

CAREGIVER CHRONICLE

Connections for Caregivers

Where Have All the Nursing Homes Gone?

By Jennifer Fitterman

Decades ago, when the family could no longer care for Grandma, she went off to live in “the Home,” a sometimes gloomy place with rocking chairs on the front porch, mint green-colored walls and staff in white nursing uniforms. Today, nursing homes have evolved into many different types of facilities, many focused on state-of-the-art accommodations and active lifestyles, including independent living, assisted living, memory care and skilled nursing facilities. The traditional “nursing home” is no more with options growing, especially those geared toward younger, more active seniors, which can lead to a great deal of confusion about their choices. Next Steps Senior Solutions assists seniors, at no cost to them, navigate their options and find the best choice. Here is a brief overview of the Continuum of Senior Living options.

Independent Living is ideal for the individual/couple that want to thoroughly enjoy retirement without any concern for the maintenance and bother of keeping up a home, and would benefit from having help close by, but doesn't need much assistance with daily living activities, such as bathing

or toileting. They do not employ nursing staff, but they do include housekeeping, meals and a robust calendar of activities with lots of socialization opportunities. They offer studios to multi-bedroom options and range from \$1500 to about \$3000 per month per person and are “private” pay, meaning that it is not covered by Medicare or any other health insurance.

Assisted Living is better suited for the individual(s) needing any assistance with activities of daily living, such as medication management, bathing assistance or any kind of disease management, like insulin-dependent diabetes. Nurses oversee the care, while care aides assist and provide care around the clock for basic needs. They offer on-going activities for residents, as well as all of the benefits of Independent Living. Residents must be ambulatory and must not require extensive skilled nursing care. Apartments range in size from studios to two bedrooms. Costs range from \$2500-\$5000/month per person depending on accommodations and care needs and is also private pay.

Memory Care is usually a separate section within an assisted living which offers similar care

and smaller accommodations, in a more secure environment, designed to be more comfortable and enriching for those with dementia or other cognitive disorders. Apartments are typically studios and some can be shared. Prices usually begin at \$4000 per month and is private pay.

Skilled Nursing, or “Rehab,” is typically the next step after a hospitalization for strengthening or other skilled care. They offer twenty-four hour nursing with CNAs providing assistance with care and a therapy department on-site offering physical, occupational and speech therapy. Accommodations are sparse with some offering private rooms. It is usually short-term, with Medicare or other medical insurance covering some or all of it depending on length of stay. They do offer some long-term options, but generally only for residents that are unable to return home after their rehabilitation.

Jennifer Fitterman is a partner at Next Steps Senior Solutions. For a more robust review of the options or for assistance, visit www.NextStepsSeniorSolutions.com.

Savvy Caregiver Training

Savvy Caregiver Training is a multi-session training dedicated to people who care for family members and friends with dementias (like Alzheimer's). Our goal is to reduce caregiver stress by offering easy-to-understand information about progressive dementias, related medicines, and diagnostic tools. In the program we help caregivers build skills on relating to persons of dementia when they behave in ways that baffle, embarrass or irritate you and others.

Here is a sampling of our upcoming schedule. Choose whichever series works for your schedule and call Johnnie Jones at jonesj@agingresources.org or 352-692-5277 to register.

03/05/2018	Mondays	1:00 – 3:00 pm	Haven Hospice, Chiefland
03/07/2018	Wednesdays	1:00 – 3:00 pm	Live Oak Public Library, Live Oak
04/03/2018	Tuesdays	1:00 – 3:00 pm	Ocala West United Methodist, Ocala
04/05/2018	Thursdays	2:00 – 4:00 pm	Cone Park Library, Gainesville
04/10/2018	Tuesdays	1:00 – 3:00 pm	Haven Hospice, Palatka
04/26/2018	Thursdays	1:30 – 3:30 pm	Bradford County Senior Center

More dates of upcoming Savvy Caregiver Trainings can be found at our Web Page (<http://www.agingresources.org/savvy-caregiver-for-families>). Or, go to our Facebook Page (<https://www.facebook.com/Savvy-Caregiver-Training-131134764247962>) for other information, tips and techniques about caregiving and dementia.



