

2026 Forum on Aging

Tuesday and Wednesday, March 3-4, 2026



Tuesday, March 3, 2026

AM Workshops 1-3 A (8:30-10 a.m.)

Participants will select one AM A concurrent workshop from the following:

AM Workshop 1A: Part 1 of 2: Navigating Ethical Dilemmas in Care for Older Adults

Speaker: Meghan Fawcett, LPCC-S, LICDC-CS, owner, Rustbelt Counseling and Consulting, LLC

Workshop Description:

As professionals dedicated to supporting older adults and their families, providers encounter intricate ethical challenges at the intersection of care, capacity and compliance. This engaging three-hour workshop will delve into practical ethical issues encountered in long-term care and community-based environments. Key topics include informed consent, substitute decision-making, client autonomy, dual relationships, professionalism and billing integrity under Medicare. Participants will engage in case studies, discussions and the application of ethical frameworks, all designed to enhance confidence and integrity in practice across various care settings.

This workshop qualifies for social work ethics.

Workshop Objectives:

Participants will be able to:

- Identify common ethical dilemmas encountered when working with older adults and their families, including issues related to autonomy, capacity and consent.
- Teach ethical decision-making frameworks and relevant professional codes (NASW, ANA, ACA) to complex scenarios in aging services and healthcare environments.
- Demonstrate ethical reasoning and best practices for maintaining professional boundaries, managing family involvement and ensuring compliance with Medicare and agency standards.

AM Workshop 2A: The Long-term Impact of Poverty on Brain Aging and Brain Health

Speaker: Patricia Faust, MGS, Owner, My Boomer Brain

Workshop Description:

Lifestyle choices account for nearly 70% of the risk of developing dementia, while genetics and environment make up the remaining 30%. Among environmental factors, poverty has an outsized impact on brain health. Living in poverty exposes individuals to chronic stress,

neighborhood violence, and limited access to financial and educational resources, all of which can harm cognitive development and resilience.

For every child born into poverty, life begins with elevated risk factors for Alzheimer's disease and other forms of dementia. This workshop will explore how a lifetime of socioeconomic disadvantage shapes the brain, breaking down the neurological consequences of chronic stress and environmental hardship.

Workshop Objectives:

Participants will be able to:

- Recognize how early life poverty is linked to smaller hippocampus and amygdala volumes - both important for memory and emotional regulation.
- Identify how chronic stress, environmental risks, material and psychological stressors can negatively affect brain structures and brain development.
- Describe how poverty accelerates brain aging and harms brain health by causing structural changes, increasing stress and impacting cognitive function.

AM Workshop 3A: Medical Marijuana: Implications for Nurses in Ohio

Speaker: Lori Catalano, PhD, JD, MSN, Associate Professor of Clinical Nursing, University of Cincinnati, College of Nursing

Workshop Description:

This workshop provides a comprehensive overview of the history and therapeutic applications of medical cannabis, including its pharmacological basis and commonly used formulations. The session will also address the complex legal landscape surrounding medical cannabis, focusing on Ohio state law, the Ohio Nurse Practice Act and relevant federal regulations. Special attention will be given to the implications for nursing practice, including prescribing limitations for Advanced Practice Nurses (APNs) and institutional policies in healthcare setting

This workshop qualifies for nursing law.

Workshop Objectives:

Participants will be able to:

- Identify the historical context and medical applications of therapeutic cannabinoids.
 - Explain how the Ohio Nurse Practice Act impacts patient use of medical cannabis and APN prescribing.
 - Identify federal legislation and regulations that affect the use of therapeutic cannabis in Ohio healthcare facilities.
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Tuesday, March 3, 2026

AM Workshops 1-3 B (10:15–11:45 a.m.)

Participants will select one AM B concurrent workshop from the following:

AM Workshop 1B: Part 2 of 2: Navigating Ethical Dilemmas in Care for Older Adults

Speaker: Meghan Fawcett, LPCC-S, LICDC-CS, Owner, Rustbelt Counseling and Consulting, LLC

Workshop Description:

As professionals dedicated to supporting older adults and their families, providers encounter intricate ethical challenges at the intersection of care, capacity, and compliance. This engaging three-hour workshop will delve into practical ethical issues encountered in long-term care and community-based environments. Key Topics Include: Informed consent, Substitute decision-making, Client autonomy, Dual relationships, Professionalism and Billing integrity under Medicare

Participants will engage in case studies, discussions and the application of ethical frameworks, all designed to enhance confidence and integrity in practice across various care settings.

