



In Support of Caregivers

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

Fall 2015

Vol. 27, Number 3

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Dear Family Caregivers,

This fall there are many and varied educational programs that may be of interest to those who are caring for older adults who need some support.

There are still spaces available in the fall *Powerful Tools for Caregivers* class series that will begin again on September 30 (p. 4). In October, a local elderlaw attorney will offer a workshop on *Legal and Financial Concerns of Family Caregivers*. Lifelong has a number of offerings in its Lifelong Learning fall catalog that may interest family caregivers (p. 3).

The Ithaca College Gerontology Institute has a workshop that will help participants understand the distinction between advance medical directives (done by the patient) and medical orders (done by the physician) in its workshop on the MOLST and eMOLST (Medical Orders for Life-Sustaining Treatment) (p. 5).



There are educational programs tailored to those caring for loved ones with Alzheimer's or related disorders (p. 3 and p. 9). These include a monthly series of webinars for dementia caregivers who want to take advantage of the expertise of national experts or who find it difficult to get out to attend local workshops. Finally, in addition to listing support groups for family caregivers, in this issue we've also listed groups offering support to your care recipients who have specific illnesses/conditions. In some instances, caregivers are welcome to attend along with their loved ones.

Don't hesitate to call the Caregivers' Resource Center here at the Tompkins County Office for the Aging to talk about any of your family caregiving concerns!

Local Caregiver Support Services

Caregivers' Resource Center & Project CARE Services

Tompkins County Office for the Aging

David Stoyell (274-5492)

Katrina Schickel (274-5491)

The Caregivers' Resource Center & Alzheimer's Support Unit

offers family caregivers information, consultation services, support groups, workshops, this newsletter, and a lending library of books on family 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 (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 provide emotional support. No charge. Donations accepted.



Adult Day Program

Longview Adult Day Community

Monday thru Friday, 9 AM- 3 PM

Pamela Nardi (375-6323)

Now offered five days a week! 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. Fee: full day (\$45) or half-day (\$31 with lunch, \$22 without lunch).



Caregiver Support Groups

Caregiver Support Group

3rd Tuesday of each month

6:30 PM-8:00 PM

Family and Children's Service
127 W. Martin Luther King Jr./State St., Ithaca.

Facilitated by Ann Dolan, LCSW. Especially for caregivers of older adults. Call for information, 273-7494. Important: Please ring buzzer located next to the front door for entry.

Alzheimer's Caregivers Group

4th Tuesday of each month

1:00-2:30 PM

Tompkins County Office for the Aging
214 W. Martin Luther King Jr/State St., Ithaca

Facilitated by David Stoyell. Open to anyone caring for a relative or friend with significant memory impairment. Call 274-5492 for more information.

Other Alzheimer's Caregiver Groups

3rd Wednesday of each month at 5:30 PM

at Lifelong, 119 W. Court St.. Ithaca. For info., call Nicole Roustin, 279-5525.

3rd 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.

Cancer Caregiver Group

2nd Tuesday of the month, 5:30-7:00 pm

At the Cancer Resource Center of the Finger Lakes, 612 W. State St., Ithaca. For family, friends and caregivers of individuals with Cancer. For info, call 277-0960.

Parkinson's Spouses Group

Meets monthly at the Office for the Aging. Call David Stoyell, 274-5492 for further information.

Fall Trainings of Interest to Family Caregivers

Note: See page 9 for upcoming workshops for those caring for persons with Alzheimer/dementia.

Legal and Financial Concerns for Caregivers

Thursday, October 15, 6:30-8:00 PM

at the Office for the Aging, 214 W. Martin Luther King Jr./State St.

Presented by: Joy Blumkin, Esq.



Ms. Blumkin, a local elder law attorney, will address common legal and financial concerns of the elderly and their caregivers such as planning for the expense of long-term care and planning for incapacity (advance directives, guardianship). Please call ahead, 274-5492, or email dstoyell@tompkins-co.org to register for this program.

