

Washburn County Unit on Aging & ADRC



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Well, this has been a very exciting week! As I write this article on May 18, 2021, for the June 2021 Focus for Life, things are changing rapidly. This last Friday, I was texting Missy Murley, our Nutrition Director, at 7:06 a.m., of the news that I had just heard on the radio, “You don’t have to wear a mask indoors if fully vaccinated”, “This changes everything no social distancing either. So they can play cards?”

Our staff has been working diligently to put in place a safe plan for reopening the senior centers, following all of the CDC (Center for Disease Control & Prevention) federal protocols and local recommendations from Public Health. Although not all seniors have agreed with our proposed reopening plans, and have voiced so in person and on social media, our hands are tied in that we must follow these recommendations as a government entity.

After consulting with Public Health, I was reminded that these new recommendations specifically address those who have been *“fully vaccinated”*.

Please keep in mind, by the time this article is published, things may have changed again! Check the CDC website for federal updates and our Facebook Page for our local program updates. If you do not have the internet, you are welcome to call our office for more information.

As of this moment, the CDC website states:

<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/vaccines/fully-vaccinated.html>

Have You Been Fully Vaccinated? In general, people are considered fully vaccinated:

- 2 weeks after their second dose in a 2-dose series, such as the Pfizer or Moderna vaccines, or 2 weeks after a single-dose vaccine, such as Johnson & Johnson’s Janssen vaccine.
- If you don’t meet these requirements, regardless of your age, you are NOT fully vaccinated. Keep taking all precautions until you are fully vaccinated.

If you’ve been fully vaccinated:

- You can resume activities that you did prior to the pandemic.
- You can resume activities without wearing a mask or staying 6 feet apart, except where required by federal, state, local, tribal, or territorial laws, rules, and regulations, including local business and workplace guidance.
- If you travel in the United States, you do not need to get tested before or after travel or self-quarantine after travel.
- If you’ve been around someone who has COVID-19, you do not need to stay away from others or get tested unless you have symptoms.

For now, if you've been fully vaccinated:

- You will still need to follow guidance at your workplace and local businesses.
- If you travel, you should still take steps to protect yourself and others. You will still be required to wear a mask on planes, buses, trains, and other forms of public transportation traveling into, within, or out of the United States, and in U.S. transportation hubs such as airports and stations.
- You should still watch out for symptoms of COVID-19, especially if you've been around someone who is sick. If you have symptoms of COVID-19, you should get tested and stay home and away from others.
- People who have a condition or are taking medications that weaken the immune system, should talk to their healthcare provider to discuss their activities. They may need to keep taking all precautions to prevent COVID-19.

If you have not been fully vaccinated:

- We will request that all staff, volunteers, and participants that are not fully vaccinated, continue to use the recommendations of the CDC for COVID-19 precautions, which include masking and social distancing, when inside our agency or senior centers.

With all of that said, our agency primarily works with the population of older adults age 60+. Washburn County seniors have been very proactive with getting the vaccine. As of today, residents age 65+ are at the rate of 86.6% have completed the series, and 91% have had at least 1 dose. Our agency, staff, and the County Board members have recognized the importance of reopening our services to the public, due to the social isolation that our senior residents have had to endure. Our plan had previously been to start reopening in June with masking, social distancing, and limited capacity required at all senior centers. This would have been opening only one day per week at each site. We planned on only serving cold box lunches, no hot meals at this time. It was understood that as new recommendations from the CDC and Public Health became available, we would align with these changes. Overnight everything changed, rather than the gradual change that we had expected.

Reopening ADRC In-Person Services

As of June 1, 2021, the ADRC (Aging & Disability Resource Center) staff will begin scheduling in-person appointments with the public. This would be with ADRC staff:

- Anna Brown, Information & Assistance Specialist (I&A)
- Kelly Weisenbeck, Elder Benefit Specialist (EBS)
- Anne Bethke, Disability Benefit Specialist (DBS)

Reopening Aging Unit Senior Centers

As of the beginning of June, we will start with "*Luncheon Meet & Greets*" at each of the senior center sites. This luncheon will serve as a welcoming back to the public, introduce new staff, go over housekeeping rules, and get feedback for additional social activities that we can assist with organizing. A Box Lunch will be provided upon request, with a suggested donation of \$4.00, for those age 60+ and a charge of \$12 for those under 60.

For all programming, we will be following the current COVID-19 safety guidelines. For those fully vaccinated for COVID-19, masking and social distancing are optional. For those who have

not yet received the full vaccine or are not post two weeks since receiving it, we will request that you please wear a mask and follow social distancing protocol.

If attending any activities, please keep personal opinions to yourself. Anyone arguing or making people feel guilty or uncomfortable about their personal decision will be asked to leave, this includes posting negative comments on social media regarding participants and our staff. Our goal is to open the center so that everyone involved has the opportunity to socialize safely while enjoying time with others. We are taking serious precautions, yet we do not want people to be afraid. We will do our best to keep everyone safe and sanitize while trying to provide for a peaceful positive environment.

Please call 715-635-4460 to preregister by June 4th!

If you would normally attend in a specific locale, but are unable to attend on that day, you are more than welcome to register and attend at an alternative location.

Washburn County Senior Centers

Monday, June 7, 2021 - Minong Area Senior Center

700 Houston Avenue, Minong, WI

Starting at 12:00 Noon

Tuesday, June 8, 2021 - Birchwood Senior Center

110 Euclid Avenue, Birchwood, WI

Starting at 12:00 Noon

Wednesday, June 9, 2021 - Spooner Senior Center

402 Oak Street, Spooner, WI

Starting at 12:00 Noon

Thursday, June 10, 2021 - Shell Lake Senior Center

210 4th Avenue, Shell Lake, WI

Starting at 12:00 Noon

**MEET
and
GREET**

NEW Dining Options

Coming out of the COVID shutdown, we understand the concerns and apprehension that some may have for coming out and participating in group activities. We will continue to offer home-delivered meals, but if you can get out we would love to see you! Our staff will do everything we can to accommodate your needs. We now have the options of indoor or outdoor seating, and Grab & Go meals.



is BACK at Economart starting June 1, 2021!!!

