



ELDERCARE RESOURCE SERVICES



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"HELPING YOU HELP YOUR LOVED ONES"

MAY 2009
A FREE PUBLICATION ON ELDER ISSUES

ALZHEIMER'S AND OTHER DISORDERS

Many seniors find themselves overwhelmed when finding out they have Alzheimer's disease. It is only exacerbated when depression, anxiety, and other psychotic conditions co-exist. Depression is common in about 50% of seniors with Alzheimer's disease, with 25% having a major depression. Anxiety disorders which include nervousness, fear, agitation about changes in routine, and even some suspicion affect about 30% of seniors with Alzheimer's disease. Other psychotic disorders include: pacing, delusions, hallucinations, sleep disturbances, restlessness, paranoia, verbal and or physical

abuse. These negative behaviors not only affect the senior but the entire family caring for the senior.

It is important to find a physician who is able to differentiate between the diagnosis of Alzheimer's disease and the other diagnoses. Once a differentiable diagnosis has been made then each disease can be treated separately. Medications can provide relief but sometimes other interventions such as providing activities, exercise, having a daily routine, or listening to music can reduce feelings of sadness and be effective in treating Alzheimer's disease and other differential diagnoses.

INSURANCE

There are many options for Seniors including Medicare with a supplemental program such as Blue Cross and Blue Shield. With this program there are no prior approvals and any physician who accepts Medicare can be seen by the senior.

There are also HMO's which can be less costly per month. However, some HMO's require prior approvals for certain testing and co-pays for appointments. Remember, changes from an HMO back to traditional Medicare can occur at anytime. Check with the HMO to find out how to disenroll. Compare all options as the health needs of the Senior changes.

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.'

MEDICATIONS

Multiple medical diseases are quite common among the senior population. Seniors often visit their physician regularly and are given medications to help control symptoms of a disease or to control a disease itself. When starting a new medication it is

important to start on a low dose and go up from there. Many seniors are on multiple medications and with each additional medication there are risks of side effects. Try to only start one medication at a time; otherwise if there is a side effect it is

difficult to know which medication is causing the side effect. Ask the physician about the risks of each medication specifically risk of fall, risk of changes in blood pressure, and other possible side effects.



Member of:
The National Association of Professional Geriatric Care Managers

"Helping you help your loved ones"

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FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

Q: My father does not throw anything out. He saves old envelopes, empty medication containers, papers, newspapers and everything else. He will not clean and will not let me clean. How can I keep his house clean?

A: From what you described it sounds as if your father is hoarding. This is very common among seniors with memory loss. They hold on to everything and need to have it all within eyesight. One reason could be your father feels if he does not see an item then he will forget where he puts it. Or it could be related to either his memory or his parents talking to him about the depression, and it could be related to your father's increase need for control. It is not easy to change habits and to move any personal items. Decide what is important to clean and

throw out and explain it to your father. Move slowly when you clean. This way you will build trust up with your father.

Q: My mother's health is failing quickly and the doctor said the family needs to think about Hospice. Can you explain what Hospice is all about?

A: Hospice is a service available to any individual in the end stages of their disease. Hospice can be for Alzheimer's disease, Cancer, Parkinsons or any other end stage disease. Hospice offers quality of life by being able to have the knowledge on pain medications. For example they can provide creams rather than have someone take an oral medication when swallowing is difficult. Hospice is also able to address

issues such as when to stop invasive procedures such as blood work and can allow the person to have choices. Medicare will cover many of the Hospice related costs. Hospice services can be provided in a home, in most Nursing Homes, or there are a number of inpatient Hospice facilities. Contact us and we can further explain the role of Hospice and the benefits the program offers.

Q: My mother does not qualify for a Nursing Home and does not have the means for an Assisted Living. She states she does not want to live alone any more even if services are brought into the home. Are there other options for seniors?

A: There are a few options depending upon the town your mother lives in and the care she needs: Supportive Housing and or Rest Home. Contact us or your local Council on Aging for options.