The following workshops are being held at Lifelong

119 W. Court Street, Ithaca

Pre-registration is required. Call Lifelong, 273-1511.

Falls Prevention- Tamara Scott, ACSM - Wednesday, September 23, 1:30-3:30 PM

Most falls can be prevented if people learn how to reduce the risk. This workshop will discuss the reasons people fall, actions people can take to limit their risk, and the importance of maintaining an active lifestyle. Participants will leave class with exercises they can do at home. Wear comfortable clothing and supportive footwear. Free

Prevent a Fall



Medicare Basics- Elizabeth Schneider - Tuesday, September 29, 5:30-7:30 PM

For those just starting to learn about Medicare. Topics will include: Medicare Part A (hospital), B (medical), and D (Medicare prescription drugs). Also, Medigap Plans and Medicare Advantage Plans. EPIC and Extra Help subsidies available to income-eligible individuals/couples. How veteran's benefits and retiree plans work with Medicare. Free.



Time to Turn in the Keys- Jonathan Maddison-Tuesday, September 29, 5:30-7:00 PM

How to start conversations with family members when it is time to stop driving. Ideas on how to move around the Ithaca area if you are not driving. Ithaca is one of the easiest places in NY to navigate with the public transport system. Come learn more about it to help your loved ones stay independent. Free



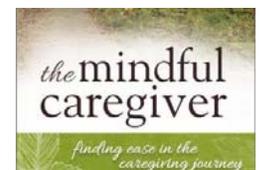
Driver Rehabilitation – Eleanor Liebson, OT - Monday, October 26, 1:00-2:30 PM

Learn what you can do to drive safely for as long as possible. Free.



Mindfulness for Caregivers – Robert Levine, MSW - Tuesday, December 1, 5:30-7:30 PM

This class will explore strategies that assist caregivers in being present to contend with the specific challenges of taking care of a loved one. This experienced group facilitator will encourage, but not require, participation from group members in order to help them be better prepared for the daily challenges they may face. \$10 fee.



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 2015

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 30 — November 4

(6 Wednesdays) 10:30 AM— Noon

at the Office for the Aging

214 W. Martin Luther King Jr./State Street

Pre-registration is required and attendance at the first class is mandatory.

**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

Choosing Hospice Sooner

“I wished we’d called you sooner,” is something Hospicare staff hears often from patients and their loved ones. Once a doctor has certified that a patient likely has six months or less to live, the patient is eligible to go on hospice, but all too often, the hospice team isn’t called in until the last few days of the patient’s life. Their nurses, social workers, aides and other professionals do all they can do make those last moments as comfortable as possible—but there is so much more they can do if they have more time to get to know the patient and family members.



Here are some of the benefits of choosing Hospicare sooner:

1. As patients and family members work with the Hospicare team, they become more comfortable sharing their end-of-life journey and discussing their care needs. This rapport can help in the building of an optimal care plan based on the patient’s and family’s wishes.
2. Pain and symptoms can be controlled better. The Hospicare team members are specially trained in the treatment of pain and discomfort. That includes the mental and emotional distress that can come at the end of life. Pain and symptoms are addressed sooner and crises can be avoided.
3. Stressful hospital visits can be reduced or eliminated.
4. Hospicare team members can help family members understand the end-of-life process. The team social worker, spiritual care coordinator, and bereavement counselor, in particular, can help family members become more mentally and emotionally prepared for the death of their loved one, which can make the grieving process less overwhelming.

Advance Care Planning and the MOLST

Tuesday, Sept. 29, 2:00 -4:30 PM

Country Inn & Suites, 1100 Danby Rd, Ithaca

Katie Orem, Geriatrics and Palliative Care Program Manager at Excellus BC BS, will review the difference between advance directives and medical orders (MOLST) especially within the framework of palliative care in the last stages of life. \$25 (\$15 for retired individuals). Call the IC Gerontology Institute at 274-1607 or register online at www.Ithaca.edu/agingworkshops.

