



# Southeastern Minnesota AREA AGENCY on AGING

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# LOOP IN THE With Laurie

Farewell and sincere thanks to 3 outgoing board members – Maggie Cook (6 years), Marge Fuller (6 years) and Marie Hlava (7 years).

Slate of Officers for 2026:  
David Beimers – Chair;  
Rachel Boyum – Vice Chair;  
Brad Lohrbach – Treasurer;  
Peggy Schlinger – Secretary.

## What's new with SEMAAA:

Semcac was awarded funding to provide the following services in Freeborn County - Assisted Transportation and Information & Assistance under Title III-B and Caregiver Information & Assistance under Title III-E.

SEMAAA is providing TA to 7 Age Friendly communities and working with an additional 5 communities exploring potential interest.

Congratulations to Elder Network and Family Service Rochester for being awarded a collaborative grant to develop and implement a two-year Senior Housing Transitions Mentorship Pilot program in Olmsted County. This initiative is supported by the Coalition for Rochester Area Housing.

Anna Thomson has accepted a new role as Older Americans Act Grants Manager (formerly Office Manager).

Aaron Thevenot has joined the SEMAAA staff in an Administrative Assistant position.

Thanks to SEMAAA's Minnesota Aging Pathways team –led by Annie Avery– along with our Resource Specialists & Lori Wacek leading our Resource Coordinators for stepping up big during the Medicare Open Enrollment Period.

Starla Inman has accepted the role of Minnesota Aging Pathways I&A Supervisor.

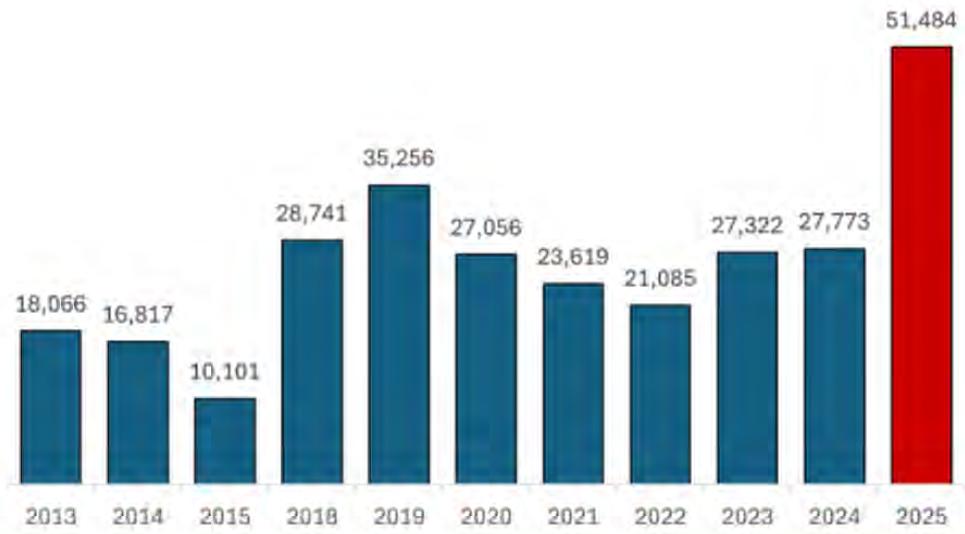
Refer to Page 9 for a Resource Specialist position opening announcement.

# 2025 Medicare Open Enrollment Period (OEP) Wrap-up

Minnesota Aging Pathways (MAP) received a record 51,484 calls this year. This heavy volume resulted in lengthy wait times for callers. This total was the highest number of calls received on record. A few things may have contributed to the increase in calls: UCare leaving the market along with other plans leaving specific counties throughout the state. This resulted in a steep reduction in the number and type of plan options.

The MAP team consisting of Resource Specialists throughout the state focused on answering Medicare calls and gave each caller the time and attention they needed to choose a plan that best supported their situation. Thank you to the Resource Coordinators who assisted by answering housing and general calls. A call center support team, Shyft-Off, also helped by triaging calls.

Volume was the highest on record



Minnesota Aging Pathways connects older adults and their caregivers to the services and supports they need. We offer a variety of options from help with housing, finding financial assistance, community supports, Medicare help, and much more.

We also offer educational presentations on Medicare, fraud prevention, and money-saving programs, as well as offering Medicare counseling in-person and over-the-phone. **If you would like to connect with us to schedule an in-person presentation; please reach out to SEMAAA at 507-288-6944 to get a message to our outreach coordinator for follow up.**

Some options for presentations are listed below but please let us know what you need. We may be able to connect you to a community partner if we do not have the presentation ourselves.

