



October 2010

VAN FORUM

## Understanding End-of-Life Options

### Getting to the Heart of the Matter

End of life. Those three words stir a wide variety of thoughts and images. Perhaps they make you think of the need to have your financial affairs in order or the need to complete a healthcare directive. For many people, the overriding concern is how to make their loved ones as comfortable as possible in this stage of life. This forum will examine both the medical considerations and the relationship side of end-of-life decisions.

Michele Fedderly will discuss POLST (Physicians Order for Life-Sustaining Treatment). She also will offer

suggestions on how to have end-of-life conversations with loved ones.

Barry Baines, MD will discuss ethical wills. Dr. Baines' interest in ethical wills began when his father developed a terminal illness in 1990. Barry is a leading authority on the use of ethical wills in financial and estate planning, palliative care, and other settings.

**Presenters:**

- **Michele Fedderly**, Executive Director, Minnesota Network of Hospice and Palliative Care
- **Barry Baines, MD**, Associate Medical Director, UCare Minnesota; Associate Medical Director for Hospice of the Twin Cities and the Johnson Hospice Care Agency

The forum is free and open to the public. To register, go to [www.vital-aging-network.org](http://www.vital-aging-network.org); look under What's New. [Register online now!](#)

Co-sponsored by:



Minnesota Network of Hospice & Palliative Care

Questions? Need a ride? Call VAN at 651-917-4652.



### Understanding End-of-Life Options

10:30 AM to 12:30 PM  
Tuesday,  
October 12, 2010

Free and Open  
to the Public

Lenox Community Center  
6715 Minnetonka Blvd.  
St. Louis Park, MN 55426

[Map to Lenox Center](#)

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### November FORUM

### Medicare after Healthcare Reform

Tuesday,  
November 9, 2010  
9:00 AM – 12:30 PM

[Additional information on page 7](#)

## Choosing Care for the End of Your Life

By Michele Fedderly, Executive Director, Minnesota Network of Hospice and Palliative Care

In earlier times, people didn't have many choices when it came to end-of-life care. Today, the miracles of modern medicine make healthcare decisions much more difficult. It's important for each of us to take the time, while we are able, to reflect on the type of care that we want if we become seriously ill. And it's important to talk with the people we love so they can know what we want.

People are often reluctant at first to talk about these issues. No one likes to anticipate serious illness. We hope that we will remain healthy until we die peacefully in our sleep. The statistics tell us, however, that we are far more likely to live our last *years*—not days or weeks—with a chronic, debilitating illness, having to face numerous difficult healthcare decisions. And for some of us, our loved ones will have to make those difficult decisions because we won't be capable of making them for ourselves.

How can you prepare for such decisions before you know what they are? One important decision you can make in advance is to choose a healthcare agent—the person who will make healthcare decisions for you when you can't make them yourself. You can choose someone who knows you well, whom you trust, and who will be an effective decision maker and advocate, even if decisions

have to be made in a crisis. You can discuss your feelings and beliefs about life-prolonging treatments with your agent and create a plan for how he or she should make these decisions.

A next step is to write down the plan in the form of a healthcare directive, also known as a living will. In Minnesota, a healthcare directive is the legal way to name a healthcare agent.

Although healthcare directive forms are available from hospitals, clinics, attorneys, and online, a recent national study found that over 40% of people have not completed a healthcare directive. To assist people in Minnesota and increase the number of completed healthcare directives, a metrowide project—*Honoring Choices Minnesota*—was begun. For this effort, the project developed a simplified healthcare directive form, as well as educational materials, and trained facilitators to help people complete the form. Several clinics and hospitals are now pilot sites for the *Honoring Choices Minnesota* program.



Attendees at the VAN Third Annual Forum on Boomers and Civic Engagement

Another important effort underway in Minnesota is POLST (Physicians Order for Life-Sustaining Treatment), a form that translates a person's wishes into an order that a physician signs and that EMS and other healthcare providers will honor. You can use your healthcare directive as a starting point for

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## Choosing the Care You Receive (continued)

completing the POLST form with your physician. The project recommends a POLST form for people with advanced, chronic, progressive illnesses or anyone wishing to further define his or her preferences of care.

