

ELDER CARE UPDATES



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www.rochestereldercare.com

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Geriatric Care Managers: What Services and Benefits Do They Provide and How Do I Find the Right Match for Me?

by Karen Witkowicz

"So, what does an elder care manager do, anyway?" is a question I hear often throughout the course of my work week. I am asked this by professionals, friends and people I meet casually. To folks not in the health care field, the term is unfamiliar.

In these times of tremendous change in the health care system, there can be much confusion about services among elderly people and their caregivers. What are the differences between independent living, assisted living and enriched living? What does "continuum of care" mean? How do you compare nursing homes? What services are available to you or your relative? What are you "entitled to" and how is payment handled? Mulling over several pages of home health agencies can be confusing as well. How can families know which ones have a good "track record" for stable and reliable service.

For many people, balancing work, family life and caring for an older relative can be challenging. New services, both residential and home-based are starting-up all the time. Often, adult children live far away from their elderly relatives, causing them worry and stress about proper care. Questions about when nursing home placement should be considered are always difficult. What do you do when Mom wants to stay home alone as long as possible? These are just a few of



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the many concerns of caregivers and care receivers.

In many cases, a private geriatric (or elder) care manager can be the advocate that is needed to help sort out care options and monitor services. The geriatric care manager in a private practice is independent of the agencies, residences, homes and services they recommend. There is no hidden agenda or quota to fill. The sole concern is for the elderly care receiver to get the best care possible and for their caregivers to be informed and comfortable assisting their relative in making these care choices. Geriatric care managers can be the lifeline that single elders who have no family in the area need to get services that can enrich their health and lives.

How do you choose a care manager that will be the right fit with the elder and family? A good care manager will take the time to listen to you and your elderly relative to understand the needs, wants and strengths of each of you. It is a good idea to interview several geriatric care managers to find a good fit. Ask about credentials, what schools they attended and what experience they have. Ask if

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*"Excellent care for your loved one
..... Peace of mind for you."*

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New Senior Community To Open In Webster

The Baywinde Senior Living Community in Webster is opening this fall and is accepting applications now. Located next to the Bayview YMCA, this community will expand the senior residential options on the east side of Monroe County. Baywinde will offer seniors living options ranging from independent to memory care assisted living.

For seniors with a high level of independence the community offers **patio homes**. These two bedroom homes have an attached garage, fireplace and front porch. Home maintenance and housekeeping services are provided.

Apartment homes are one and two bedroom models with additional services such as linen laundry, housekeeping and two daily meals.

Assisted living units are available for those who need increased services for themselves or a loved one. All meals, personal care, medication supervision, transportation are among the services provided.

In the **assisted living memory care** neighborhood the above amenities are included in a safe, secure environment that uses music, art, recreational activities and family involvement to promote its residents' well-being. Two bedroom companion apartments are available for memory impaired elders and their primary caregivers to share.

For more information call Jan Glende, 872-8100, 200 Kidd Castle Way, Webster, NY 14580.„

Resources For Caregivers

www.alfa.org

This is the website for the Assisted Living Federation of America where there is a great deal of consumer info available. It defines and gives facts about assisted living. It gives other senior housing definitions and has an Online Residence Directory, as well as articles of interest about assisted living.

www.aoa.gov/directory

The Resource Directory for Older People can be obtained here. This website is published by the Administration on Aging and has names, addresses, phone and fax numbers for organizations that can provide information and resources on matters pertaining to seniors. „

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they specialize in certain fields. Some specialize in working with memory-impaired people and others may specialize in working with the legal profession as examples. Request references and check them.

Fees vary greatly. Many care managers charge an hourly rate. The rates vary from \$50 - \$85 per hour. Since fees can add up quickly, be sure you stay in touch with your geriatric care manager and be specific in what services you are asking him/her to provide. Many care managers offer package rates and these need to be discussed to determine what will work out the best for you.

You and a qualified, knowledgeable, geriatric care manager making informed decisions results in the best care for your loved one and stress relief, peace of mind and the energy you need for the other areas of your life. 1 „



Can She Continue To Live Alone. . . ?

- Á Do you know an elderly person whose skills for daily living are deteriorating and no one connected with the situation seems to know what to do?
- Á After your contact with this person do you worry that no one sees the whole picture?
- Á Do you fear for the safety of this elderly client?
- Á Are you concerned for the welfare of the caregiver in this situation?

Consider referring this elderly person and his or her family to an Elder Care Manager. A Care Manager can help a family identify its needs for elder care assistance. There are many options available and many choices to be made about elder care. Be sure that your clients have as much experience and knowledge available to them as possible.