Workshop Objectives:

Participants will be able to:

- Identify common ethical dilemmas encountered when working with older adults and their families, including issues related to autonomy, capacity and consent.
- Apply ethical decision-making frameworks and relevant professional codes (NASW, ANA, ACA) to complex scenarios in aging services and healthcare environments.
- Demonstrate ethical reasoning and best practices for maintaining professional boundaries, managing family involvement and ensuring compliance with Medicare and agency standards.

AM Workshop 2B: The Unspoken Symptoms of Dementia: What They Are and How to Manage

Speaker: Kristen Cooley, MSW, Program Director, Giving Voice Foundation

Workshop Description:

This presentation will highlight the more “taboo,” less-discussed behavioral and psychological symptoms that can occur with progressive dementia. Participants will gain a clearer understanding of challenging mood and behavioral symptoms, along with practical non-pharmacological approaches to manage them. The session will also empower caregivers and professionals to address these behaviors with greater confidence, empathy and clinical insight.

Workshop Objectives:

Participants will be able to:

- Identify at least three behavioral and/or psychological symptoms of dementia.
- Describe at least three nonpharmacological interventions for management of behavioral disturbances.
- Distinguish the difference between Alzheimer's disease, dementia and normal aging.

AM Workshop 3B: H.R. 1 and the Aging Network: Funding Shifts, Program Impacts and What Advocates Need to Know

Speaker: Kelsey Bergfeld, BA, Chief Policy Officer, Ohio Association of Area Agencies on Aging (o4a)

Workshop Description:

H.R. 1 (The Big Beautiful Bill Act) proposes significant funding and policy changes that will directly affect Medicaid, SNAP and related aging services across federal and state systems. This session will break down the major fiscal shifts and explore how they could reshape access to health care, nutrition support and home- and community-based care for older adults. Attendees will walk through timelines of expected changes, from immediate administrative adjustments to longer-term impacts on program eligibility, service capacity and provider stability. The presentation will also highlight how these changes may influence the aging network's ability to meet rising needs.

Workshop Objectives:

Participants will be able to:

- Identify and understand key funding and policy changes in H.R. 1 and how they will affect Medicaid, SNAP and core aging-related services.
- Explain the projected timeline of impacts—including immediate, short-term and long-term effects—on programs, providers and older adults.
- Identify advocacy strategies by recognizing potential risks, opportunities and system-level challenges created by the legislation.

Tuesday, March 3, 2026

Keynote (12:45-1:45 p.m.)

Opening Keynote: Getting Better Together

Speaker: Therese Gopaul-Robinson, MPH, Speaker, Consultant and Author

Keynote Description:

In healthcare and aging services, professionals juggle staffing shortages, compliance pressures and the constant balance of clients, family and organizational needs.

In this keynote, Therese Gopaul-Robinson uses powerful, concrete “behind-the-scenes” parallels to highlight the often-overlooked contributions of those in the helping profession who often overlook their own needs, which leads to a state of emotional and physical exhaustion, often called compassion fatigue.

Through storytelling and her own leadership journey, she invites participants to reflect on their impact, recognize their value and reconnect with the deeper purpose that drives them. Attendees will leave inspired and equipped with practical strategies to recommit to excellence, take ownership of their influence and move forward with renewed confidence, knowing their work sets the stage for success.

Keynote Objectives:

Participants will be able to:

- Recognize the significance of their roles and the challenges posed by stress, burnout and pressure within both leadership and front-line positions in aging services.
- Teach actionable steps to enhance their daily experiences, foster a strong team culture and safeguard their own well-being.
- Identify uncertainty as a source of strength, reinforcing their crucial role in ensuring the industry effectively addresses the increasing needs of older adults.

Tuesday, March 3, 2026

PM Workshops 1-3 (2-4 p.m.)

Participants will select one PM concurrent workshop from the following:

PM Workshop 1: Communication with Impact: Mastering Message Framing

Speaker: Therese Gopaul-Robinson, MPH, Speaker, Consultant and Author

Workshop Description:

Effective communication is the cornerstone of high-quality care in aging services. Every interaction, whether with colleagues, residents, families or interdisciplinary teams, shapes trust, collaboration and compliance. This interactive session provides aging services professionals with evidence-based communication strategies designed to strengthen teamwork, reduce conflict and improve outcomes for clients and families.

Participants will learn practical tools to navigate difficult conversations, foster stronger partnerships with families and collaborate more effectively across roles. These skills are directly applicable to nursing home administrators, social workers, nurses, assisted living staff and care managers.