For more information, attend the VAN forum *Understanding End-of-Life Options: Getting to the*

*Heart of the Matter* on Tuesday, October 12 from 10:30 am to 12:30 pm. To register, go to [www.vital-aging-network.org](http://www.vital-aging-network.org). You also can obtain resources and information from the Minnesota Network of Hospice & Palliative Care at [www.mnhpc.org](http://www.mnhpc.org), 1-800-214-9597 or 651-659-0423.

### **Honoring Choices Minnesota (HCM)**

Honoring Choices Minnesota (HCM) is a collaborative, community-wide public-health initiative. The Twin Cities Medical Society, a physician membership association, serves as convener and coordinator for HCM. The initiative hopes:

- To make advanced care planning the healthcare community's standard of care for adults
- To ensure that every person's healthcare choices are clearly defined and then honored at the end of life.

Advanced care planning includes completion of a healthcare directive, but, ideally, it is about conversations with a trained facilitator who is skilled at engaging patients and their loved

ones in discussions about their desires and values related to end-of-life care.

Most healthcare organizations in the metro area have committed to participation in HCM. Seven hospitals and clinics attended training and served as pilot sites from January to June 2010, and several more will participate in the program during the first half of 2011.

Honoring Choices Minnesota, together with [Twin Cities Public Television \(TPT\)](http://www.tpt.org) and the [Citizens League](http://www.citizensleague.org), are planning a public engagement campaign.

For more information, visit at [tpt.org/choice](http://tpt.org/choice) or [www.metrodoctors.com](http://www.metrodoctors.com).

## From the Chair

### *An Update on the Vital Aging Network*

This month I have a lot of news to share about the Vital Aging Network (VAN). VAN has just received a grant from [New York Life Insurance Foundation](#) to replicate the ALVA Leadership Development course in Denver, Colorado, and Seattle, Washington. The implementation team for this project is planning to meet next week. VAN anticipates that an ALVA course would begin in each city in October 2011.



We are also working to adapt our approach to leadership development for older adults for use in an [AmeriCorps](#) project that VAN and the [Metropolitan Area Agency on Aging \(MAAA\)](#) are planning. The two organizations received a planning grant from [Serve Minnesota](#) that began in June 2010. If our application for operational funds is successful, host communities in the seven-county metropolitan area will recruit AmeriCorps members aged 55 or older to work with community leaders to make communities more accessible and age friendly. VAN is planning leadership development training for the members. This project would be part of a nationwide effort by AmeriCorps to increase participation of members age 55 and above to 10%.

Turning to another area of VAN's development, I am pleased to report that the Vital Aging Network is now an independent nonprofit organization. The Leadership Group voted to incorporate this past May, having concluded that VAN had outgrown its need to operate with a fiscal agent. VAN filed articles of incorporation with the Minnesota Secretary of State on June 1. Subsequently, we submitted an application for tax-exempt status to the IRS and have just received official notice from the IRS that VAN is a 501(c)3 tax-exempt organization.

Finally, VAN has been privileged to receive support for organizational development from [Atlantic Philanthropies](#) since 2006. This support will end on December 31, 2010. Atlantic has changed the focus of its Aging Program to improving economic and health security and to strengthening voice and participation of older people on these issues. Accordingly, it will no longer be funding the approximately 60 grantees that have concentrated on the general area of civic engagement by older adults. The Leadership Group and VAN's committees and task forces are planning how to accomplish this transition without compromising our mission or diminishing our impact. We wish to express our thanks to Atlantic Philanthropies for their confidence in our programs and their support over the past five years.

**Nancy Eustis**  
Chair, Vital Aging Network

## Volunteering Spotlight

Can we help spread the word about a volunteer opportunity in your organization? Send us information by the 10th of the month for publication in the e-Bulletin for the next month. While we will make every effort to include what you send us, space is limited.

