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Easing older minds

NE CAN UNDERSTAND the concern of older residents in Glassport.

They're wondering what to make of the mailings, sent at random, regarding a long-range medical study by University of Pittsburgh researchers.

Borough officials are seeking to reassure residents that it's legitimate. They said they know who has been invited by Pitt's Mon Yough Healthy Aging Team to take part in that study.

(In case you're still wondering, you can call Glassport's non-emergency number, 412-672-4514.)

Out of an office in White Oak, MYHAT is conducting a five-year study aimed at improving understanding of healthy aging, particularly of the mind, by identifying factors that cause some elderly to remain healthy while others develop problems.

The study is funded by the National Institutes of Health. Pitt researchers are seeking out randomly selected seniors in Clairton, McKeesport, West Mifflin, Glassport, Duquesne, Liberty, Dravosburg and White Oak.

These towns have some of the oldest demographics in the U.S. McKeesport and White Oak, for instance, have the oldest demographics in Allegheny County. Allegheny, in turn, is second only to Dade County, Fla.

The survey is voluntary, and seniors who agree to participate will be offered what Pitt officials called "a small monetary token of appreciation for their time."

MYHAT officials reiterated those seniors who do not want to participate can call a toll-free 800 number to be taken off the list. However, we hope most of those contacted will take part in this worthwhile venture, focused on an area that could use such attention.