

CAREGIVER CHRONICLE

Connections for Caregivers

Creating a Care Plan

By Johana Wiznitzer

It's never easy to accept that it may be time to create a care plan for your loved one or family member.

The conversation doesn't have to be awkward and even though it may seem tedious, it can be much easier than it seems.

A care plan is getting all of the

information about the individual and refining it in the simplistic form. A care plan enables you to identify the problem and come up with possible solutions. If you're not thinking about creating one in the near future, having a plan in mind will eliminate the stress associated with the unexpected.

The first step you should take before even creating a care plan is identifying the problems of your loved one. Does he or she trip, wander, forget things easily or is simply unable to complete simple tasks? If yes, then a care plan may be necessary.

"It's a case by case situation and there are steps. If people understood the system people would be able to not have everything falling apart. The reality is a lot of people don't reach out or deal with it because it won't happen to me," said Flory Antiga-Stephens Case Manager for Senior Healthcare Center at Springhill.

It is important to keep in mind that a care plan does not have to be done immediately; it is something that should be talked about amongst your family members. They will be there for the emotional support because it might be difficult to accept the fact that is (continued on next page)



CAREGIVER FORUM
JULY 21, 2016
 Downtown Gainesville Library
 401 East University Avenue,
 Gainesville, FL 32601

RSVP at 800-272-3900
 or at info@alz.org

10:00 a.m.
 REGISTRATION

10:30 a.m.
 WELCOME AND KEYNOTE:

EVALUATING DANGER, RISK AND SAFETY IN ORDER TO CREATE A GOOD CARE PLAN

Discuss when to step in and protect the patient versus allowing people to be in charge of their own decisions. Identify a bioethical strategy and set of guidelines for those managing these situations. Demonstrate the questions to ask when evaluating the dangers and how to help people get past not wanting to see the changes that are happening

MANAGING EMOTIONALLY CHARGED INTERACTIONS

Discuss how to manage the anger, denial and guilt found in highly emotional interactions. Practice mediation techniques to reduce conflicts and to increase compassion and respect. Identify approaches to change the interaction into a more positive, empathetic conversation

12:00 p.m.
 LUNCH AND EXHIBITS

12:30 p.m.
 LEARNING TO BECOME A FEARLESS CAREGIVER

Gary Bang hosts a panel of experts that will answer your questions and share their knowledge, experience and wisdom.

1:45 p.m.
 BREAK AND VISIT EXHIBITS

2:00 p.m.
 BRAIN FITNESS TIPS FOR CAREGIVERS

Lisiani Doty, PhD explains why brain fitness is important to living a full life during our later years. Catching early signs of memory and thinking problems may result in fixing simple memory problems. We will practice a series of different brain exercises, and talk about a brain-healthy lifestyle

3:15 p.m.
 CLOSING AND EVALUATIONS

alzheimer's association
 central & north florida chapter
 800.272.3900 | ALZ.ORG/CNFL

Making the Decision

(continued from previous page)

time for your loved ones to go into a care plan.

Once it has been talked about, the next step is finding the right information for your loved one. It is important to look at your loved one's mental and medical history, to make sure the assessment is as precise as possible. Gather all of the individual's history such as their insurance information, social security, Medicare/Medicaid, medication and their dosages.

At first it may be hard to accept the concept of getting older and needing help. The individual's life is changing – mentally, physically and emotionally. But there shouldn't be a fear, if you aren't prepared, said Antiga-Stephens.

Make sure you have an understanding of the financial aspect of a care plan. It's important to keep in mind your family's financial status and the estimated cost of how much the care might cost.

After looking at the financial costs, create an assessment. First look at their physical status. How long can they walk for? Up to what point can they complete a task. What can they do? What can't they do? Determine their capabilities. Next, look at their current cognitive and mental health. Look into their social interactions, their relationships with others and possible caregivers that meet their needs. Also look into their social aspect: their social interaction, social group and who could be a potential caregiver.

"We have one patient who is 93 years old and was living alone. One day when she went to her pharmacist to pick up her medication she seemed really confused. The pharmacist called us, and we

made some arrangements for her daughter, who is now retired, to live with her. It's a realization that things have changed; although, it is a mild change it is a significant one that she can no longer live alone," Antiga-Stephens said.

It is always essential to keep in mind your loved one's wishes and desires. As your loved one ages, their needs may change as well. Remember the more you know about your loved one, the better it is for them.

At the end of the day, it's a human experience to age, and it is important to anticipate the unexpected.

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.



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Like the page to get notices about events and activities between our print issues.

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

New Florida Digital Assets Law Eases Restrictions on Access to Social Media

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 is now commonplace for someone to make much of their life almost entirely paperless. That created a significant problem for Florida probate and elder law attorneys because there had been no specific laws to deal with the issue.

But a Florida law passed earlier this year begins to come to grips with this monumental issue. The Florida Fiduciary Access to Digital Assets Act, which went into effect July 1, now makes it easier for personal representatives in the state.