Tuesdays and Thursdays from 7 a.m. – 11 a.m.

Economart staff will take your donations.

Returning Dining at Five

We are working to resume our Dining at Five come July 2021! Dining at Five has been an evening congregate dinner option at the Washburn County senior centers for many years. It is part of the Wisconsin Elder Nutrition Program, which is provided for residents age 60+, following the state nutritional guidelines. Participants are provided with an opportunity to donate towards the cost of the meal, but no one (aged 60 or older) will be denied a meal regardless of their ability to donate. Caregivers are also welcome to participate in the program.

NEW Social Activities

Starting the week of June 14, 2021, the Washburn County Unit on Aging will provide scheduled social programming with Megan Tuttle, our new Senior Activities Facilitator. Megan will work with participants, to develop new social enrichment opportunities for the mental health and physical wellbeing of older adults throughout Washburn County.

- Minong Senior Center – Monday's
- Birchwood Senior Center – Tuesday's
- Spooner Senior Center – Wednesday's
- Shell Lake Senior Center – Thursday's

NEW Alternative Virtual Options

Maybe you are not ready or able to visit us in person. If you would like to join us for an activity or even lunch, we can set up a monitor so that you can participate virtually. Remember the Jetson's TV Phone? Well, we can do that now! We can set you up with the equipment so we can see and hear each other, just like you are in the room. If you are interested, please contact us.



NEW Contactless Sign-In/Out

With the use of the SchedulesPlus web-based senior center software program, we will have a touch screen computer that will be set up at each building entry. Stylus pens will be provided. As people arrive, they will use their personalized scan card to complete a COVID health screen, check-in/out for activities, meals, log volunteer time and mileage. This will allow for immediate cloud contact tracing for Public Health if there is an active incident. SchedulesPlus was designed to help senior center programs to manage events, transportation, volunteers, attendance, room reservations, payments, donations, mailing lists, invoicing, rentals, and more. This program saves the County money \$\$\$, by integrating many of the back-office tracking tasks, that are spread across multiple staff members. With most grant applications, it is required that our agency document "all" activities that are provided on our properties, including the number of participants per activity. This would be essential information to provide when requesting additional funds for building improvements or for expansion of services.

NEW Senior Socials

Before the CDC announcement of changes for those fully vaccinated, we had already begun working on a project to provide social opportunities, outside the walls of our senior centers. It is now summer and we need to get out, moving, and smell the fresh air again. Our first will be a Senior Social Concert Series, which will take place on beautiful Shell Lake. A dinner will be

served out of the Shell Lake Community Center. The meal is open to adults age 60+ and their caregivers, with a suggested donation of \$6 for those 60+ and a charge of \$12 for those under 60. For the meal, there will be a required registration form to be completed, since this meal will be part of our Wisconsin Elder Nutrition Program, similar as Dining at Five, just at a different location. Seating for dining will be available inside the Community Center or can be taken outside under the tent by the Pavilion. After the meal, live musical entertainment will be provided for your enjoyment. Save the dates, load your lawn chairs and put on your dancing shoes. Event and registration information will be coming out soon.

Wednesday, July 21, 2021

4:30-5:30 p.m. - Senior Social Meal served out of Shell Lake Community Center

5:30-7:30 p.m. – The “Blue Water Big Band” from Duluth, a group of 12 musicians playing 30's through 60's genre'. Glenn Miller, Duke Ellington, 50's crossover rock, Latin, waltzes, swing, and ballads.

Wednesday, August 18, 2021

4:30-5:30 p.m. - Senior Social Meal served out of Shell Lake Community Center

5:30-7:30 p.m. - The “SongSmiths” have been singing together for nearly 40 years, Dawn and Gary Smith bring a melodic acoustic touch and sweet harmonies to songs you (mostly) know by heart ... although there may be a few destined to become new favorites.

Tuesday September 14, 2021

4:30-5:30 p.m. - Senior Social Meal served out of Shell Lake Community Center

5:30-7:30 p.m. – Band to Be Announced

NEW “Creative Journaling Group for Caregivers” Starting July 2021

- *In Person Creative Journaling for Caregivers* - Six (6) 1 ½ hour sessions, Shell Lake Senior Center, Dates: Thursdays, July 1st, July 8th, July 15th, July 22nd, July 29th, and August 5, 2021, Time: 10:00 a.m. to 11:30 p.m., Lunch served immediately following, with reservation required. Virtual options available.
- *In Person Creative Journaling for Caregivers and Care Recipient* - Six (6) 1 ½ hour sessions, Limited to five (5) teams of two (2) people, Caregiver and Care Recipient, Shell Lake Senior Center, Dates: Thursdays, September 23rd, September 30th, October 7, October 14th, October 21st, and October 28th, Time: 10:00 a.m. to 11:30 p.m. Lunch served immediately following with reservation required. Virtual options available.
- Please call Megan Tuttle at 715-635-4460 for registration.

WANTED:

Are you seeking a rewarding position within Washburn County, allowing our seniors to remain living independently? If so, we are looking for additional people to join our team! We are currently recruiting for a Part-time Senior Dining Site Manager in Birchwood, Part-Time Kitchen Helper/Cook for the Washburn County Senior Centers, Volunteer Drivers to transport seniors for services, Meals on Wheels Drivers to deliver meals, and Volunteers to assist with our Healthy Aging Programs. Please call 715-635-4460 for more information.