

Press Release

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Are You Caring for an Aging Parent, Relative, Neighbor or Friend?

The Department of Labor estimates that 30% of the workforce is caring for an aging parent or relative. These working caregivers are paying a heavy price as they struggle to balance their personal and work responsibilities. By 2011, it is expected that this caregiver workforce figure will jump to 54%, when 5 million baby boomers turn 65.

“Eldercare is an evolving challenge for employees and organizations alike.”

For most caregivers, it's not a question of if they will receive a call about mom being diagnosed with Dementia or dad breaking a hip. It's really a question of when the call will come.

All too often, an individual finds themselves in the midst of a crisis, following a senior being involved in an accident, or experiencing a sudden illness. These individuals feel unprepared, because they lack knowledge regarding the senior's medical history, medications, insurance coverage, financial matters, or what the senior's wishes would be in the given situation. In addition, they don't understand what the issues are, where to turn for help, or what kinds of questions to ask.

Corporate America is paying a high price as working caregivers struggle to care for their aging relatives; as reflected in absenteeism, workday interruptions, eldercare crises, and work schedule adjustments. According to a MetLife Survey, the aggregate costs of caregiving to U.S. businesses, is estimated at \$29 billion+ per year.

To ensure the highest quality of life for the longest time possible, it is crucial that seniors and their loved ones begin a dialogue to discuss the topic of aging. This process needs to focus on the senior's hopes and desires, short and long term goals, and their abilities and needs; while establishing a spectrum of resources that will address the senior's evolving needs.

It is important to take a pro-active approach to map out a clear "*Advance Care Plan*". This process will help avoid unnecessary stress and financial concerns down the road. If a senior doesn't act now to develop a plan, future events may require a loved one to step in to make decisions, usually without the benefit of the senior's input.

Geriatric Care Managers are specialists who assist seniors and their families in planning and implementing ways to allow the greatest degree of independence, safety and quality of life. GCMs assess a senior's needs, develop a Care Team, and work with the Team to formulate a Care Plan. Developing a Care Plan is similar to putting a jigsaw puzzle together. The more pieces of the puzzle you have, the clearer the picture. The role of the GCM is similar to the conductor of an orchestra; ensuring that there is good communication, teamwork, and that everyone remains focused on the goal.

The Caregiver Resource Center provides a spectrum of geriatric care management services for individuals, families and businesses. For more information contact Linda Ziac - Director at (203) 861-9833 or visit www.CaregiverResourceCenter.com