



# ELDERCARE RESOURCE SERVICES



INFO@ELDERCARERESOURCE SERVICES.COM  
WWW.ELDERCARERESOURCE SERVICES.COM  
"HELPING YOU HELP YOUR LOVED ONES"

JANUARY 2009  
A FREE PUBLICATION ON ELDER ISSUES

## SOCIAL ISOLATION

Now that the holidays have passed and it is 2009, family members who were busy with the holiday season find themselves with time on their hands. For some seniors they are able to move from one activity to another and keep themselves active. For others it is not that easy. With winter and the very cold weather many seniors tend to stay indoors more. It is important to observe and listen for signs of changes such as change in appetite or sleep patterns or just in their conversation and words. This is the time of year family members can try some other techniques so their relative is not isolated. For example, if there

is a son or daughter out of state, have them send their relative a post card regularly. The mail becomes important and it reminds your family member that they are important. If there are some tasks that your family member can do in their home; for instance stamp thank you notes, put holiday photos in an album, cut out recipes from a few magazines and put them in order, this allows your relative to feel important and they feel they have a purpose and are helping their children.

Everyone wants to feel useful. Being busy helps during the winter blues.

## ASK QUESTIONS

When a relative has a new diagnosis or is being treated for a medical condition, it is okay to ask many questions. Some physicians have a tight schedule and are limited to a certain amount of time per patient. You and your relative's questions are important. If a physician does not have time to answer the questions, ask the physician if there is better time to meet or a better time to talk by phone or to communicate via e-mail. Give the physician other opportunities for communication.

Your questions are important and the answers can help you and your family make more informed decisions.

## ABOUT US

**ElderCare Resource Services** is a geriatric care management company co-owned by Linda Sullivan RN, and Debbie Gitner LCSW. Our unique Nurse/Social Worker team are able to provide both psychosocial and medical consultation to our clients. Linda and Debbie work together on each case. Clients can call either one of us as we always work as a team. We are strong advocates for our clients giving them information to make them better consumers; getting their relative the best care possible. Together we are able to assist our clients and their families with information on Home Care, Assisted Living, and or Nursing Homes. Linda and Debbie each have over 30 years working with the geriatric population. Now is the time to plan for the future. Call us today if you have a question about our services. We'll be happy to chat. Look for our monthly column in the Metro West News called 'Senior Savvy.'

## INFECTIONS

The news continues to report the high rate of infections in hospitals. Infections should be taken seriously. There are times that antibiotics are able to resolve the infection and other times the first antibiotic is unable to clear the infection. If your rela-

tive needs another course of antibiotics to cure an infection do not be alarmed. Many times seniors do need a second course of antibiotics. Talk with your relative's physician about the type of infection. Is it a urinary infection, upper respira-

tory or an infection post op?

Ask questions and stay on top of the situation. Infections should be taken seriously because they can spread throughout the body causing organs to shut down.



Member of:  
**The National Association of Professional Geriatric Care Managers**

*"Helping you help your loved ones"*

*info@eldercareresourceservices.com*

*Debbie Cell: 508-733-3964*

*Linda Cell: 508-958-8967*

*Fax: 508-405-0963*

*Toll Free: 866-280-2308*

*Phone: 508-879-7008*

*Eldercare Resource Services  
29 Gano Road  
Marlboro, MA 01752*

## FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

**Q: My mother's doctor will not call me back. I am worried about my mother but can not obtain any information. How can I resolve this problem?**

**A:** There is a form called a HIPPA form which your mother would have to sign. The form needs to have a statement from your mother that gives you permission to obtain her medical information. Give this to the physician's and they will talk with you. The HIPPA allows you to obtain medical information but not to make decisions. To be able to make decisions a health care proxy needs to be completed and the physician would need to invoke the proxy stating your mother is not able to make decisions for herself.

**Q: My mother does not trust doctor's and is suspicious of all medical treatments. She refuses to take**

**medications and only wants to take herbal remedies. She now has high cholesterol and a thyroid problem. What can I do?**

**A:** There is nothing you can do. Your mother is competent and able to make her own decisions. In the eyes of the law, she is able to lead her life and make decisions for herself as she sees fit. Remember that fact if your mother becomes very ill. Fighting with your mother over these issues is not good for her or for you. Eventually there will be animosity. Accept your mother's ways and always remember she lead her life her way and had quality of life the way she choose.

**Q: My parents have chosen to move to a continuum retirement community. How can I**

**assist them with this move?**

**A:** Just a quick statement—read the contract and have a lawyer read the contract as well. It is important to know the process if either of your parents need more care; how do they move from the assisted living to the Nursing Home and what are the additional costs. If your parents are unhappy and choose to move out it is important to know ahead of time how that process works and the costs involved. Help your parents by asking if they need help packing, organizing, and being there for them.

**Q: My father is in Florida and wants to move closer to me. How do I make this happen?**

**A:** Hire a Geriatric Care Manager who can assist you with information on local facilities which will save you time and make the move seamless. Call us and we can help.