Workshop Objectives:

Participants will be able to:

- Recognize how message framing influences trust and compliance with clients, families and colleagues.
- Explain the difference between positive and negative framing and how each impacts decision-making in aging services.
- Use at least two message-framing techniques to reduce resistance and increase understanding in emotionally charged conversations.
- Design interdisciplinary teamwork by framing messages in ways that align goals across roles and reduce conflict.

PM Workshop 2: Understanding Guardianship for Older Adults: Its Purpose and Applications

Speakers: Lisa Frye, BA, Guardian Manager, LifeSpan; Laurie Luken, MSW, Guardianship Services Manager, Meals on Wheels of Northern KY and Southwestern OH; Mary Ann Jacobs, Esq., Attorney, Ritter & Randolph, LLC

Workshop Description:

Join us for an engaging and informative workshop on guardianship for older adults, where we'll explore its purpose, practical applications and the legal process involved. Our expert panel will guide you through the initial steps of guardianship, including how cases begin and how referrals occur—whether directly or through Adult Protective Services.

Participants will gain a clear understanding of the responsibilities of a guardian and learn how guardianship differs from power of attorney. Real-life case studies will illustrate scenarios involving clients in care facilities as well as those living independently in the community.

Workshop Objectives:

Participants will be able to:

- Identify individuals who may require a guardian.
- Describe the legal process involved in guardianship.
- Explain the role and responsibilities of guardians.
- Identify community resources available for guardianship.

PM Workshop 3: Panel Discussion: Protective Services and Ombudsman Process, from Start to Finish.

Speaker: Kevin Kurpieski, BA, Social Services Supervisor, Adult Protective Services, Butler County JFS; Karri Owens, BSW, Adult Protective Services, Butler County JFS; Eric Carpenter, JD, Program Director Ombudsman, Pro Seniors; Sarah DeMoss, MSW, Screening Manager, Butler County Children Services

Workshop Description:

This workshop brings together representatives from the Ombudsman Program, Child Protective Services (CPS) and Adult Protective Services (APS) to provide a comprehensive

overview of how protective services operate. Participants will learn about the entire process—from the initial phone call or report received by the agency, through the screening process that determines whether a case will be investigated, to the steps involved in an active investigation. The session will cover different types of reports, including abuse, neglect and exploitation, and explain how these cases are managed within the system. In addition, the Ombudsman Program will explain its commitment to safeguarding patient rights, promoting fair treatment and enhancing the overall quality of care.

Workshop Objectives:

Participants will be able to:

- Interpret the reporting, screening and investigative process for cases reported to protective services.
- Describe the process of ombudsman services for patient rights, resolving problems or making a change in a facility.
- Recognize the state mandates that guide Ohio child protection agencies.
- Identify how Adult Protective Services collaborates with Child Protective Services and the Ombudsman Program to address cases effectively.

Wednesday, March 4, 2026

Wednesday, March 4, 2026

AM Workshops 1-3 A (8:30-10 a.m.)

Participants will select one AM Intensive workshop from the following:

AM Workshop 1A: Part 1 of 2: Motivational Interviewing: Techniques Used with Difficult Conversations

Speaker: Jennifer Haywood, LISW-S, LICDC-CS, Clinical Social Worker and Addiction Specialist, Haywood Counseling

Workshop Description:

This three-hour workshop provides education on motivational interviewing, a client-centered approach designed to engage individuals who may be resistant, ambivalent about change or lack motivation to make decisions. Participants will explore practical strategies to guide individuals through the stages of change, encouraging healthier behaviors while honoring their current circumstances. This training is ideal for professionals supporting individuals who face challenges in progress with treatment plans, offering new, non-confrontational techniques to foster meaningful and productive conversations.

Workshop Objectives:

Participants will be able to:

- Interpret the foundations of motivational interviewing and how to apply them when working with older adults, including strategies for engagement at different stages of change.
- Use the OARS technique (Open-ended questions, Affirmations, Reflective listening and Summarizing) and apply various forms of reflective listening to build empathy and rapport.
- Recognize how to ask questions, ask permission and meet the clients at their goals, not the worker's goals.

AM Workshop 2A: Do I Need a Living Will? Understanding Advance Directives and Conversations About End-of-Life Choices

Speaker: Dr. Doug Smucker, Emeritus Professor, Department of Family and Community Medicine, University of Cincinnati College of Medicine.