Tompkins County’s Improved PERS System

The Tompkins County Office for the Aging is now working with Doyle Medical Monitoring of Rochester, NY to offer **Personal Emergency Response Systems (PERS)** to county residents. The PERS program provides medical alert equipment to individuals who are at risk of falling or other medical emergencies, allowing them to live with greater confidence and safety. Some of the benefits of the improved PERS system include:

- Average response time at the push of a button-- less than 45 seconds (wrist button or pendant).
- Highly trained operators can talk to you through the unit speaker to help determine what kind of assistance you need
- Cutting edge, UL rated technology, compatible with most home phone systems
- Transmitter range of 300-400 feet
- Standard price of \$25/month (may vary based on equipment and qualifying factors)
- No installation fee
- Automatic monthly payment option
- Installation and service visits by Office for the Aging staff



For information, call Eileen Savino, 274-5492 at the Tompkins County Office for the Aging.

Does Medicare Require Hospital Discharge Plans?

Dear Marci,
I am having heart valve replacement surgery soon and spoke with my primary care doctor about care after my surgery. She said that I should ask the hospital for a discharge plan before I leave so that I understand how to continue my care once I am home. I have never received a discharge plan before. Does Medicare require the hospital to provide a discharge plan to me as part of my hospital stay? – Louise (Washington, DC)

Dear Louise,

Hospital discharge planning services are intended to make your move from the hospital to your home or other location as smooth and safe as possible, and aim to prevent additional trips to the hospital for you. Under specific circumstances, Medicare does require all hospitals to provide discharge planning services as part of a hospital stay. Let's see if those circumstances might apply to you.

Hospital discharge planning is only required if you are admitted to the hospital as an inpatient. If you are considered a hospital outpatient, Medicare does not require hospital staff to help you prepare for your care following a hospital stay. However, some states may provide you with greater rights to discharge planning services. Since you had heart valve replacement surgery, it is likely that you will be considered a hospital inpatient. Here are additional steps you can take to ensure that you leave the hospital with the plan you need.

You or your doctor should ask hospital staff for a comprehensive discharge planning evaluation. A discharge planning evaluation tries to foresee your medical and other care needs after your hospital stay. Some hospitals automatically evaluate the discharge needs of all

patients, and some do not. That said, if you or your doctor asks for a comprehensive discharge evaluation, the hospital must give you one. Know that the discharge evaluation is not the same as a discharge plan, but it is a necessary step for acquiring a discharge plan if you are eligible.

Be aware that the hospital's main goal during your evaluation should be to return you to the place you left before your hospital stay (this may be your home or another facility). If this isn't possible, the hospital should recommend other, more appropriate places for you.

Make sure hospital staff members consider your range of needs following your hospitalization. If you are returning home following your surgery, the discharge planning evaluation should see whether you can care for yourself or if you will need assistance from family, friends, or other community caregivers. For example, do you need home health care or meal delivery services? The hospital staff should also see whether you will need medical equipment or changes to your home to make it safe. If you are going back to a facility, the hospital must make sure the facility can still care for you after your hospital stay.

Review which post-discharge services will be covered by Medicare and how much they will cost. If you have another type of insurance, such as Medicaid, check what is covered.

Tell the hospital discharge planning staff about your needs and preferences for care after your hospitalization. If you are eligible for a discharge plan, your needs and preferences must be incorporated into your plan of care.



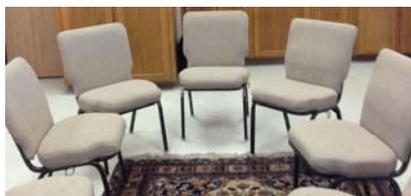
Be sure the hospital prepares you for discharge. Before you leave the hospital, staff must educate and train you, your family, and/or your caregivers about your care needs. Hospital staff should also provide a clear list of instructions for your care and all medications you will need. The hospital must explain what to do if problems occur, including who to call and when to seek emergency help. The hospital must provide referrals as appropriate for other care, including referrals to home health, skilled nursing or hospice agencies, physicians, and medical equipment suppliers, among other supportive services.

