



TOMPKINS COUNTY
OFFICE FOR THE AGING

Aging Better, Together



Fall 2018

Vol. 31 Number 3

In Support of Caregivers

A Publication of the Caregivers' Resource Center and Alzheimer's Support Unit at the Tompkins County Office for the Aging

In this issue:

***Powerful Tools Class**

***The Six R's of Dementia -related behavior**

***Ten Steps to Getting Help**

***Fall Caregiver's Workshops**

***Stay Steady Tompkins**

***Tips on finding information**

Local Caregiver Support Services

**Caregiver's Resource Center &
Project Care Services**

Tompkins County Office for the Aging

Rodney Maine 274-5491

Caryn Bullis 274-5450

The Caregiver's Resource Center & Alzheimer's Support Unit offers family caregivers information, Consultation services, workshops, this newsletter and a lending library of books on family caregiving topics. Stop by or call for an appointment.

Volunteers with Project CARE offer caregivers a needed break and helps in other ways as needed. We may also be able to arrange for paid home care Services or short term respite for stressed Caregivers having difficulty paying for those services. Call Caryn to discuss your needs.

Caregiver Counseling
Family and Children's Services
Ann Dolan 273-7494

A caregiver counselor will meet with family caregivers periodically in her office to help them work through complex caregiving issues or provide emotional support. Special circumstances may be considered for in-home service. No charge. Donations accepted.

Adult Day Program
Longview Adult Day Community
Monday through Friday, 9am-3pm
Pamela Nardi 375-6323

Adult day programs offer older adults companionship along with planned social and recreational activities. It often provides a break from caregiving and time for other matters. Fee: \$55/day includes lunch and snack.

Support Groups



Caregiver Support Group
3rd Tuesday of each month
6:30pm-8:00pm
Family & Children's Service
127 W. Martin Luther King Jr./State St., Ithaca

Facilitated by Ann Dolan, LCSW. Especially for caregivers of older adults. Call for information, 273-7494, before attending first time. Please ring buzzer located next to the front door for entry.

Cancer Caregiver Group
2nd Tuesday of each month
5:30pm-7:00pm
Cancer Resource Center
612 W. State St., Ithaca

For family, friends, and caregivers of individuals with Cancer. Call 277-0960 for information.

Parkinson's Caregivers Group
1st Monday of each month
11:00am-12:30pm
Office for the Aging

Call the Office for the Aging. 274-5491 for more information.

Alzheimer's Caregiver Groups

1st Wednesday of the month at 5:30pm

Lifelong, 119 W. Court St., Ithaca

For additional information call the Alzheimer's Association at 330-1647.

3rd Wednesday of the month at 12:30pm

Walden Place, Cortlandville

For additional information call 756-8101. Companion care for your loved one is available during the meeting.

FALL WORKSHOPS

Legal and Financial Planning for Family Caregivers

Wednesday, November 14, Noon-1:30pm

at the Office for the Aging, 214 W. Martin Luther King Jr./State St.

Presenter: Marcie Finlay, Esq.

Ms. Finlay, a local elder law attorney, will discuss legal issues that affect elderly individuals and their families, especially issues related to planning for the expense of long term care and planning for incapacity (advance directives, guardianship). Register for this workshop by calling 274-5450 or email cbullis@tompkins-co.org

Responding to Dementia-Related Behaviors

Thursday, December 6, Noon-1:30pm

at the Office for the Aging, 214 W. Martin Luther King Jr./State St.

Presenter: Staff from the Alzheimer's Association of CNY

This workshop will provide practical information and resources to help dementia caregivers learn how to decipher and best respond to challenging behaviors. Register for this workshop by calling 274-5450 or email cbullis@tompkins-co.org

Powerful Tools for Caregivers

Registrations are still being accepted for the Fall class. Refer to the following page for more information!!!

Feeling Stretched?

Let's Face It...

Caring for someone with illnesses such as dementia, heart disease, Parkinson's disease, stroke, or chronic cancer can be stressful physically, emotionally, and financially.



Balance Your Life

Powerful
Tools
for **Caregivers**

Fall 2018

Powerful Tools for Caregivers Classes

Powerful Tools for Caregivers is a six-week educational program designed to provide you with tools you need to take care of *yourself*.

You will learn to:

- Reduce stress
- Improve self-confidence
- Better communicate your feelings
- Balance your life
- Increase your ability to make tough decisions
- Locate helpful resources

The program consists of 90-minute class sessions offered weekly for six consecutive weeks.