Workshop Description:

In this workshop we will review important advance directive documents and discuss ways to thoughtfully navigate a conversation about end-of-life choices. We will review the purpose and content of Ohio's living will, DPOA for Health Care and DNR form, as well as the "Five Wishes" document. We will also review opening questions and online resources that can help navigate sensitive conversations about end-of-life choices that are documented in advance directives.

Workshop Objectives:

Participants will be able to:

- Describe the content and purposes of the Ohio living will, DPOA for Health Care and DNR documents.
- Explain effective and compassionate ways to begin conversations about end-of-life choices.
- Identify online resources that can guide detailed advance planning discussions.

AM Workshop 3A: Question, Persuade and Refer: Suicide Prevention Gatekeeper Training

Speakers: Mary Wolff, MS, Coordinator, Hamilton County Suicide Prevention Coalition, Talbert House

Workshop Description:

The Question, Persuade, Refer (QPR) workshop is a 1.5-hour suicide prevention training designed to equip participants with the skills to recognize warning signs, engage in supportive conversations and refer individuals to appropriate help. Through interactive discussion and practical scenarios, attendees learn how to ask the right questions, offer hope and connect someone in crisis with resources. The session is suitable for community members,

educators, professionals and anyone interested in promoting mental wellness and saving lives. Special attention will be paid to risk factors for older adults and caregivers.

Workshop Objectives:

Participants will be able to:

- Identify verbal, behavioral and situational indicators that someone may be at risk of suicide.
 - Articulate how to ask direct questions about suicidal thoughts, express concern, empathy and persuade the individual to seek help.
 - Interpret how to connect someone in crisis with professional help, including local mental health services, crisis line and emergency support.
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Wednesday, March 4, 2026

AM Workshop 1-3 B (10:15 – 11:45 a.m.)

Participants will select one AM Intensive workshop from the following:

AM Workshop 1B: Part 2 or 2: Motivational Interviewing: Techniques Used with Difficult Conversations

Speaker: Jennifer Haywood, LISW-S, LICDC-CS, Clinical Social Worker and Addiction Specialist, Haywood Counseling

Workshop Description:

This three-hour workshop provides education on motivational interviewing, a client-centered approach designed to engage individuals who may be resistant, ambivalent about change or lacking motivation to make decisions. Participants will explore practical strategies to guide individuals through the stages of change, encouraging healthier behaviors while honoring their current circumstances. This training is ideal for professionals supporting individuals who face challenges in progressing with treatment plans, offering new, non-confrontational techniques to foster meaningful and productive conversations.

Workshop Objectives:

Participants will be able to:

- Interpret the foundations of motivational interviewing and how to apply them when working with older adults, including strategies for engagement at different stages of change.
- Use the OARS technique (Open-ended questions, Affirmations, Reflective listening and Summarizing) and apply various forms of reflective listening to build empathy and rapport.

- Recognize how to ask questions, ask permission and meet the clients at their goals, not the worker's goals.

AM Workshop 2B: Overview of Substance Use Disorder (SUD) and Problem Gambling (PG) Among Older Individuals

Speaker: Jeff Rhien, MRC, PCC-s, LICDC-CS, Deputy Director – Outpatient, Substance Use Disorder, Crisis & Criminal Justice Services, Mental Health Recovery Board

Workshop Description:

What would you do if one of your clients was struggling with substance use disorder (SUD) or Problem Gambling (PG)? These issues can deeply impact individuals, teams and organizational culture, but knowing how to respond can make all the difference.

This interactive workshop will help you:

- Recognize the signs of SUD and PG in a professional setting.
- Learn how to start the conversation — approaching these sensitive topics with empathy and confidence.
- Explore available resources for treatment, prevention and ongoing support.

Through real-world scenarios, practical strategies, and guided discussions you'll leave equipped to handle these situations with professionalism and care.

Workshop Objectives:

Participants will be able to:

- Identify signs of Substance Use Disorder (SUD) and Problem Gambling (PG) among older Ohioans.
- Learn techniques for screening and assessment and non-judgmental conversations.
- Summarize options for treatment and prevention programs.

AM Workshop 3B: Normal Aging Changes and Common Geriatric Syndromes

Speaker: Irene Hamrick, MD, FAAFP, AGSF, Emeritus Professor, University of Cincinnati, Department of Family and Community Medicine

Workshop Description:

Join Dr. Hamrick for an intuitive session on the natural processes of aging and how typical changes manifest in older adults. With this foundational understanding, she will highlight the importance of lifestyle modifications that enhance quality of life, extend healthy lifespan and support independent living. The workshop will address common age-related issues and provide practical guidance on prevention and management, including incontinence, sleep disturbances, dementia, hearing and vision impairment, dehydration and falls.

