



# ***In Support of Caregivers***

*A Publication of the Caregivers' Resource Center and Alzheimer's Support Unit at the Tompkins County Office for the Aging*

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## ***The Caregivers' Resource Center***

*Striving to support those who are caring for family and friends*

- Telephone support available Monday through Friday, 8:30 AM to 4:30 PM
- Referrals to respite services and other community-based services for caregivers and their care-receivers
- Volunteer Support for Caregivers through Project CARE
- \*This quarterly newsletter: *In Support of Caregivers*
- Powerful Tools for Caregivers* classes
- \*Directory: "Resources for Caregivers in Tompkins County"
- Caregiver Support groups
- Periodic workshops for family caregivers
- Alzheimer's education and support
- Lending library of books and videos on caregiving topics
- Speakers available to talk to community and employee groups on caregiving topics



\*These publications are also available on-line at: [www.tompkinscountyny.gov/cofa](http://www.tompkinscountyny.gov/cofa)

(Click on "Local Resources for Older Adults" or "Newsletters")

## Monthly Caregiver Meetings at the Office for the Aging

### Caregiver Speaker Meetings

- Monthly meetings with a guest speaker presenting on a topic of interest to family caregivers. Note: this is not a “support group.” It is open to anyone interested in the topic.
- Meets the 1<sup>st</sup> Thursday of each month from 6:30-8:00 PM (no meetings in July and Aug)
- in the Office for the Aging Conference Room, 214 W. Martin Luther King, Jr/State St.

### Alzheimer’s Support Group

- Open to those caring for loved ones with Alzheimer’s or other cognitive impairments
- Meets the 4<sup>th</sup> Tuesday of each month (June 24, July 22, August 26)
- 1:00 - 2:30 PM in the Office for the Aging Conference Room, 214 W. Martin Luther King, Jr/State Street

### Caregiver Support Group (for caregivers of older adults)

3<sup>rd</sup> Tuesday of each month, 6:30 PM-8:00 PM at Family and Children’s Service, 127 W. State St., Ithaca. Facilitated by Ann Dolan and Margaret Page. Call for information, 273-7494.



### Other Alzheimer’s Caregiver Groups

1<sup>st</sup> Wednesday of each month at 6:00 PM. at Lifelong, 119 W. Court St.. Ithaca. For info., call the Alzheimer’s Association at 330-1647.

Last Thursday of the month, 5:30 PM Dinner, 6:00-7:00 meeting at Clare Bridge, 101 Bundy Rd., Ithaca. RSVP to Clare Bridge, 351-7857.

3<sup>rd</sup> Wednesday of the Month, 12:30-1:30 PM at Walden Place, Cortlandville. Call 756-8101. Companion care for your loved one available during the meeting.

## Local Caregiver Services

### Caregivers’ Resource Center & Project CARE Services

*Tompkins County Office for the Aging*  
David Stoyell, Katrina Schickel (274-5482)

*The Caregivers’ Resource Center & Alzheimer’s* **Discover the Resource Center**

*Support Unit* offers family caregivers information and consultation services, support groups, workshops, this newsletter, and a lending library of books and videos on caregiving topics. Stop by or call for an appointment.

Volunteers from *Project CARE* offer caregivers a needed break and help out in other ways as needed. We may also be able to arrange for paid home care services or short-term respite for stressed caregivers having difficulty paying for those services. Call Katrina to discuss your needs.

### Caregiver Counseling

*Family and Children’s Service*  
Ann Dolan/Margaret Page  
(273-7494)



A caregiver counselor will meet with family caregivers periodically in her office or at their home and help them work through complex caregiving issues or for emotional support. There is no charge for this service.

### Adult Day Program

*Longview Adult Day Community*  
Tuesdays, Wednesdays, Thursdays,  
9 AM- 3 PM  
Pamela Nardi (375-6323)



Adult day programs offer older adults companionship along with planned social and recreational activities. It often provides a break from caregiving and time for other matters. Both full day (\$38) and half-day (\$19) include lunch and snacks.

# Geriatric Mental Health & Caregiver Support Services

**M**ore than 16,000 Tompkins County residents are age 60 and over. With this number increasing, our (Family and Children's Service) new Geriatric Mental Health Project is designed to be responsive to the social, emotional, and psychological needs of the older adult by providing an array of mental health treatment services to elders and their families.

These services include **in-home counseling for seniors** and **Caregiver Counseling**, plus a new **Caregivers Support Group** and our ongoing **Grandparents Support Group**. Both groups are *free* and open to the public.