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and her vision

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From the Desk of Sam W. Boone, Jr.:

Watch Out for New Medicare Scammers

By Sam W. Boone, Jr.

Editor's Note: This is part of a series of columns that will be presented in this newsletter by Sam W. Boone, Jr., a local attorney whose primary practice areas include elder law, estate planning, probate and trust administration. It is hoped that the information will be valuable for caregivers and family members dealing with issues related to elder law.

It didn't take long. New Medicare cards are being introduced starting next month. It is expected that it will take a full year for the new cards to be totally distributed. But already, scammers are hard at work with new plans to attack recipients of the cards.

The irony is that the new cards are designed, in part, to protect against scammers. The card will include an 11-character, randomly assigned number with no connection to any other personal information, like Social Security numbers.

One new scamming ploy is relatively simple. You would get a phone call from someone claiming to be a Medicare representative. This person will ask for payment in exchange for the new card. Do not make any payment. The new card is free and is going to all Medicare beneficiaries.

Additionally, you may be contacted by someone also claiming to be a Medicare representative, asking you to purchase Medicare's prescription drug coverage – Part D. The scammer may pressure you to purchase Part D or face losing all your Medicare coverage. However, Part D is completely voluntary. Including it or not in your Medicare package has no effect on your overall health plan.

A third new scam involves someone calling to tell you there is a refund waiting for you from your insurance company. The caller will ask for your bank account number and Social Security number in order for you to get your refund. You should never give this information out over the phone,

Finally, a similar scam will have someone call, claiming to be from Medicare, and needing

to update or confirm your information. Again, never give this information out on the phone if you have any doubts.

If a scammer is successful at this medical identity theft, they can use your insurance to see doctors, get prescriptions, buy medical equipment and even file a false claim. If they get your bank information, they can do even more damage to you.

The Ponemon Institute, an organization that does research on privacy, data protection and information security, offers this frightening



statistic. In one year's time medical identity theft has jumped 21 percent and costs the average victim approximately \$13,500 to correct.

Be aware that, for the most part, Medicare will never contact you by phone. Medicare communication is done by U.S. Mail.

With these new scams already active, the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS), with help from AARP, has already started a campaign to protect Medicare recipients from having their cards get into the wrong hands.

The most important thing to remember is if you receive one of these calls, hang up. The new card is free, and no one from Medicare will call to verify information before you receive it. You can also contact Medicare, talk to a family member or friend you trust or go to this website: <https://www.cms.gov/outreach-and-education/outreach/partnerships/fraudpreventiontoolkit.html>.

Sam W. Boone, Jr. is a Gainesville-based attorney practicing elder law and estate planning. He is past-president of the Academy of Florida Elder Law Attorneys and is accredited by the Veterans Administration. To learn more about elder-law issues, go online to [www. http://boonelaw.com](http://boonelaw.com), or call (352) 374-8308.

The Benefits of Effective Home Healthcare

By Elizabeth Phillips
Professional Service Coordinator,
Carter Healthcare

Long hospital stays or institutional living are almost never a good alternative for people – even less so when those people are older. But often it is challenging to find an alternative that will work best for your older family member.

One effective alternative may be to bring in a qualified home healthcare agency. But the question at that point for family caregivers is how to know who is qualified.

There are some things to look for when trying to determine what agency you want to bring in to help care for your loved one.

First, look for a Medicare-certified, Joint Commission-accredited home healthcare agency that can provide safe, in-home medical care in the local community.

Home healthcare is an alternative to prolonged and costly hospital stays and institutional living. At home, people are more likely to recover quickly due to the comfort of being in a familiar environment. Services provided are Skilled Nursing, Physical, Occupational and Speech Therapies.