The new law is designed with a few purposes in mind.

First, it provides fiduciaries (personal representatives, trustees, guardians and agents under durable powers of attorney) the legal authority to manage digital assets and electronic communications the same way they would bank, brokerage and other investment accounts. The law specifies when the fiduciary may access the content of digital assets and electronic communications and when he or she may only access a catalog of the digital property. This means that the access can be limited to knowing with whom you communicated and not the substance of that communication. You can prevent them from reading the content of your email or accounts allowing them to know who you have communicated with or what accounts you have accessed. Think of this as allowing your fiduciary to see what is inside an envelope or just the outside of the envelope.

Second, the law gives custodians of digital assets and electronic communications the legal authority they need to interact with the fiduciaries of their users while maintaining the user's privacy expectations for his or her personal communications. Most importantly, the law provides some legal protection for the custodian

of the digital assets.

Additionally, the law gives Internet users the ability to plan for the management and disposition of their digital assets if they should die or become unable to manage their assets. This is done by giving fiduciaries the authority to access, control or copy digital assets and accounts.

There are some limitations on the new law. It only applies to those who already have fiduciary



duties and powers. It only extends to family members or someone else to whom you have granted access to your digital accounts.

It also does not allow the fiduciary to own the asset or make transactions. And the law defines a digital asset as an electronic record, which includes electronic

communications, and does not include the underlying asset or liability unless the asset or liability is itself an electronic record.

So while this does not resolve all the issues related to digital assets, it is a good start and enables us to work with an issue that is only going to get more complex with time.

Some internet companies allow users to use their own system tools to allow you to give access to your account to others. At present, we know of only two online tools – Facebook's Legacy Contact and Google's Inactive Account Manager. But it is important to be aware that if you use those tools they will override authority that you have granted (or prohibited) if you have well drafted estate planning documents.

If you go to the blog page on our website (www.boonelaw.com), you will find a recent article we wrote about that issue.

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://www.boonelaw.com), or call (352)-374-8308.

Coordinating Care and Resources

By David Huckabee

Coordination of care and resources can be one of the greatest challenges faced by a caregiver. Making sure that all needs are addressed, medical appointments are kept, financial records are accurate, and that nothing falls through the cracks can seem overwhelming even to the most diligent caregiver.

At the Alzheimer's Association, we offer several suggestions to help caregivers through the maze of care coordination. The first of these suggestions seems almost too simple, but it is one that we often forget in the moment.

1. Write everything down. Studies have shown that the mere act of writing something down helps us remember it. Even if we don't remember it, we have the written list to refer to as needed. When we say everything, we mean everything. Doctor's appointments, questions about symptoms, phone numbers of neighbors and friends who have offered to help (and what they might be able/willing to do)...the list goes on and on. Obviously, what ends up being written will depend on the situation but when in doubt, write it out.

2. Stay organized. Reducing clutter and keeping important information in a central location can reduce the time and energy needed to find something in the moment. This includes legal papers, financial statements, medical information, etc. We also suggest

that at least two people have knowledge of where these important papers are located.

3. Plan ahead. Unfortunately, much of the stress caregivers experience happens when situations that could have been planned for were ignored or put off until another day. None of us enjoy thinking about end of life decisions, facility placement, and other stressful situations. However, planning ahead as much as possible for these events greatly reduces stress in the moment.

4. BREATHE! With very few exceptions, decisions that you need to make as a caregiver do not need to be made immediately (no matter how much other people want you to have to make them in the moment). We always think better and make better decisions if we give ourselves time to reflect and consider our options. Being a great caregiver doesn't necessarily mean being a fast caregiver.

If you would like more information about any of these suggestions or would like to participate in our educational/support opportunities, please contact the Alzheimer's Association Central and North Florida Chapter at (800) 272-3900 or e-mail me directly at dhuckabee@alz.org.

David Huckabee is the Associate Director of Programs for the North Central Florida Regional Office of the Alzheimer's Association.



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The advertisement features three photographs of a young girl: one sitting on a large cushioned chair, one standing with a walker, and one pushing a stroller.

Living in Illness Time

By Tom Rinkoski,
Caregiver Coach at Elder Options

When you are living in ordinary time, you don't tend to think about extraordinary planning. Upon tumbling into the wormhole of chronic and/or terminal illness your clocks are discombobulated and you are reduced to reactionary thinking. Contemplating the possibilities of retirement, or 55+ living (as they name it here in the Sunshine State) doesn't usually include planning for chronic pain and illness. Perhaps, the bad news cycle or watching *The Best Exotic Marigold Hotel* may have prodded you to deeper thought into funeral arrangements, perhaps even momentarily thinking about assisted care. We avoid, even deny this type of thinking not just because it's a downer, but because denial is hidden face of hope that such pain and anguish will not be a part of our story.