### Lutheran Social Services Friendly Visitors

[Lutheran Social Service's Senior Companion Program](#) is seeking volunteers, aged 55 and older, who can commit 10 to 15 hours per week as a *friendly visitor* sharing conversation, assistance, and activities with elders trying to remain in their own homes. All volunteers receive mileage reimbursement, and those serving at least 15 hours a week receive a tax-free stipend of \$2.65/hour. For more information, call 651-310-9444 or email [john.bringewatt@lssmn.org](mailto:john.bringewatt@lssmn.org).

### The Consortium at Carondelet Village Volunteer Drivers

Recognizing that seniors have a desperate need for transportation, the [Consortium at Carondelet Village](#) is working in six St. Paul neighborhoods—Highland Park, West 7th, Mac-Groveland, Summit-Hill, Summit University, and Merriam Park—to establish

### Vital Aging Network Forum Task Force Volunteers

The Vital Aging Network (VAN) is seeking individuals interested in helping plan the 2011 VAN Forums. Since 2001, VAN has offered monthly forums on topics of interest to older adults, ranging from social networking to healthcare reform. Volunteers must commit to planning one forum per year and be willing to work in a team environment. For more information, contact Emily at 651-917-4648 or [emily@vital-aging-network.org](mailto:emily@vital-aging-network.org).

a collaborative volunteer transportation program. The agency is seeking responsible drivers aged 50+ to drive seniors to medical and nonmedical appointments and outings. Volunteers will undergo a background check and extensive training and must have a reliable car with valid insurance. For more

information, contact Laurie Verseput at [lverseput@cvconsortium.org](mailto:lverseput@cvconsortium.org) or 651-964-9368.

### Minnehaha Park Clean-up Volunteers

On Sunday, October 3, from 9:00 am to 11:00 am, volunteers will convene to clean up [Minnehaha Park](#). Minnehaha Park is one of the Twin Cities' most popular destinations. With all of those visitors, comes a lot of trash. Help pick up the park to keep it beautiful. To register, visit [www.HandsOnTwinCities.org](http://www.HandsOnTwinCities.org) or to obtain more information, contact Matt Bielefeldt at 612-379-4900 ext. 18.



Attendees at the VAN Third Annual Forum  
on Boomers and Civic Engagement

## For Your CALENDAR



**Tuesday, November 9, 2010**  
**9:00 AM – 12:30 PM**

[Register Now!](#)

Roseville Lutheran Church  
 1215 Roselawn Avenue W.  
 Roseville, MN 55113

### NOVEMBER VAN FORUM

#### ***Your Medicare after Healthcare Reform: Making the Best Possible Decisions***

With the passage of federal healthcare reform legislation, Minnesota's Medicare recipients, their families, and older adults approaching eligibility have many questions about how reform is affecting Medicare benefits. This forum provides an update.

#### **Presenters**

- Senator Amy Klobuchar (Invited)
- Kelli Jo Greiner, Minnesota Board on Aging
- Beth Woods, Metropolitan Area Agency on Aging
- Lee Graczyk, Mature Voices Minnesota

Mature Voices Minnesota (MVMn) is a co-sponsor. Partners include Minnesota Board Aging (MBA) and Metropolitan Area Agency on Aging (MAAA).

[Map to Roseville Lutheran Church](#)

Free and open to the public

### MEMORY CLUB SUPPORT GROUP

#### **Amherst H. Wilder Foundation**

#### **Beginning Wednesday, October 6**

Community Services for Aging at the [Amherst H. Wilder Foundation](#) will offer *Memory Club*, a 10-week, educational support group in Saint Paul for persons recently diagnosed with early-stage memory changes and their care partners. Groups will feature weekly topics followed by peer-group discussions in a safe environment for learning and sharing. Sessions will occur from 1:00 to 3:00 pm from October 6 to December 8 at Wilder Center, Saint Paul. Call Kathryn Ringham, LICSW, 651-280-2295, for screening. Preregistration is required.

