



Northeast Delta HSA has launched a new initiative, **Operation Golden Years**, to provide increased awareness, support, and services for those sixty and above in our 12-parish region. Our vision is to enable often overlooked seniors to not just survive, but rather thrive through the “golden years” of their lives.

More than 850,000 Louisianans are over the age of 60 (nearly 19 percent of the total population).<sup>1</sup> In the days ahead, we aim to leverage our services in support of enabling this population in our region to live longer, more active lives. As part of Operation Golden Years, Northeast Delta HSA offers:



- **Education in the Proper Use and Disposal of Prescription Medications.** A recent study found approximately 4.5 million visits per year to the doctor or emergency department are due to adverse drug events.<sup>2</sup> Our prevention and wellness team facilitates community forums educating seniors on the proper use and disposal of their prescriptions. Each April and October we partner with other organizations in our region to provide prescription take back boxes as a part of the National Prescription Take Back Day.
- **Specialized Services for Elderly Dealing with Addictive and Mental Health Disorders.** Addiction and mental health issues know no expiration date. Addictions among people 60 and up are often underestimated and under-diagnosed, which prevents many seniors from getting the help they need. Drug or alcohol abuse can often mimic the symptoms of other medical or mental health disorders, such as diabetes, dementia, or depression. Our integrated behavioral health and primary care integration model enables our licensed clinicians to provide holistic care for our clients’ specific needs.
- **Medical Advocacy for Elderly with Intellectual/Developmental Disabilities.** Northeast Delta HSA advocates for seniors with physical, intellectual, and developmental disabilities to get the support and services they need to remain active in our communities. By connecting clients with Home and Community Based services, our Developmental Disabilities team works diligently to provide every opportunity for clients to receive the support needed to remain in their homes as they advance in years.
- **Opportunities to Make a Difference in the Community.** We believe that seniors possess a wealth of experience, wisdom, and gifts to contribute toward the greater good of our society. In line with this greater vision, we provide opportunities for seniors to join with us to make an impact in the lives of younger generations by joining coalitions, volunteering and mentoring in schools, and engaging in prevention-based outreach work for our various initiatives. We need the senior generation to help us chart a new path forward in Northeastern Louisiana.

<sup>1</sup> Louisiana Policy Academy State Profile, Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration in partnership with the U.S. Administration on Aging, <https://acl.gov/sites/default/files/programs/2016-11/Louisiana.pdf>.

<sup>2</sup> Sarkar, U., Lopez A., Maselli, J.H., Gonzales, R. (2011). Adverse Drug Events in U.S. Adult Ambulatory Medical Care. *Health Services Research*. Volume 46 (5), pp. 1517-1533.