

For Immediate Release

Shepherd's Center of Charlotte changes eligibility

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Charlotte, NC – The Shepherd's Center of Charlotte is **lowering the eligibility age for program and service participants from 65 to 55** to better serve the older adults in the community.

Since assuming the position of Executive Director in April, Linda R. Pellerin has been reviewing The Center's procedures in an effort to improve programs and services. One of the things that kept coming to the forefront was the age restriction of 65. As the Baby Boomers continue to "age into" retirement, Social Security and Medicare, The Shepherd's Center needs to be ready to address the issues of major concern. If older adults are offered programs and services at an earlier age, they may be better prepared when specific needs arise.

A recent release by the [National Institute of Health](#) reports, ***"Americans in their early to mid-50s today report poorer health, more pain and more trouble doing everyday physical tasks than their older peers reported at the same age in years past, a recent analysis has shown."*** If this is indeed the case, then the services and programs of The Shepherd's Center of Charlotte will be needed more than ever. Pellerin states, ***"Lowering the eligibility age to 55 will allow The Center to expand our reach to thousands more older adults in the Charlotte community. Our mission is to provide programs and services to older adults in an effort to help them stay in their homes as long as possible. If we can provide these services to them at an earlier age, they may be able to remain vital and comfortable in their own surroundings to well-advancing years."***

The Shepherd's Center of Charlotte has been serving older adults in the community since 1980. Programs currently offered by The Center include a quarterly mini-college, which is named *Adventures in Learning*; computer classes where seniors learn how to use the computer, the Internet and e-mail, Word, Excel and in September – Digital Imaging and Editing; and a Travel Program where older adults take one to two-day trips to areas of interest in the Southeast. Services offered are Medical Transportation; Grocery shopping transportation; hot-meal delivery in partnership with Friendship Trays; Handyman Service; Income Tax Assistance; Medicare Information Assistance in cooperation with SHIIP (Senior Health Insurance Information Program); Companion Aide, for seniors who need assistance at home following surgery or illness; Financial Planning and Defensive Driving classes.

For more information, please contact Linda R. Pellerin at 704.365.1995 or lrpellerin@shepherdscharlotte.org. Or visit our Web Site at www.shepherdscharlotte.org. And for all the latest information on The Shepherd's Center of Charlotte, be sure to check out our Web Log by clicking on [Linda's Blog](#).