Each patient's program should be tailored to his or her personal medical history and current situation. Resources leading to positive outcomes include:

- a comprehensive re-hospitalization prevention plan;
- a heightened level of clinical oversight during critical post-hospitalization days;
- advanced wound management using certified wound care specialists; and
- routine maintenance checks through the Continued Wellness Program.

Diagnoses that may qualify for home healthcare include, but are not limited to, the following:

- Cardiovascular issues, such as angina and congestive heart failure
- Diabetic disorders, such as neuropathy and ulcers
- Gastrointestinal issues, such as diverticulitis and GERD
- Neurological conditions, such as ALS and Parkinson's
- Oncological issues, such as anemia and malnutrition
- Orthopedic/muscular issues, such as fractures and lower extremity weakness
- Respiratory issues, such as COPD and pneumonia
- Urological conditions, such as incontinence and UTI.

Carter Healthcare is a leading healthcare provider focused on delivering outcomes-based results and the highest quality of Home-Health Services to thousands of clients in the comfort of their homes. Physician referral is required to initiate services with Carter Healthcare. To learn more, call (888) 951-1112 or go online to www.carterhealthcare.com.

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Your Most Important Role

Editor's Note: The first half of this article appeared in the January Caregiver chronicle. To read it, go to www.caregiverchronicle.com

By Johnnie Jones III

Telling a parent "no" may seem disrespectful. Resisting the urge to allow someone who has always made decisions with you to share in directing their care may cause a lot of internal conflict.

The role of caregiver must always come first. Things typically go smoothly for family caregivers until one of those other roles slips past you and responds without the benefit of the caregiver filter through which everything must be seen. Anger, frustration and disappointment come when you interact with your person as mom or honey instead of responding as if you were giving care to a beloved older neighbor or the parent of a dear friend. For dementia caregivers, as your person's condition worsens and the disease progresses, the caregiver will remember and understand their role prior to the onset of illness but the care recipient will not. This means that caregivers sometimes hold on to expired role expectations long after their person has

released them. Caregiving is multifaceted and complex enough without further complicating it with biological, marital and relational barriers.

The role of caregiver is distinctly different from all other roles and relationships and family caregivers have the difficult task of separating themselves from their past and seeing their care recipient as someone to whom they are coincidentally related. No matter how child-like your person's behaviors or symptoms may be, you must never respond as a parent. This is not a role reversal because although your care recipient may have been parent, spouse or older sibling, they probably never had to care for you in a clinical context.

When you interact with your care recipient remember that now that they are ill your first and most important role is as caregiver.

Johnnie Jones III is the Caregiver Support Coordinator for Elder Options/Savvy Caregiver Training Program. Upcoming trainings and other information can be found at www.agingresources.org/savvy-caregiver-for-families, or on Facebook at www.facebook.com/Savvy-Caregiver-Training-131134764247962.

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Scientists Have Discovered The Secret To Living a Long, Healthy, Fulfilling Life

By Ruth Brunner

Researchers call it “connectedness.” In other words, those who spend time with family and friends and have personal connections with people every day are more likely to live longer, stay healthier and be happier. And it also helps people stay independent, remain mentally sharp, and reduce the risk of health issues such as Alzheimer’s.

According to a study from Harvard Medical School, “Connectedness is as much a protective factor – probably more – than lowering your blood pressure, losing weight, quitting smoking, or wearing your seat belt.”

That is why Windsor of Gainesville is so passionate about what we do. We want people to be able to stay as independent and active as they can, but without the responsibilities of a house. They benefit by having the time to do

the things they want and having a friendly, fun atmosphere full of other active people.

Many people don’t want to move out of their house and live somewhere else. We want to stay at home because we want to be “independent.” But ironically, the longer we stay, the more our own house can become a burden. And worse, living alone or having limited opportunity for “connectedness” day after day can drain your energy, bring on ill health and even shorten your life.