#### **Medicare 101 (1 hour)**



Medicare can be complicated, but Minnesota Aging Pathways is here to help.

Whether you've been on Medicare for a few years and just need a refresher, or you're brand new to Medicare, Medicare 101 will help you understand the basics so you can manage your health care options.

#### **Preventing Fraud & Scams (1 hour)**

Fraud and scams are on the rise, with some scammers specifically targeting older adults. But there are ways you can protect yourself and your personal information. This presentation includes information about fraud prevention, and you'll learn how to detect and report fraud and scams, so you can keep your personal information and yourself safe.



#### **Money Saving Programs and Services (30 Minutes)**



Learn about programs that can lower Medicare premiums, deductibles and out-of-pocket costs. Find out about who qualifies, how to apply for assistance and learn about program benefits. We'll also cover Medicare preventive services, like free screenings, vaccines and wellness visits.

# Medicare 101



Medicare can be complicated, but Minnesota Aging Pathways is here to help. Whether you've been on Medicare for a few years and just need a refresher, or you're brand new to Medicare, Medicare 101 will help you understand the basics so you can manage your health care options.

## REGISTRATION

Please call Winona Friendship Center to register: **507-454-5212**

Minnesota Aging Pathways is a free, statewide service of the Minnesota Board on Aging in partnership with **Minnesota's area agencies on aging**. **Minnesota Aging Pathways helps older Minnesotans and caregivers find** answers and connect to the services and support they need.

**February 24**  
**1:00 pm - 2:00 pm**  
**East Rec Center**  
**210 Zumbro Street**  
**Winona, MN**

## Unprecedented 2026 Medicare, Medicaid, and Health Insurance Changes and Impacts

*Webinar – January 20, 2025, 12:00 PM - 1:00 PM*

Join the Minnesota Gerontological Society (MGS) webinar presented by Kelli Jo Greiner, Health Care Policy Analyst/Medicare Product Manager and SHIP Director at the Minnesota Board on Aging to gain a deep understanding of how the health insurance landscape and Medicare have changed. These changes can have a significant impact on the consumers' healthcare, healthcare provider access, insurance premiums, options, deductibles, co-insurance, and out-of-pocket expenses.

[www.mngero.org/event-6485886](http://www.mngero.org/event-6485886)



# Alzheimer's and Dementia Grant Opportunity

The Minnesota Board on Aging administers a competitive grant program focusing on Alzheimer's disease and other dementias and their impact on family, friends and caregivers. Grants should:

- Increase awareness of Alzheimer's disease and other dementias
- Increase the rate of cognitive testing
- Promote the benefits of early identification
- Connect family, friends and neighbors who are caregiving with education, support and resources.

Grants should stimulate collaboration and coordination and strengthen community relationships and partnerships that promote the benefit of physician consultation for all people who may have a memory or cognitive concern.

## Key Information:

- **Grant term:** Up to 24 months (July 1, 2026 — June 30, 2028)
- **Maximum request:** \$150,000
- **Total funds available:** \$750,000

**Match requirement:** 25 percent match is required for requests above \$50,000

Grant application and portal:

- SFY 2027 Regional and Local Dementia Grants RFP (PDF)
- To apply, go to the grant portal.  
⇒ <https://mn.gov/board-on-aging/direct-services/grants/dementia-grants/dementia-grants-rfp.jsp>



## Key Dates:

- Dec. 1, 2025: Request for Proposal (RFP) posted
- Jan. 7, 2026: Dementia Grant Responders Conference, 1-3:30 p.m.

Central Time

- **March 20, 2026: Applications due at 4 p.m. Central Time**
- April 1, 2026: Phase I denial notices sent to responders
- April and May 2026: Review and scoring applications
- June 2026: Negotiate contracts
- July 1, 2026: SFY 2027 anticipated start date

For TA support contact SEMAAA's  
Eldercare Development  
Partnership staff:  
Dan Conway [dan@semaaa.org](mailto:dan@semaaa.org) or  
Chris Johnson [chrisj@semaaa.org](mailto:chrisj@semaaa.org)





# CAREGIVER COMMUNITY CONNECTION

Are you a caregiver? Do you know someone who is? Come and connect with other caregivers and community members to support each other and learn more about resources and supports available for caregivers.

