

For more information about our program and upcoming special events, please visit our website: www.gnjseniordaycare.com. You may also follow us on Facebook at Genevieve N. Johnson or call our office at 202-723-8537.

Best Regards, Thelma

SAVE THE DATE!



Learn about our recreation and socialization programs, counseling services, Alzheimer's Support, and much more

Sunday, July 17th, 2022 | 12:30 PM – 4:00 PM

4817 Blagden Avenue NW, Washington, DC 20011

202-723-8537 | www.gnjseniordaycare.com

The event is free and open to all ages.

Featuring: Sample Sessions of our programs; Over 25 vendors;

Live Entertainment w/ Ewabo Caribbean Band

Hotdogs/Half Smokes on Sale on the Grill; Special Guests and Surprises!