Be sure to follow up with your primary care provider and other providers involved in your care after your hospitalization. The hospital should send your providers information about your medical condition no later than seven days after you leave the hospital. Keep in mind that Medicare now pays for your primary care provider to manage your care right after your hospital discharge.

(Reprinted from the August 2015 edition of Marci's Medicare Answers, published by the Medicare Rights Center.)

Support Groups for Persons with Specific Illnesses/Conditions

On page 2 of this newsletter, we've listed support groups for caregivers of older adults. Following are groups that may offer support to those for whom you are caring. In some instances, caregivers are welcome to accompany their care receiver or even the group without their loved one. Call or email the contact listed for the group to inquire.



Parkinson's Support Group

**Second Monday of the month - 10:30 AM
at Kendal at Ithaca in Conference Room A**

Make sure to call Evelyn Kalish, 266-5354, or email ekalish@kai.kendal.org before attending for the first time.

Family & Friends Stroke Recovery Group

**First Thursday of the month – 1:30 PM
at Finger Lakes Independence Center, Ithaca**

For stroke survivors and their families. Call Dana Murray-Cooper, 342-2653 or email coop1663@aol.com.

Multiple Sclerosis Support Group

**2nd Monday of the Month – 6:30 PM
at Lifelong in Ithaca**

Sponsored by the MS Society. Call 229-9098 for further information.

Cancer Support Groups

Various Times

Cancer Resource Center, Ithaca

The CRC of the Finger Lakes sponsors several monthly groups (men's group, two women's groups, colorectal group, advanced cancer group, and open groups for any types of cancer.) Call 227-0960 or visit online at crcfl.net for details.

Early-Stage Alzheimer's Group

**3rd Wednesday of the month, 5:30 PM
at Lifelong, Ithaca**

This group is for persons with dementia only. Advanced screening is recommended prior to attending by calling the group facilitator, Kim Owen, 227-4415.

News and Notes

Shingles Vaccine at Pharmacies

Because the risk of shingles increases for older adults, a single dose of shingles vaccine is recommended for people 60 years of age and older. The vaccine can now be administered by your local pharmacist and is covered by most insurance. But unlike for flu shots, you will have pay whatever your plan charges as a co-pay for this medication. It is not currently available as a generic so check with your pharmacist or plan about what your co-pay will be. Even those who have had shingles can still receive the shingles vaccine to help prevent repeat occurrences.



VA Health Care Benefits Overview

A 48 page booklet titled **Health Care Benefits Overview** is available from the VA. You can view or download a copy of this booklet online at www.va.gov/healthbenefits/resources/epublications.asp. You can also call 1-877-222-8387 for information on VA health care. Information on available long-term care services and respite services can be found on pp. 22-25. For hearing aids and eyeglasses, refer to page 25. The VA dental insurance program is described on page 29.



Profile of Family Caregivers

The profile of the family caregiver in America is changing as the population ages, according to a new research study from the National Alliance for Caregiving and AARP. Caregiving in the U.S. 2015 provides surprising insight into today's family caregivers. Some highlights of the report:



Highlights of Today's Caregivers:

- 82% care for one person who is likely either living with the caregiver or living within 20 minutes of the caregiver.
- 60% of caregivers are female. The typical caregiver is a 49-year-old female caring for a 69-year-old female relative, most likely her mother.
- 40% of caregivers are male.
- 34% of caregivers have a full-time job, while 25% work part time. Caregivers who work do so for 34.7 hours per week on average.
- Caregivers have been caring for 4 years on average, spending 24.4 hours per week helping with activities like bathing, dressing, housework, and managing finances.
- 32% provide at least 21 hours of care a week, on average providing 62.2 hours of care weekly.
- 38% of caregivers report high emotional stress from the demands of caregiving.

