



News Release

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Reporters: Matt Paxton speaks May 2, 12-1:30 p.m.

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GOVERNOR'S CONFERENCE ON AGING GATHERS EXPERTS TO DISCUSS ENHANCING LIVES OF OLDER VIRGINIANS

TV's Matt Paxton speaks on hoarding

(RICHMOND, Va.) — The Virginia Department for the Aging and Rehabilitative Services will convene in Richmond May 2-3 the first Governor's Conference on Aging in 13 years to identify ways to enhance the health and well-being of Virginians as they age.

Hoarding expert and TV star Matt Paxton of Richmond will appear May 2 to discuss his unusual job and share insights and techniques to understand this complex disorder and the loneliness and isolation of living in a hoarded home and how to motivate and communicate with hoarders and their family members.

Some 400 citizens and representatives from government, business, academia and the non-profit sector will gather at the Hilton Richmond Hotel and Spa/Short Pump for [the conference](#) to assess how well the Commonwealth meets the needs of Virginia's growing aging population related to long-term services and supports, safety and financial security and livable communities.

Panelists will address topics such as elder abuse and financial exploitation, building communities to support older Virginians through home modifications and assistive technologies, and implementing additional support services for those with dementia and their caregivers. On May 3, a moderated session will result in multiple state policy recommendations.

Virginians 60 and older number nearly 1.5 million today. By 2030, 1 in 4 Virginians – more than 2 million people – will be age 60 and older, presenting new economic and social opportunities and challenges for our communities.

“Many of Virginia's state and local agencies, communities, partners and other stakeholders are responding to this social change,” said DARS Commissioner Jim Rothrock. “They are implementing ‘aging in place’ initiatives, making cultural changes to long-term care

services and supports, and addressing concerns for the safety and financial security of older Virginians. We need to share and adapt these best practices to make the Commonwealth a great place to age and thrive in.”

Matt Paxton, a frequent star of the television show “Hoarders” and author of “The Secret Lives of Hoarders,” started his cleaning business a decade ago after helping his grandmother clean her basement. Since then, he has cleaned thousands of hoarded homes, working to help older adults and their families cope with this psychological problem.

[Plenary speakers](#) include Sandy Markwood, CEO of the National Association of Area Agencies on Aging; Linda Bryant, Virginia’s deputy attorney general for the criminal justice and public safety division; Rodney Harrell, director of livable communities for AARP; Veronica Li, whose novel, “Confucius Says,” describes the challenges of caring for aging parents; and retired Maj. Gen. Antonio Taguba, community ambassador for AARP.

The conference is hosted by DARS and the Virginia Association of Area Agencies on Aging. Visit <http://bit.ly/23yBSYp> for program details.

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The Virginia Department for Aging and Rehabilitative Services, in collaboration with community partners, provides and advocates for resources and services to improve the employment, quality of life, security, and independence of older Virginians, Virginians with disabilities, and their families. For more information, visit www.vadars.org or follow DARS on Facebook at www.facebook.com/vadars or Twitter at @vadars.