



CAREGIVER CONNECTIONS

Resources for Elders, Family and Professional Caregivers

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Vacationing with Your Loved One

Taking a successful vacation when you are a caregiver requires planning and coordination. **Sheryl Leary**, the Family Caregiver Specialist for HESSCO Elder Services, reminds us to check the following: “Is the destination accessible for my loved one’s abilities? Ensure that stairs are kept to a limit that is acceptable and have railings. Are doorways wide enough for a wheelchair or walker? Will the bathroom accommodate your routine?”

“Are the activities within my loved one’s capabilities? Be aware that your loved one’s abilities may be different when not in the comfort of home. Allow time for recuperation from the travel before activities are planned. Have you checked the latest security regulations for airlines, trains and buses? It is best to check with your transportation provider prior to your travel about what will be expected for security and/or inspection. Make sure all medications are in their original containers and anything liquid is kept in a clear separate bag and ready for inspection. Check with your doctor to see if your loved one’s pacemaker or implanted medical device can go through the X-ray process. An excellent source of information for travelers is the Transportation Security Administration (www.tsa.gov). This website has information for travelers with disabilities/medical issues including those with pacemakers, diabetes, mobility and hearing issues. You can also check the accommodations needed for individuals traveling with oxygen. When going through security at airports, you may request a private room and caregivers can stay with their loved one.”

Remember that elders are more sensitive to extreme heat and more prone to dehydration. Ask your loved one’s doctor about any concerns he may have for fluid intake based on the climate you will be visiting. Find the nearest location of an emergency room or urgent care provider in the area you are visiting *prior* to the trip.



Please also check about your loved ones’ medical insurance coverage in that area—especially if they are in a Medicare advantage plan. Keeping it simple and slow paced will make it a fun and restorative time for you all.

Health Care Reform Is Good News for Medicare Beneficiaries

The long and nasty year-long debate over health care reform has left many Medicare beneficiaries confused and worried. Important questions like these are on people’s minds: Will benefits be cut? Will premiums go up significantly? Will my doctor refuse to see Medicare patients? Will services be rationed to save on costs?

Happily, the answer to all of these worrisome questions is a resounding NO! In fact, there is much in the way of GOOD NEWS to share which hasn’t been sufficiently covered in the media. Here are some of the highlights in this category:

- Medicare recipients in the donut hole receive \$250 this year to help with prescription drug expenses;
- Beginning next year, all preventive care services will be FREE of deductibles or co-payments
- Preventive care health screenings will be expanded and there will be a 50% reduction in prices on brand name drugs.

Health Care Reform *(continued from front)*

- There will be more Medicare services with an emphasis upon fair reimbursements for primary and home based care services will be included.

It is hoped that over time this combination of cost savings and alternative preventive care services will save money and extend the solvency of the Medicare program, which is currently projected to be insolvent in 2017. This is a very key issue, which will be discussed further in forthcoming articles.

We thank Dr. Diamond, an independent health insurance broker and consultant, for his contributions to the Caregiver Connections newsletter which will help keep us informed about the Health Care Reform process.

Caregiving on Community TV

Hosts Leslie Ahern and Paul Antokolsky



Remember to watch **Agewise** on BNN-TV the second Tuesdays of the month at 2:30 PM and is hosted by **Haris Hardaway**.

The **Taking Care** TV program (www.takingcare.tv) airs live every **Wednesday at 6:00 PM** on Comcast channel 9 and RCN channel 15. The program is repeated **on Friday at 10:00 AM and Sunday at noon** within the city of Boston.

You can also watch outside Boston on your computer by going to www.bnntv.org and click on Watch *Channel 9* at the show times mentioned above. You can also go to www.takingcare.tv and click on the TV show page. You will also see a list of upcoming guests and topics there as well as the contact information of previous guests.

Caregiver Support groups

Join other caregivers for refreshments and discussion in a caring, relaxed, and confidential setting on a monthly basis. Everyone is welcome and **there is no charge**. We ask that you call to pre-register first.

“Smoother Sailing” Alzheimer Education Group

There will be **no July 5, 2010 meeting** due to holiday.

This free monthly group will meet on **August 2, 2010** at 6PM at the Boston Center for Rehabilitative and Sub-Acute Care in West Roxbury. Call Family Care Advisor, **Leslie Ahern at 617-477-6676** to pre-register. The group provides support and education about dementia and the Alzheimer’s disease process.

We will learn behavioral techniques called Habilitation therapy. We will problem solve how to manage challenges like bathing, eating, toileting and anxiety. Our goal is to make “smoother sailing” of your every day care. **“While we can not stop the stormy winds of dementia diseases, we can learn together how to better adjust our sails”.** ©



LGBT* Caregiver Support Group

This group usually meets the first Monday but Please contact Joanne Peskowitz at **(617) 271-4182** for exact dates.

*Lesbian/Gay/Bisexual/Transgender



“Taking Care of Me” Support Group

The group will meet Monday,, **July 19, 2010 and again on August 16, 2010 at 6PM** at Boston Center for Rehabilitative and Sub-Acute Care in West Roxbury. It is accessible by MBTA and there is free parking. Contact: **Leslie Ahern at 617-477-6676**. **Group usually meets the third Monday of the Month.**



Please note all services are provided free and no income verification is required. For more information or to receive this newsletter monthly, please contact: **Leslie Ahern Family Care Advisor 617-477-6676 LAhern@ethocare.org**
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