



# Central Alabama Aging Consortium

August '26

## When the Heat Becomes Part of the Job

“This heat likes to challenge my deodorant,” **Senior Health Coach Amanda Pratt** says with a laugh.. “I leave the house smelling fresh and arrive at my members’



**Amanda**

homes questioning my choice in brands!” Amanda can laugh about one consequence of working through a Central Alabama summer. But she and other CAAC employees whose work takes them into homes and facilities across Autauga, Montgomery and Elmore counties are deadly serious about what extreme heat can mean for the people they serve. For Amanda, that can begin with the temperature inside a member’s home. Some people do not have central air conditioning and depend instead on window units that may comfortably cool only part of the house. Heat can even affect what food someone can keep on hand and how long it remains usable.

“The heat definitely adds another layer to what we have to consider when helping our members,” Amanda says.



**Ombudsman Cheryl Craig** feels the heat herself as she travels to nursing homes and assisted living facilities for visits and care plan meetings.

**Cheryl** She says It reminds her to hydrate and to look closely at whether residents are able to do the same. “Is there fresh, cool water in their cups? Are the cups within the resident’s reach?” Cheryl asks.

She also encourages facilities to make hydration enjoyable, suggesting watermelon, Popsicle or ice cream socials—some of the same ways she keeps her own grandchildren hydrated at home.



**Camille**

For CAAC case managers, coping with the heat can begin before they ever reach a client’s front door. **In-Home Services Director Camille Jackson** says a day may include six or seven home visits, sometimes

involving considerable travel in rural areas. Case managers bring extra water, look for shaded parking and allow time for hot vehicles to cool.

Once inside the home, the considerations change again. They talk with clients about hydration and adequate cooling, check that outdoor pets have fresh water and remain mindful of caregivers who may be providing cleaning or personal assistance in a warm home. When available, case managers also help provide fans to clients without adequate cooling.

Extreme heat doesn’t distinguish between the person providing a service and the person receiving it. For CAAC employees working in the community, that means taking care of themselves while noticing the small things that may help someone else cope—a glass of water within reach, a cooler room, fresh water for a pet or a fan where there wasn’t one before.

They are ordinary responses to an extraordinary stretch of heat—and part of the everyday work of helping people remain safely in their homes and communities.

CAAC has been spending more time out in the communities we serve—and we're looking for even more doors to open.

While our Outreach Coordinator is on leave, **Executive Director Yolanda Evans** is pinch-hitting to help keep our outreach efforts moving. But finding the next place CAAC needs to be is something all of us can help with.

Think about the organizations and groups you encounter in your own community. **Is there a church with an active senior ministry? A civic or neighborhood group looking for a speaker? A community center, library, caregiver group or other organization whose members might benefit from learning about CAAC?**

An outreach opportunity doesn't have to involve hundreds of people.

Sometimes a conversation with a small group is exactly what it takes to connect someone with a service they didn't know existed.

**CAAC's mission is to help older adults and people with disabilities remain as independent as possible in their own homes and communities.** The more people who know who we are and what we do, the better our chances of reaching someone who needs us. Help us find our next door. If you know of an organization or group that would welcome CAAC, let us know by emailing [caac.adrc@caac-al.org](mailto:caac.adrc@caac-al.org)

Every day, Direct Service Providers help make something possible that is at the heart of CAAC's mission: helping older adults and people with disabilities live safely and independently in their own homes and communities.

DSPs are often the people who see our clients most regularly. Their presence, the services they provide, the changes they notice and the concerns they report all contribute to the well-being of the people we serve.

September is DSP Appreciation Month, and CAAC **Compliance Director Alexis Murray** recently expressed the agency's gratitude to our providers:

"We appreciate your professionalism, your vigilance, and your commitment to the people we serve. Most of all, **THANK YOU FOR BEING OUR PARTNERS IN SERVING THEM.**"

## As Another Year Comes to a Close

Next month marks the end of the fiscal year for many CAAC programs—and an opportunity to look back at another year of service to older adults, people with disabilities and caregivers across our three-county area.

In our September newsletter, **Executive Director Yolanda Evans** will continue a CAAC tradition with her annual message reflecting on the year just completed and looking ahead to the year to come.

For now, thank you to everyone whose work has made this year possible.