This class is offered free of charge to those caring for spouses, parents or other adult relatives/friends. *(It is not intended for professional caregivers.)*

Wednesdays, September 5—October 10
6:00pm-7:30pm
at McGraw House
221 S. Geneva St., Ithaca

Register as early as possible as class size is limited.
To register or inquire about the program, call the
Tompkins County Office for the Aging:
607-274-5482



JOIN THE FIGHT FOR ALZHEIMER'S FIRST SURVIVOR.

Walk To End Alzheimer's® - Ithaca/Cortland, NY
 September 16, 2018

Registration at 11:30 a.m. • Ceremony at 1 p.m. • Walk at 1:15 p.m.

PRESENTED LOCALLY BY



NEW YORK STATEWIDE SPONSOR



2018 NATIONAL PRESENTING SPONSOR

Edward Jones

alz.org/walk



Stay Steady Tompkins County

Written by Anne Reilly, Geriatric-Certified PT and Carolyn Beyers of the Health Planning Council

Did you know that 1 in 4 Americans aged 65 and over falls every year? Falls are the leading cause of injuries for older Americans. Falls are costly-in dollars and in quality of life. However, falling is not an inevitable part of aging. Through practical lifestyle adjustments, use of effective programs and community resources, the number of falls among seniors can be reduced substantially.

Calling all Caregivers and their friends and neighbors to celebrate the start of fall by taking proactive steps to stay healthy and active to maintain or even improve your mobility. Please join us for the Stay Steady Tompkins County: Fall Risk Information Event.

Lifelong is teaming up with Cayuga Medical Center, Office for the Aging, Cayuga Area Preferred Network, Ithaca College, Tompkins County Health Department, Foodnet Meals on Wheels, the Health Planning Council of the Human Services Coalition and the Finger Lakes Independence Center to offer a special multidisciplinary pro-health screening and information session to kick off Falls Prevention Awareness Week.

The Stay Steady Tompkins County Event will take place on **Monday, September 24 at Lifelong** to kick-off National Fall Prevention Awareness Day and the "Fall Season". This event is the first event of the Stay Steady Tompkins County Fall Risk Event Series (see other dates below). The Lifelong event will be held from **9:30am to 12:30pm** and you can plan to:

- Come speak with experts in Geriatric Physical Therapy (under the direction of Geriatric-Certified Physical Therapist, Anne Reilly and team).
- Pick up resources about Physical Therapy and exercise programs that improve strength, balance, mobility and reduce fall risk.
- Take part in a brief Fall Risk screening that includes balance and mobility screen.
- Find out if you are at low, moderate or high risk for falling and what you can do to lower your risk for falling.
- Review your medication list with a pharmacist or nurse and ask questions about medications.
- Pick up resources and information about vision health and fall risk.
- Speak with an occupational therapist about home safety and adaptive devices and equipment.
- Learn about many additional resources (available through the Tompkins County Office for the Aging and the Tompkins County Health Department) to make your home safer. Get information about a free home assessment and home modification options.

Remember, you have the power to prevent falls. Educate yourself and take action now.

Other Fall 2018 Stay Steady Tompkins County: Fall Risk Screening Events are:

- **October 24th at McGraw House, 1:00pm-4:00pm (221 S. Geneva St., Ithaca)**
- **November 8th at Groton Center Village Court, 10:30am-12:30pm (200 W. South St., Groton)**
- **December 13th at YMCA, 9:30am-12:30pm (50 Graham Rd., Ithaca)**

For more information, you can email Carolyn Beyers at cbeyers@hsctc.org or call 607-273-8686.

The Registry at FLIC

The Registry is a compiled list of private pay aides who have been screened through a face to face interview with the Registry Coordinator at FLIC. References are provided and verified to make sure the aide has the necessary skills and compassion that are important for someone to have when taking care of people in their homes. The Registry also contains a list of skilled nurses varying from pediatrics to palliative care.

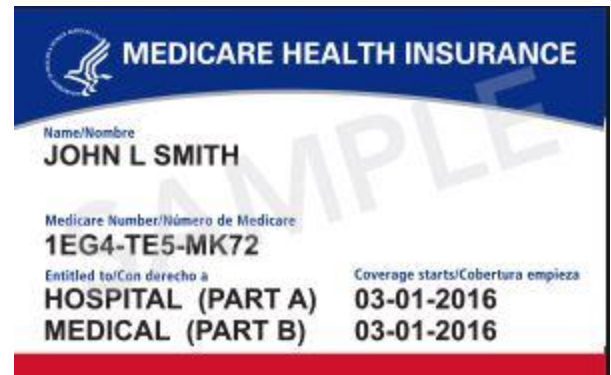
For more information **contact Teri Reinemann at 272-2433.**

The Registry program is made possible through funding from the Tompkins County Office for the Aging and the New York State Office for the Aging.