Beyond fears, there are plenty of other stumbling blocks to discussing end-of-life issues and making family plans: geographic distance between family members, finances, convoluted family structures, and more. If they are only stumbling blocks, and not walls, we can still make the journey. Here are some practical tips on life planning:

- Choose a time when you can be relaxed while together in the same room. Maybe that means setting up the conversation over a good meal. Perhaps setting aside some time at a family reunion.
- Anticipate that resistance may occur and be prepared to welcome it, then move on.
- Set up an environment of open communica-

tion. You know your family better than me, and are aware of what helps them to hurdle their nerves. Be prepared.

- Recognize personal & familial values and preferences. Start with what you know and can honestly accept and go forward from there.
- Keep everyone involved in discussion! While respecting the introverts space, make sure to invite each person to share feelings and thoughts.
- Get skilled help to facilitate the gathering if necessary. Do not feel less in asking for professional help. Ask a minister, a coach, a professional geriatric assistant, etc.

Your first attempt at an overall plan doesn't have to be so detailed that it takes a lawyer to draw it up. It should however take into consideration the following basic elements: Medical Help, Physical Conditions, Legal Documentation, Social and Spiritual needs, changing mental abilities, Financial resources and caring for the caregivers. Any one of these is a study session in itself. Speaking to the particulars may well mean employing professional assistance in the aspect of Elder Law Attorneys, geriatric Case Managers, Social Workers, and more. There are many agencies like Elder Options that are available as resources. Call on us for help.

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Upcoming Savvy Caregiver Trainings

Savvy Caregiver Training is an education program for dementia caregivers. The goal is to lessen caregiver stress by providing easy-to-understand information about the diseases that cause dementia, medications and its progression. In addition, we help caregivers to learn behavior management skills to properly address negative dementia interactions. Choose the training that is nearest your location.

- Live Oak, Florida at Suwanee River Regional Library. Wednesdays from 10:00 am – 12:00 Noon, starting July 27, 2016. Six week format. Led by Lauren Dean.
- Chiefland, Florida at Hospice of Citrus and The Nature Coast. Thursdays from 1:00 – 3:00 pm, starting August 18, 2016. Six week format. Led by Ana Robles-Rhoads.
- Starke, Florida at Bradford County Senior Center. Wednesdays from 1:00 – 3:00 pm, starting September 14, 2016. Six week format. Led by Lauren Dean.
- Gainesville, Florida at M.L.K. Center. Thursdays, 2:00 – 4:00 pm. Starting September 9, 2016. Six Week format. Led by Ana Robles-Rhoads.
- Palatka, Florida at Haven Hospice; Tuesdays, 1:00 – 3:00 pm. Starting October 11, 2016. Six Week format. Led by Lauren Dean.

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/SavvyCaregiverNorthCentralFlorida>) for other information, tips and techniques about caregiving and dementia.

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Things to Think About When Deciding the Best Service Plan for Your Loved One

By Sally Dahlem

Seeking extra help for a loved one is often a challenging task. Adding to the confusion, families must navigate through various types of services offered as well as compare them to their specific needs. Though the topic is not pleasant, there are tips that families can follow in order to ensure the process of choosing a service is as simple as possible and results in the best possible plan for your loved one.

One variable to consider when choosing the best service is education about what is causing a loved one to require extra help. Whether it is age, disease or disability, understanding the condition can help to understand what kind of assistance would best be suited for the loved one. For example, a loved one may have a disease where they need help accomplishing certain tasks, but may also require encouraging independence and determining the correct times to do so. Families can learn more about conditions by consulting doctors or organizations tailored to certain conditions.

Another variable to consider is the financial state of the family, an estimate of what certain services cost and what policies or insurance the family may be able to access or use with different plans. Al-

though it is easy for families to overlook the financial commitment of a care plan because many think of assistance for a loved one as invaluable, planning finances from the beginning can help families avoid strife and financial stress that can build up and cause catastrophic problems later.

One of the best variables to consider is the amount of resources that are available to help you through the process such as local medical offices and organizations such as Home by Choice. Another option is using online resources like websites or blogs that provide information that could be useful when choosing services. The Home By Choice blog contains articles with free advice offering information about preparing for care choice, ways to make your home "senior friendly," tips for discussing things with your doctor and so much more. You access this information on Home By Choice's website at <https://www.homebychoice.com/blog>.

Sally Dahlem is a partner at Home by Choice, which provides private-duty homecare services. She and her business partner, John Markham, have more than 35 years of experience in home healthcare, assisted living, long-term care and the medical equipment industries.

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John Markham and Sally Dahlem

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Caregiver Support Groups

Al'z Place/Harbor Chase
3rd Thursday of the month at 9am
Open to all caregivers
Contact Robyn at 352-375-3000 for address

Alterra Clare Bridge
3rd Thursday of the month- 6pm
4607 NW 53rd Ave, Gainesville, FL 32653
Contact Gail at 376-5151

The Cancer Center at NFRMC
Heart of Healing Support Group/Meditation
Tuesdays 12-12:30pm
Call Joanie at 386-853-0162

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

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

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.php.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