The 2012 Tompkins County Office of the Aging Needs Assessment reported that of the elder residents surveyed more than 31% report feelings of anxiety or depression. According to the Geriatric Mental Health Foundation, 10-20% of the older population suffers from treatable anxiety and

15% of adults over age 65 suffer from depression with much higher rates for those in nursing homes or hospitals. We



believe that most of our community's elderly residents are receiving little or no specialized mental health treatment.

Our Geriatric Mental Health clinicians, Margaret Page and Ann Dolan, coordinate the assessment process, provide ongoing counseling services tailored to meet the individual concerns of each participant, and provide referrals for community services that may help address an elder's daily needs. For elders unable to access needed services due to health problems or limitations in mobility, we can now provide community-based services within the home.

**Caregiver Services** - According to the National Alliance of Caregiving (2009), 19% of all adults nationwide provide informal, unpaid care for at least one elderly relative or friend. Grant funded **Caregiver Counseling Services** already offered at F&CS will now include a *free Caregivers Support Group*, open to the community. These services assist family members who are feeling stressed, guilty or angry, isolated, overwhelmed, fatigued, or fearful of the future.



Our *free Grandparents Support Group* addresses the unique challenges, issues, and solutions for grandparents raising their grandchildren. In New York State, almost 7% of all children are being raised by their grandparents and another 7% are living in a household headed by other relatives. This facilitated group, open to the public, is made possible by the generous support of CFCU Community Credit Union.

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*Reprinted with permission from Family and Children's Service's Family Connections newsletter, Spring 2014.*

## **New Caregiver Support Group**

Family and Children's Service's new support group meets generally on the 3rd Tuesday of every month from 6:30 pm – 8:00 PM at their offices at 127 W. State Street. It is facilitated by Ann Dolan, LCSW and Margaret Page, MA LCAT: "Join us for a supportive and educational monthly support group, especially for caregivers of older adults." **IMPORTANT: Please ring buzzer located next to the front door for entry.** Contact F&C Service at 273-7494 for more information on this group or any of the services mentioned on this page.

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# Project Lifesaver

*(Note: Advance registration for this presentation is required. Call the Office for the Aging, 274-5492 or email: [dstoyell@tompkins-co.org](mailto:dstoyell@tompkins-co.org).)*

## Project Lifesaver Presentation

by Deputy Dawn Caulkins

Thursday, June 5, 6:30 PM-8:00 PM

at the Tompkins County Office for the Aging

214 W. Martin Luther King Jr./State Street



The Tompkins County Sheriff's Office is now enrolling people in Project Lifesaver. Project Lifesaver is designed for individuals living at home in the community who are at risk for wandering, including people with Alzheimer's or other forms of dementia. Participants are fitted with a personalized Project Lifesaver wristband that emits an automatic tracking signal every second, 24 hours a day. If a 911 call is made that the participant has gone missing, the signal can be tracked by trained personnel from the Tompkins County Sheriff's office using patrol cars and hand held equipment with radio frequency tracking ability. A helicopter with radio frequency tracking ability can be used in the search through a cooperative arrangement with the Onondaga County Sheriff's Dept and the Onondaga County Project Lifesaver program.

There is a \$300 deposit for the equipment that is refunded at the time the equipment is returned and a \$10 fee for battery replacement every 60 days. No one will be turned away for inability to pay. The purpose of this program is to save lives and not to make a profit. Participation in Project Lifesaver can bring peace of mind to families, caregivers and communities.



Deputy Caulkins, from the Tompkins County Sheriff's Department, will introduce Project Lifesaver. She will explain how the tracking system works and the range at which it is effective. Deputy Caulkins will show the tracking equipment used by Sheriff Department personnel as well as the transmitters and bands worn by participants in the program. She will go over the registration process, procedure for equipment maintenance/battery replacement and what happens if a participant is reported as missing. Advance registration is required as space is limited.

In the meantime, if you want more information on Project Lifesaver or to enroll in Project Lifesaver, phone 607-257-1345, ext. 455.

## Feeling Stretched?

### Let's Face It...

Caring for someone with a chronic illness such as dementia, heart disease, Parkinson's Disease or stroke can be stressful physically, emotionally and financially.



## *Balance Your Life*

**Powerful**  
**Tools**  
for **Caregivers**

**Fall 2014**

## **Powerful Tools for Caregivers Classes**

Powerful Tools for Caregivers is a six-week educational program designed to provide you with the tools you need to take care of *yourself*.

You will learn to:

- Reduce stress
- Improve self-confidence
- Better communicate your feelings
- Balance your life
- Increase your ability to make tough decisions
- Locate helpful resources

The program consists of six - 90 minutes class sessions held weekly and is offered free of charge to caregivers.