## DETAILS

- Free respite is offered, so participants are encouraged to bring their loved one
- Participants can bring a snack to share, but this is not required
- This will be a space for caregivers and community members to learn together
- Meetings are free, but registration is required

*Funded in part by South Country Health Alliance*



HOSTED BY ELDER NETWORK

**IN-PERSON MEETINGS AT FIRST  
PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH EVERY  
2ND AND 4TH TUESDAY OF  
EACH MONTH, 1-2:30 PM**

**FIRST SESSION WILL BE ON  
DECEMBER 9TH, 2025**

**1-2:30 PM**

**101 6TH AVE NW  
KASSON, MN 55944**

**LEARN MORE OR REGISTER BY  
CALLING THE ELDER NETWORK**

**OFFICE AT  
507-285-5272**



Mayo Clinic Alzheimer's Disease Research Center in Collaboration with Elder Network Presents:

# After the Diagnosis

**An educational program for persons newly diagnosed with mild cognitive impairment, Alzheimer's disease, or a related dementia, and their families.**

**After the Diagnosis** is a free, quarterly, in-person seminar providing a road map of information and resources to guide those impacted by dementia and their care partners. Light refreshments will be served mid-event.

 **Monday, February 2**  
**Friday, August 14**

 **11:30 a.m.-4:30 p.m.**

 **LOCATION**  
**Mayo Clinic**  
**Alzheimer's Disease Research Center**  
**3033 41st NW | Rochester, MN 55901**

*Enter through door B2*

*Convenient free parking including  
handicap spaces is available.*

## TOPICS INCLUDE

- Understanding your diagnosis
- Managing the disease
- Knowing your strengths
- Everyday ways to live well with dementia
- Opportunities to ask questions of the experts, connect with others, and visit with community organizations.

**Space is limited.**

To register, go to

**<https://After-the-diagnosis.eventbrite.com>.**  
**Registration questions, call (507) 538-4048.**



Scan the QR code  
for quick access.



# Board Member & Staff Openings

The SE MN Area Agency on Aging is a private nonprofit 501(c)(3) organization that helps older adults and their families age successfully with dignity and informed choices. SEMAAA has members representing the eleven counties we serve (Dodge, Fillmore, Freeborn, Goodhue, Houston, Mower, Olmsted, Rice, Steele, Wabasha, and Winona).

- Board members serve as volunteers and must reside or work in the county they represent.
- At least fifty percent of board members must be over 60.
- Board members are elected to a three-year term and can serve two terms.
- Combination of in person and virtual meetings.
- Meetings are held approximately 10 times per year and are on the last Wednesday of each month from 9:30-10:30am.

We are currently seeking board members for the following areas:

- ✓ Fillmore
- ✓ Goodhue
- ✓ Mower
- ✓ Steele
- ✓ Wabasha
- ✓ At Large

Applications for Board Membership can be obtained on our website [www.semaaa.org/volunteer](http://www.semaaa.org/volunteer) or by contacting SEMAAA's Executive Director at [laurie@semaaa.org](mailto:laurie@semaaa.org)

We would love to have you!

## SEMAAA Position Opening

**Position:** Minnesota Aging Pathways Resource Specialist

**Status/Schedule:** FT – Benefitted Position/M-F 8:00am – 4:30 pm

**Closing date:** January 26, 2026

**Resumes/Cover Letters to:** Laurie Brownell – [laurie@semaaa.org](mailto:laurie@semaaa.org)





## SEMAAA Board

**David Beimers**, *Chair* - Rice County  
**Rachel Boyum**, *Vice Chair* - Winona County  
**Brad Lohrbach**, *Treasurer* - Dodge County  
**Peggy Schlinger**, *Secretary* - Olmsted County  
**Linda Lares** - Freeborn County  
**Linda McPeak** - Houston County  
**CC Linstroth** - Representative At-Large  
**OPEN** - Fillmore County  
**OPEN** - Goodhue County  
**OPEN** - Mower County  
**OPEN** - Steele County  
**OPEN** - Wabasha County

## SEMAAA Staff

**Laurie Brownell** - Executive Director  
**Kim Voth** - Finance Manager  
**Anna Thomson** - OAA Grants Manager  
**Laurie Marreel** - Grants Administrator  
**Patti Schad** - Finance Assistant  
**Aaron Thevenot** - Administrative Assistant  
**Dan Conway** - Sr. Eldercare Developer  
**Chris Johnson** - Eldercare Developer  
**Annie Avery** - MAP Contact Center Manager  
**Starla Inman** - MAP I&A Supervisor  
**Nicole Cummings** - MAP Resource Specialist  
**Tambi Lokken** - MAP Resource Specialist  
**Laurie Magnus** - MAP Resource Specialist  
**Jerry Roberts** - MAP Resource Specialist  
**Amy White** - MAP Resource Specialist  
**Chad Wojchik** - MAP Resource Specialist  
**Lori Wacek** - Resource Coordination Supervisor  
**Sara Kohrs** - Resource Coordinator  
**Jen McLaughlin** - Resource Coordinator  
**Jay Hall** - Resource Coordinator  
**Erin Lawrence** - Resource Coordinator