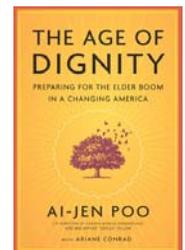
To view the complete report, go online to www.caregiving.org/caregiving2015.

New in the Lending Library

Books of interest to those who are caring for older adults can be borrowed from the Lending Library at the Tompkins County Office for the Aging. Recently added:

The Age of Dignity: Preparing for the Elder Boom in a Changing America. Ai-Jen Poo, 2015.

By 2035, 11.5 million Americans will be over the age of eighty-five, more than double today's 5 million, living longer than ever before. The process of building a culture that supports care is a key component to restoring the American dream, and, as Ai-Jen Poo convincingly argues, will generate millions of new jobs and breathe new life into our national ideals of independence, justice, and dignity.



Alzheimer's Notes

The following two workshops will be held at:

**Tompkins County Office for the Aging
214 W. Martin Luther King, Jr./State St.**

To register for either or both workshops, call 274-5492 or email dstoyell@tompkins-co.org.

Living with Alzheimer's for Caregivers: Late Stage

Tuesday, September 29, Noon – 3 PM

The late stage of Alzheimer's may involve significant changes in how the person with the disease is cared for. This workshop will address:



- Symptoms associated with late-stage Alzheimer's
- Communication changes
- Working with the doctor
- Resources available for care
- Moving someone into a facility
- Monitoring facility care
- End of life issues and palliative care

Responding to Dementia-Related Behavior

Thursday, November 19, 2:00-3:00 PM

During the middle stage of dementia, the person with the disease often starts to exhibit new behaviors that can be confusing for a caregiver. These behaviors are a form of communication, and are essential to understanding the needs of the person with dementia. This workshop will assist caregivers to decipher behaviors and determine how best to respond, including how to identify common triggers for behaviors associated with dementia, explain the process for assessing and identifying challenging behaviors, and list strategies to address some common dementia-related behaviors.



Care Connection Teleconferences

Care Connection is a free teleconference sponsored by the Alzheimer's Foundation of America that is designed for both family caregivers and professional caregivers of individuals with Alzheimer's disease and related dementias. The sessions are held the second Thursday of the month from 1:00-2:00 PM. Participants can simply listen or contribute to the conversation during interaction sessions after the presentation by an expert:



To participate,
Call toll-free 877-594-8353. When prompted, enter
Guest ID #: 46692951#

A list of upcoming topics follows:

September 10, 2015:

Topic: *The Role of the Geriatric Care Manager in the Planning Process*

October 8, 2015:

Topic: *Abilities based Dementia Approaches for Cognitive and Language Changes*

November 12, 2015:

Topic: *Supporting LGBT Families with Alzheimer's Disease.*

December 10, 2015:

Topic: *What You Need to Know: Intimacy, Sexuality and Alzheimer's Disease.*

“Perspectives” Newsletter

Perspectives is a publication of the Shiley-Marcos Alzheimer's Disease Research Center in San Diego.

Is a quarterly newsletter written for people with early/moderate stage dementia that addresses the concerns, reflections, and coping skills of individuals with Alzheimer's or a related memory disorder. Subscribe to receive it electronically (free) or by surface mail (\$20/yr.) by emailing lsnyder@ucsd.edu.

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)

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Katrina Schickel, Project CARE Coordinator

Telephone: (607) 274-5491

E-mail: kschickel@tompkins-co.org



Websites of Interest to Family Caregivers:

Tompkins County Office for the Aging: 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

Caregiver Action Network: www.caregiveraction.org

AARP Caregiver Resource Center: www.aarp.org/home-family/caregiving

Next Step in Care: www.nextstepincare.org

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