### HOW CAN I AFFORD RETIREMENT? SERIES

#### **Hennepin County Library**

#### **Beginning Saturday, October 9, 2010**

Are you approaching retirement or recently retired and concerned about how you'll make ends meet

over the years or decades ahead? Learn how to make informed investment decisions and develop objective investment strategies to reduce financial risks and ensure income during your retirement years. Attend the "How Can I Afford Retirement?" program series scheduled Saturdays, October 9 and 23 and November 6 from 10:00 am to 12:00 pm at [Hennepin County Library–Brookdale](#). Admission is free. [Register](#).

### INTERESTING CONVERSATIONS

#### **Inver Hills Community College**

#### **Sunday, October 10, 2010, 2:30 to 4:00 PM**

Join writers and musicians for *Times Are Changin' and So Is the Music*, which will explore how artists today are interpreting and translating their views of the world through music, as well as who is listening. The presentation will be in Room 196 of the Fine Arts Building. For more information or to register for this event, see [www.inverhills.edu/all](http://www.inverhills.edu/all).

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## For Your CALENDAR (continued)

### FAMILY HISTORY FAIR

#### Hennepin County Library

**Saturday, October 23, 2010, 10:00 AM to 1:00 PM**

[The Library Foundation of Hennepin County](#) and the [Minnesota Genealogical Society](#) will sponsor a Family History Fair. The event will be held at [Hennepin County Library–Minneapolis Central](#). The sponsors invite the public to browse ethnic and special interest tables, connect with genealogical experts, attend mini-sessions on practical genealogical topics, learn how to start a family history, and discover exceptional resources at the library. Admission is free, but the sponsors request registration. Register online at [www.hclib.org](http://www.hclib.org) or call 952-847-8000.

### ALIVE AND WELL

#### Senior Workers Conference

**Thursday, October 28, 2010**

The Senior Workers Association will offer its fall Aging Conference, *Alive and Well*, which will focus

on challenges that senior workers face and will offer advice, training, and support for those individuals. For more information on the cost and to register, visit [www.seniorworkers.org](http://www.seniorworkers.org).

### BOOMERS MEAN BUSINESS FORUM

#### Transform 2010

**Friday, November 5, 2010**

Over the past five years, Transform 2010 has worked to prepare Minnesota for the coming age wave of baby boomers. Plan to join Transform 2010 and its partners at this one-day *Boomers Mean Business Forum* to review progress for the age wave and look into the future. The forum will be held at the [Earl Brown Heritage Center](#), Brooklyn Center, Minnesota, from 8:00 am to 4:30 pm and costs \$30, which includes a continental breakfast and lunch. For more information, visit [www.dhs.state.mn.us/2010](http://www.dhs.state.mn.us/2010).



***It's not too late to register for ALVA!***

The Vital Aging Network is pleased to offer the ALVA Leadership Development program in six locations in 2010–2011. The course will help you:

- (Re) discover your lifework.
- Take advantage of the opportunities and address the barriers to leadership in later life.
- Plan and implement a project to build your capacity as a civic leader.
- Build an ongoing network for sharing ideas, knowledge, and resources.

Classes are held at: [Century College](#) in White Bear Lake, [Inver Hills Community College](#) in Inver Grove

Heights, [Minnesota State University](#) in Mankato, [North Hennepin Community College](#) in Brooklyn Park, [Riverland Community College](#), and [St. Cloud Technical & Community College](#). Classes meet from 8:30 am to 3:30 pm on the second Friday of the month for eight months. A limited number of scholarships are still available.

Course fees are \$750. Contact the schools directly to register (click links above).

For more information, contact Tom Hyder at 651-917-4635, [tom@vital-aging-network.org](mailto:tom@vital-aging-network.org) or visit [www.vital-aging-network.org](http://www.vital-aging-network.org).