Workshop Objectives:

Participants will be able to:

- Differentiate between the characteristics of a typical aging body and those of a younger individual.
 - Recognize and interpret the impact of diseases affecting more than 50% of the elderly population.
 - Identify strategies to mitigate or prevent many adverse changes and age-related issues.
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Wednesday, March 4, 2026

Keynote (12:45-1:45 p.m.)

Closing Keynote: Caring for the Aged: The Grief We Carry Within Us

Speaker: Kim Vesey, RN, Owner, My Hope Path

Keynote Description:

Caring for the elderly presents a unique privilege that allows us to learn invaluable life lessons as they share their rich stories from years of experience. However, it also brings to light the profound losses they face, such as the decline in physical and cognitive abilities, which can trigger a grief-like response. These ongoing challenges, along with the emotional toll of accompanying clients who pass away during our care, can elicit feelings of grief in us as professional caregivers. This session will delve into the symptoms of cumulative grief and offer practical steps to help recognize and manage the grief we experience while supporting the elderly.

Keynote Objectives:

Participants will be able to:

- Recognize three types of loss that older adults typically encounter during their later years.
 - Identify three signs that indicate a professional caregiver is experiencing an accumulative grief response.
 - Explain three strategies that can help lessen the effects of accumulative grief.
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Wednesday, March 4, 2026

PM Workshops 1-3 (2-4 p.m.)

Participants will select one AM workshop from the following:

PM Workshop 1: Being with the Dying and Those Who Love Them

Speaker: Kim Vesey, RN, Owner, My Hope Path

Workshop Description:

Many people struggle to connect with individuals who are nearing the end of life or with their loved ones, often feeling unsure about what to say or how to avoid causing additional distress. This session is designed to help you develop the skills and confidence needed to provide meaningful support during this profound stage of life. We will explore the importance of being present—both verbally and non-verbally, discuss effective communication strategies and address significant questions surrounding life’s meaning and suffering. By the end of this workshop, you will feel better equipped to accompany and comfort those in your care.

Workshop Objectives:

Participants will be able to:

- Identify practical actions that support and encourage patients nearing the end of life.
- Identify common challenges faced by caregivers and apply strategies to address these concerns effectively.

PM Workshop 2: Next Generation MyCare Ohio Launch 2026

Speaker: Brooke Gully, CCM, MEd, Vice President, Medicaid Services, Council on Aging

Panel Members

Anthem: Katie Profitt, Strategy and Program Development Director, Anthem, and CareSource: Jacqueline Shorter, Director, Provider Relations and Nicole Whitaker, Manager, LTSS Provider Relations, CareSource

Workshop Description:

Join us for an informative update on the changes to the MyCare Ohio program, featuring insights from an expert panel of health plan representatives. Each health plan will provide insights into the enhancements of Next Generation MyCare Ohio.

MyCare Ohio is a managed care initiative tailored for Ohio residents who are eligible for both Medicaid and Medicare benefits. This program seamlessly combines these benefits into one coordinated plan managed by a care provider.

Key enhancements in Next Generation MyCare focus on several critical areas:

- Increased support for members to access necessary care through dedicated care teams.
- Improved transportation options to facilitate member attendance at appointments.
- Expanded availability of in-home providers for member convenience.
- Reduced wait times for prior authorization requests.

Workshop Objectives:

Participants will be able to:

- Interpret the changes introduced in the Next Generation MyCare Ohio program.
- Identify the health plan enhancements associated with Next Generation MyCare Ohio.

- Identify how to address any concerns raised by clients enrolled in the Next Generation MyCare Ohio program.

PM Workshop 3: Fair Housing for Care Providers

Speaker: Rebecca Griffin, PhD, Med, Director of Education, HOME Housing Opportunities Made Equal

Workshop Description:

This workshop provides an overview of fair housing laws and equips participants to better support and advocate for individuals in their care. Disability status is the most frequently reported category of housing discrimination nationwide, disproportionately affecting seniors. As care providers, you may be asked to verify a patient's disability status and the need for accommodations or modifications. This session will guide you through that process and connect you with resources for additional support.

Workshop Objectives:

Participants will be able to:

- Interpret fair housing law, including protected classes and prohibited conduct at the federal, state and local level.
- Summarize disability rights in housing, including the right to reasonable accommodation (RA) or reasonable modification (RM) and common RA/RM requests.
- Identify documentation supporting clients' needs and advocate for clients who encounter illegal housing discrimination.