**Not intended for professional caregivers**

**September 23 - October 28 (Tuesdays)**

**10:00-11:30 am**

**At Kendal at Ithaca**

**2230 N. Triphammer Rd.**

**Conference Room C**

**Pre-registration is Required**

**To register or inquire about the program, Call:**

**Tompkins County Office for the Aging, 274-5482**

Powerful Tools for Caregivers is offered by the Caregivers Resource Center of the Tompkins County Office for the Aging, with support from Cornell University, and NY Connects /Long Term Care Services Unit of the Tompkins County Department of Social Services

# News and Notes

## More People Eligible for EPIC

The NY State EPIC program provides seniors (65+) with co-payment assistance for Medicare-covered prescription drugs. The state has recently expanded eligibility more people with expensive co-pays on drugs to get assistance from NY State. Individuals with income below \$75,000 and couples below \$100,000 now can join. Members with incomes above \$20,000 (\$26,000 for a couple) must meet an annual out-of-pocket EPIC deductible based on their income before EPIC starts helping with co-pays. For example the EPIC deductible for an individual with an income of \$50,000 is \$1,233. Questions? Call EPIC at 1-800-332-3742 or call Lifelong or the Office for the Aging and ask to speak to a health insurance (HIICAP) counselor.



## Dental Case Management – The

“Dental Case Management Program” is a Tompkins County program designed to enhance access to dental care for Medicaid recipients. But it also helps low income seniors find dentists who agree to provide needed dental services at a much reduced rate to income-eligible older adults (60+, with income below \$1,945/month for an individual or \$2,622/month for a couple). Tompkins County residents can call the Office for the Aging to be screened and referred to the program (274-5492).



**Smart Seniors-** An informative booklet for those concerned about preventing older relatives from being scammed is called “Smart Seniors” and is published by the NYS Office of the Attorney General.



It discusses “the Grandparent scam,” Internet safety, identity theft, charities and other common

scams that prey on vulnerable older adults. It can be viewed online at <http://www.ag.ny.gov>. Type “smart seniors” into the search feature.

## LawHelpNY.org

Visit [www.LawHelpNY.org](http://www.LawHelpNY.org) website for information on legal topics of interest to older adults. Click on “Seniors60+” to get answers to legal questions, sample forms, and information about the courts, lawyers and social service organizations that provide services related to Seniors. Issues covered include: Age Discrimination, Consumer Problems for Seniors, Debt, Elder Abuse, Foreclosure, Grandparenting Issues, Guardianship of an Adult, Housing Issues for Seniors, Life Insurance and Long Term Care Insurance, Medicare, Medicaid and Other Health Insurance for Seniors, Prescription Drugs, Nursing Homes, Long-Term Care and Home Care, Pensions, Senior Veterans, Social Security Retirement and Survivor's Benefits, SSI for Seniors over 65, Living Will, Health Care Proxy, Power of Attorney, Wills and Estates.



## 3rd Party Notices

It is crucial that older adults designate a third party to receive notices in the event they neglect to keep up timely payment on insurance policies. Insurance companies must also be updated on new addresses if you as a 3<sup>rd</sup> party designee have moved. It is important to know what policies they have, and when the premiums are due. People can pay for 20 or more years into a long term care insurance policy and then have it go for naught if no one catches that premiums went unpaid and cancellation warnings unheeded. If it is unclear whether or not a 3<sup>rd</sup> party has been designated to receive notices, verify it with a phone call to the insurer.



## Generalized Anxiety Disorder

**S**tress and caregiving usually go hand-in-hand, but if worrying becomes constant, interfering with work, sleep, and even family life, this may be an indication of generalized anxiety disorder, according to Jennifer Buckley at *caregiver.com*.

Generalized anxiety disorder (GAD) is distinguished by the presence of anxiety regarding life circumstances, including caregiving responsibilities, for six months or longer.

Sleeplessness and difficulty concentrating are hallmarks of GAD, as are fatigue, headaches, and shortness of breath. Fortunately GAD is treatable with a combination of medications, cognitive-behavioral therapy, and dietary changes. Medications like anti-depressants and sedatives are the most commonly prescribed drugs for GAD. Cognitive-behavioral therapy focuses on changing behavioral and emotional patterns that exacerbate anxiety while encouraging relaxation techniques and healthy thought processes, rather than dwelling on negative or upsetting thoughts.

Diet may also be a factor in GAD. Excessive caffeine intake may worsen anxiety symptoms, as will other stimulants. If GAD is left untreated, clinical depression may develop. Caregivers who suspect that their level of anxiety is becoming unmanageable should contact their healthcare provider as soon as possible so that treatment, and ultimately relief, may begin.



