

UK Elder Care

IN THE KNOW

E-Newsletter
January 2009



A MESSAGE FROM THE COORDINATOR

Winter weather can be dangerous for older adults, especially those at risk with chronic health conditions. This is a good time to check on older family members and friends to ensure they have adequate heat and warmth during the cold months. AARP provides these helpful tips to consider when preparing for the winter months:

- **Keep warm and safe indoors and outdoors:** Make sure older residents wear warm clothing in several layers. When indoors, stay in a heated room; avoid fire hazards by having proper ventilation when using fireplaces, wood stoves, or space heaters. Functioning smoke and carbon monoxide detectors should be installed.
- **Good health:** Make sure older adults continue their exercise regimens, but avoid overly strenuous physical activity; and maintain a healthy diet with plenty of liquids. Caregivers should make sure older adults get vaccinated against the flu and pneumonia.
- **Ensure the older person is able to go out safely when needed:** Walkways and driveways should be free from snow and ice.
- **Prepared for emergencies:** Keep a phone with emergency numbers already pre-entered; and make sure older persons have a personal emergency response system available.



NEWS HIGHLIGHTS

Valuing the Invaluable: The Economic Value of Family Caregiving, 2008 Update

In 2007, about 34 million family caregivers provided care at any given point in time, and about 52 million provided care at some time during the year. The estimated economic value of their unpaid contributions was approximately \$375 billion in 2007, up from an estimated \$350 billion in 2006.

This report provides updates to the state and national estimates in the 2007 Valuing the Invaluable reports.

The economic value of caregiving exceeded total Medicaid long-term care (LTC) spending in all states, and was more than three times as high in 36 states. Compared with Medicaid home- and community-based service spending, the economic value of family caregiving was at least three times as high in all states, and more than 10 times as high in 19 states.

The costs of caregiving to caregivers themselves are more than a simple accounting of hours. They include direct out-of-pocket expenses, economic insecurity caused by changes in work patterns, and health effects.

State and national data are presented on the economic value of family caregivers and their effects on the health and LTC systems. Policy recommendations at both the federal and state levels are offered to prevent family caregivers from being overwhelmed by the demands placed upon them and to fund more services and supports for them. (8 pages)
Pub ID: I13

Source: www.aarp.org/research/housing-mobility/caregiving/dd158_caregiving.html



UPCOMING EVENTS ON CAMPUS & IN THE COMMUNITY

- **WOW-FREE Mini Health Screening** sponsored by Health & Wellness. Appointments consist of tests for non-fasting cholesterol, glucose and triglycerides, height, weight, blood pressure, body fat percentage, and waist circumference. Upcoming WOW's: January 14th, from 8 a.m. to noon, at Sturgill Bldg., Conference Room; and February 4th, from 8 a.m. to noon, at Commons Bldg., Room 307. To make your 10-minute appointment, please visit www.uky.edu/HR/wellness/healthscreening.html.
- **Successful Aging Seminar Series** sponsored by Lexington Family Magazine. A series of free seminars offered quarterly all at Southern Hills United Methodist Church. The second session is **Search for Cures for Alzheimer's Disease: How Close Are We Really?** Guest speaker is Dr. Gregory Jicha with the UK Sanders-Brown Center on Aging. February 7 10 a.m. – Noon. For a complete schedule <http://www.lexingtonfamily.com> or call 223-1765.
- **CARE Group combined meeting in February!** February 12th in 214 B, CTW Bldg from Noon – 1 p.m. Discussion topic will be **Home Safety Tips**. Special Guest Speaker David Fahringer, Certified Physician Assistant with the College of Health Science.



CAREGIVER SURVIVAL GUIDE

TAKE CHARGE OF YOUR LIFE

As we travel through life one thing is for certain, we will meet head-on with life changes. We can try resisting change; however change is a constant traveling companion, and sometimes an unwelcome guest.

Becoming a caregiver is one of those life changes which can occur suddenly and without warning, or it can evolve over time. Regardless, it is the unfamiliarity of the uncharted water that causes the most distress.

Viewing your role as family caregiver it is important that you gain control over the situation and not let the situation control you.

We can choose:

- Set limits
- Learn to be flexible
- Allow our loved ones to do as much as they can for themselves
- Recognize our strengths and acknowledge our limitations
- Learn to say “no”
- Ask for help
- Take time for respite

Asking for help is a sign of strength, not weakness. You and your family member will be better off if you learn to:

- Put guilt aside
- Overcome negative self talk and insecurities
- Ask for help you need and accept help that is offered
- Recognize and accept that you have a RIGHT to time off



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