Windsor of Gainesville is more than a place to live, it is a lifestyle. It is a community of people who want to have a more active social life.

Ruth Brunner is the Sales Director for The Windsor of Gainesville.

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Caregiver Support Groups

Alz Place
3rd Thursday of the month at 9am
Open to all caregivers
1610 NW 23rd Ave., Gainesville
Contact Nancy at 352-265-9200

Alzheimer's Association
Caregiver Support Group
2nd Thursday of each month - 1:30 p.m.
Edward Jones conference room,
220 North Main Street, Suite 2, Chiefland
Contact Kathryn at 352-493-4949

Cancer Center at NFRMC
Breast Cancer Support Group
2nd Tuesday of the month - 6pm - 7:30 pm
Call Susie at 352-213-5890

Community Cancer Center
Living With Cancer Supports
www.cccnf.com for more information

Community Cancer Center
Lake City Support Group
2nd Wednesday every month 11am - 1pm
4520 W.US Hwy. 90, Lake City, FL 32055 For more information call 386-755-0601

Community Coalition for Older Adults
Second Friday of the month, Senior Recreation Center,
5701 NW 34 St.
Contact Shirley Bloodworth at
sgblood@bellsouth.net
for information.

Haven Hospice
Bereavement Supports
Call 692-5123 for more information

Hospice of Marion County
Transitions Caregiver Support Group
Usually the 2nd Tuesday of each month 11am - 1 pm
The Elliott Center, 3231 SW 34th Ave. Ocala
Call for information 352-854-5200

Hospice of the Nature Coast
Wings Community Education Center
Grief Support Group- High Springs
Call 386-454-1338 for more information

Lake Area Caregiver Support Group
4th Tuesday of the month from 1-2:00pm
Trinity Episcopal Church
204 SR 26, Melrose, FL 32666
Call 352-475-3792 for more information

Park Meadows Health and Rehab Center
3250 SW 41 Pl, GV
Call the Alz Helpline at 1-800-272-3900 for more information

Senior Healthcare Center at Springhill
3rd Tuesday of the month- 2:30-4:00pm
3720 NW 83rd Street, Gainesville, FL 32606
Contact Flory at 336-3050

NF Mind Matters Stroke Support Group
4th Thursday of the month from 1-2 pm
South Tower, 4th floor Conference Room-NFRMC
Call 1-800-611-6913 for more information

The Village
(for Village residents only)
2nd Thursday of the month from 1:30-3 pm
8000 NW 27th Blvd., Gainesville, FL 32606
Call 872-5332 for more information

United Church of Gainesville
1624 NW 5th Ave, GV
3rd Tuesday of the month from 7-8pm
Open to caregivers of persons with dementia
Contact Lynda at 352-219-3023

VA Caregiver Support
Mon-Fri- 8am- 11pm, Sat. 10:30-6pm
Call 1-855-260-3274

Useful Resources

Seniors vs. Crime: www.seniorsvscrime.com
Alzheimer's Association – www.alz.org/cnfl/index.asp
Doggie Styles: Mobile Pet Grooming – www.doggiestyles.org
Elder Affairs – www.elderaffairs.state.fl.us/index.php
Elder Helpline – 1-800-963-5337, options@agingresources.org
Elder Options – Savvy Caregiver Classes –
www.agingresources.org
Florida Silver Alert – www.floridasilveralert.com
SHINE (Serving Health Insurance Needs of Elders)
www.floridashine.org
Driving – www.independencedrive.phhp.ufl.edu
Medicare – www.medicare.org
State of Florida – www.myflorida.com
National Institute on Aging (free publications) – www.nig.nih.gov
United Way – Alachua, Bradford & Putnam counties –
www.unitedwaycnfl.org
National Association of Professional Geriatric Care Management
– www.caremanager.org
U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs – www.va.gov



Ride to Remember

April 28

*To learn more go to:
<http://gccfla.org/rtr/>*