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*Reprinted from January 2014 Caregiver Corner, Behavioral Health Services North, Plattsburgh NY.*

## Cancer Resource Center

**T**he Cancer Resource Center of the Finger Lakes (CRC), based in Ithaca, offers face-to-face comfort and assistance during a stressful time for people with cancer and their loved ones. Its services include Support Groups, Networking Groups, Financial Advocacy, One-to-One Info and Support, Wellness Programs, a Boutique with new and gently used items, a lending library and collaboration with Cornell cancer researchers.

Its One-to-One Support includes the *Helping Hands Program* and *Friendly Correspondent Program*. Through the Helping Hands Program, volunteers help people diagnosed with cancer and the loved ones of those with cancer with daily needs such as cleaning, errands, organizing bills and paperwork, occasional rides, lawn mowing/yard work, snow shoveling, pet care, and delivery of a homemade meal. Through the Friendly Correspondent Program, students from Ithaca College and Cornell University write cards to patients once a month. The purpose behind this program is to make sure no one faces cancer alone. By receiving cards, it helps patients to avoid isolation.

There are four times of transition when people especially turn to the CRC for information and support:



1. At the time of diagnosis,
2. When treatment ends,
3. When cancer returns to learn to live with it as a chronic disease,
4. At a point when questioning whether or not treatment is still worth pursuing.

To learn more, visit the CRC online at [www.crcfl.net](http://www.crcfl.net) and visit them in person at 612 W. State Street. (Tel) 607-277-0960.



# A Caregiver's Pledge

*If you are trying to balance caring for a loved one with self-care and other responsibilities, consider taking this pledge, signing it and keeping it where it will remind you to act on your pledge.*

1. I will understand that I can't care for anyone else if I also don't care for myself. I will keep an image in my mind of putting the oxygen mask on myself first.
2. I will remember that the only person I can change is myself. I cannot change my loved one who is ill, nor my family members.
3. I will find opportunities to laugh, daily. These might come in movies, jokes, television, or with friends who can see the humor in my situation and remind me to do the same.
4. I will get away from my caregiving duties on a regular basis, even if it is just to walk around the block. But I will also find ways to have lunch with a friend, go to a movie, window shop, breathe in fresh air, watch the sunset, or eat a hot fudge sundae.
5. I will visit a support group, either online or in person in my community, so that I know that I am not alone. If a support group isn't right for me, I will find a friend to talk to, call my family consultant, or attend a workshop.
6. I will learn as much as I can about my loved one's illness so I can better care for him or her with understanding. I will learn techniques that will make caregiving easier for both of us.
7. I will say "yes" when people offer to help. I will make a list of things they can do and post it on the refrigerator, so that when those offers come, I'll be ready. When there are not offers, I will ask for help, even though it might be hard to do so.
8. I will use community resources to help make my caregiving duties easier.
9. I will find something I really like to do and make sure I find time to do it on a regular basis. Just because I am a caregiver, doesn't mean I have to give up everything that is meaningful to me. I will read, knit, garden, scrapbook, do genealogy or woodworking for a designated period of time every week.
10. I will remember that I am loved and appreciated, even when my loved one can't tell me that. I will honor the nurturing, responsibility, caring and support that I provide to my loved one as a gift I give.

Signed on \_\_\_\_\_ by \_\_\_\_\_:

# The Caregivers' Resource Center and Alzheimer's Support Unit

Please call or visit us  
at the Tompkins County Office for the Aging  
214 W. Martin Luther King, Jr./State Street, Ithaca.  
(Open weekdays, 8:30 AM - 4:30 PM)

**David Stoyell, CRC Coordinator and Newsletter Editor**

Telephone: (607) 274-5492

E-mail: [dstoyell@tompkins-co.org](mailto:dstoyell@tompkins-co.org)

**Katrina Schickel, Project CARE Coordinator**

Telephone: (607) 274-5491

E-mail: [kschickel@tompkins-co.org](mailto:kschickel@tompkins-co.org)



## Websites of Interest to Family Caregivers:

**Tompkins County Office for the Aging:** [www.tompkinscountyny.gov/cofa](http://www.tompkinscountyny.gov/cofa)

*\*Click on "Local Resources for Older Adults" to access our Tompkins County resource guides.*

*\*Click on "Newsletters" to view electronic editions of this newsletter for the past year.*

**Family Caregiver Alliance:** [www.caregiver.org](http://www.caregiver.org)

**Caregiver Action Network:** [www.caregiveraction.org](http://www.caregiveraction.org)

**AARP Caregiver Resource Center:** [www.aarp.org/home-family/caregiving](http://www.aarp.org/home-family/caregiving)

**Next Step in Care:** [www.nextstepincare.org](http://www.nextstepincare.org)

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