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**ELDERCARE RESOURCE SERVICES**



**INFO@ELDERCARESERVICES.COM**  
**WWW.ELDERCARESERVICES.COM**  
**"HELPING YOU HELP YOUR LOVED ONES"**

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**A FREE PUBLICATION ON ELDER ISSUES**  
**TEL: 508-879-7008**

## **PARKINSON'S DISEASE**

As the disease progresses it can become more challenging to dress, bath, eat, walk and talk. Continually exercising is key to keeping the muscles moving. Exercise through ballroom dancing, an exercise program for Parkinson's patients or Rock Steady Boxing are all good options

This article will present some tips for making life easier for the Parkinson's patient:

Use satin sheets—the slippery surface makes it easier to turn over in bed. Try a vibrating pillow to relieve stiff, tight or achy muscles. Adjust the height of the bed to the height of the individual with Parkinson's.

If the bathroom door is

narrow consider removing the door and hanging a tension rod with a curtain. This could make it easier getting in and out of a bathroom with a wheelchair. If there is room, consider changing the door to a pocket door.

Install a support pole by the bed, toilet, living room chair, kitchen chair etc.

When the person with Parkinson's gets stuck in a freeze, try taking their hands in yours hand while facing them and gently pumping your hands up and down in an alternating motion.

When it is difficult to take a step forward, take a small step back, rock forward and go. When it is difficult to step left, take a small step

right, then rock your left foot and go.

If there is difficulty standing from a seated position, place hands on the armrest, rock back and forth and count.

If pills are difficult to take, put the pill in the mouth, tilt the chin down, look down at the bottom of the glass of water and swallow. Continue to look down during the entire swallowing process.

In MA there is an organization called APDA, American Parkinson's Disease Association. The web site is: <http://apdama.org/wcms/> Information and clinical trials are on the site.

## **ABOUT US**

**ElderCare Resource Services** is a certified aging care management company co-owned by Linda Sullivan RN, CMC, and Debbie Gitter LCSW, C-SWCM. Our unique Nurse/Social Worker team is able to provide both psychosocial and medical consultation to our clients. Linda and Debbie work together on each case. Families can consult with either of us. We are strong advocates for our clients giving them information to make them better consumers; getting their relative the best care. Together we are able to assist our clients and their families with information on Community Services, Home Care, Assisted Living, and Nursing Homes. Linda and Debbie have over 35 years working with the geriatric population. Now is the time to plan for the future. Call us if you have a question about our services. We'll be happy to chat. Look for our monthly column in the Metro West News 'Senior Questions and Answers'

## **THANKSGIVING**

Thanksgiving is a time to reflect backwards and set goals moving forward. This is a good time of year to assess the needs of our aging family members and bring up that difficult discussion; how do you want to live the rest of your life and what should I do if you become ill and need care. This is one of the hardest

discussions to have but one of the most important discussions. Sometimes phrasing it with compassion and caring can open the doors. Everybody wants control of their lives and wants to choose. Try to lead the conversation without being judgmental. Validate, repeat their words, and keep saying; if

I know your wishes I will do my best to honor them. Linda and Debbie can meet with family members and the aging adult to discuss having a plan in place when there is a change in medical health. We can bring up the tough questions as professionals.

Certified Members of:



**National and New England Associations of Professional Geriatric Care Managers**

## INSURANCE

Once again as in past years it is open enrollment for Prescription Part D, and open enrollment to make changes to your medical insurance plans effective January 1, 2016.

Part D covers prescription drugs. Between now and December 7, 2015 review the current prescription plan to see if the current plan will continue to be the best plan in 2016. Some Part D prescription drug companies change what medications are covered or change the cost of medications or the monthly premium or the deductible. This is why it is important to review the current plan to see if it is the best plan in 2016.

One way to review Part D is to contact the local Council on Aging and arrange for an appointment with the SHINE (Serving the Health Information Needs of El-

ders) counselor. A SHINE counselor is able to provide free health insurance information and counseling to Massachusetts residents with Medicare. They are also able to assist family members regarding their relative.

The Medicare website also has information on how to compare plans. Go to [www.medicare.gov](http://www.medicare.gov) and in the search box type "part d plans for 2016", click on it and you will be able to put in the current list of medications and compare the cost of the current plan with the cost of other plans.

If you decide to change plans this can be done either on line or by a phone call. The new Part D prescription drug company will notify the old Part D prescription drug company of the change.

It is important to enroll in Part D when you turn 65. If you did not enroll and did not have coverage from another source, when you do apply for Part D there will be a financial penalty.

Part B coverage may increase for some people. For a single individual with an income above \$85,000 and a couple above \$170,000 may pay more in 2016. This increase is in the President's 2016 budget.

### EVENTS:

November 7th at the Callahan Center at 535 Union Ave in Framingham. *Ageless Grace: Timeless Fitness for Body and Mind for People with Dementia*. 9:30 AM Registration and 10:00-11:00 Presentation. RSVP to Lisa 508-532-5980 Ex.2

November 11th at New Bridge on the Charles at 6000 Great Meadow Drive in Needham. *Managing Parkinson's Disease—Partnering with Clients and Families* Presented by APDA and ALCA-NE. Registration at 8 AM. Program 8:45 AM– Noon. Free. For a brochure and to register go to: <http://www.gcmnewengland.org/>

## FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

**Q: My mother is in a Nursing Home and I want to buy her something significant related to her middle to end stage dementia and not just another nightgown. Do you have any ideas?**

**A:** Consider purchasing lavender hand lotion. Studies have shown that lavender relaxes people. Put together family pictures of years past in a digital photo album that continues to show picture after picture. This can be turned on and the picture rotate through. Purchase headphones and an I-pad. Put your mother's favorite music on the I-pad, favorite songs, favorite artists etc. When you or other family members visit place the headphones on her ears. Some favorite songs bring back good memories.

**Q: I am trying to keep my parents at home but I am exhausted. What**

**resources are there to help them which helps me.**

**A:** Consider having an assessment from a Geriatric Care Manager who can come into the home to meet with your parents and you to discuss the situation. This assessment will include a plan of care to allow them to age in place. Your parents may feel you are quite able to keep going however as a caregiver you are one person caring for two people and at high risk of caregiver burnout. Give us a call to talk and we can find ways to help you and your parents.

**Q: My father was admitted to an Assisted Living and included in his paperwork was information on palliative care. Do I need to worry that this facility is already seeing my father at the end of life. The move was to give my**

**father a quality of life and focus on being with people. Can you explain this?**

**A:** In MA a law went into effect that anyone moving into a facility must be given written information on options for care. The idea was to provide information prior to a crisis which allows people to make informed decisions about healthcare which reflect each person's personal goal, wishes and values. The information must be given out to everyone with a serious advancing illness. Information should be in writing defining what is palliative care, what is hospice care, what ways to provide advance care planning. One good website is *Honoring Choices*:

**[www.honoringchoicesmass.com](http://www.honoringchoicesmass.com)**  
They explain everything in simple words and offer anyone (even without a serious illness) paperwork to complete stating their personal wishes.