NEWS AND NOTES

Medicare Open Enrollment

Medicare Open Enrollment starts October 15th and goes through December 7th. During this time, you can make any changes to how you receive your Medicare. Any changes you make will be effective January 1st. Contact the Office for the Aging 274-5482 or Lifelong 273-1511 to make an appointment with a certified HIICAP counselor.



"You're not alone"



If you or your family are faced with a dementia diagnosis, you need answers-and support. **On Thursday, August 30th from 5:30pm-7:00pm** Brookdale is hosting a "Family Night" where you can learn more about how to meet the challenges of caring for a loved one living with Alzheimer's.

Lisa Kendall, LCSW-R will be giving a caregiver talk on 7 Domains of Well Being. For reservations or for more information call 607-256-5094 or 607-342-6050. Dinner is provided.

Caregiver Support Group

Robert Levine, LMSW, Executive Director of Clare Bridge Cottage-Brookdale will be hosting a Caregiver Support Group on **Thursday, October 25th at 5:30pm** at Brookdale. For more information call 256-5094.



Alzheimer's Page: The Six R's

*The "Johns Hopkins Memory Bulletin" highlighted the following strategies for managing difficult behavior as discussed in **The 36 Hour Day**, the groundbreaking book by Nancy Mace and Dr. Peter Rabins:*

People with dementia often exhibit behaviors that are frustrating, embarrassing, and sometimes even dangerous to the caregiver and others. These may include angry outbursts, agitation, aggression, wandering, vocalizations, hoarding or hiding things, and inappropriate sexual behavior. For many caregivers, these difficult behaviors are the most challenging and exhausting aspect of caring for a person with dementia. Here are six coping strategies for dementia-related behaviors.

Strategy 1-Restrict. First calmly attempt to get the person to stop the behavior, especially if the behavior is potentially dangerous.

Strategy 2-Reassess. Consider what might have provoked the behavior. Could a physical problem (toothache, urinary tract infection, osteoarthritis...) be behind the agitation or anger? Is a particular person or the noise level in the room triggering the negative reaction? Could the time of day and fatigue be contributing to the problem?

Strategy 3-Reconsider. Put yourself in the dementia patient's shoes. Try to imagine what it must be like to not understand what is happening to you or to be unable to accomplish a simple task. Consider how frustrating or upsetting the current situation or environment might be for a person with dementia.

Strategy 4-Rechannel. Try to redirect the behavior to a safer, less disruptive activity. For example, if the person constantly disassembles household items, try finding simple unused devices, such as an old telephone or a fishing reel, that can be taken apart and put back together repeatedly. For someone who hoards or hides things, put away valuables and replace them with an array of inexpensive items. Distraction often works well to curtail disruptive, repetitive behaviors and restlessness. For example, try asking the person you're caring for to "help" with simple tasks, such as holding spoons or potholders while you cook.

Strategy 5-Reassure. The brain injury of the person with dementia and the resulting confusion and frustration can lead to anger, anxiety, and outright fear in certain situations. Calmly reassure the person that everything is okay and that you will continue to take care of him or her.

Strategy 6-Review. After an unsettling experience with your loved one, take time to review how you managed the problem and what you might have done differently. Think about what may have triggered the problem, how it might have been avoided, and what you might try the next time a similar situation arises. It also helps to create a patient-friendly environment. This might include soothing music in the background; pictures, words, or arrows to help orient the person in the house; or a secure place to sit outside or walk in the backyard.

Reprinted from In Support of Caregivers Fall 07 Newsletter

Defining the Help You Need

1. **Recognize that caregiving, like all jobs, is made up of lots of individual tasks, not all of which are of the same importance.** Some tasks take a few minutes, some may take many hours. Some tasks are easy; others require some skill and fortitude. The challenge is to know the difference.
2. Understand **that asking for help is a sign of strength and not of weakness.** Remember, Superman and Wonder Woman only exist in the comics, the movies and on TV.
3. **List all of your caregiving related tasks that need to get done,** such as cooking meals, mowing the lawn, filing insurance forms, going to the doctor, lifting, bathing, dressing, and undressing your care recipient, laundry. When you see how long the list is you'll realize there's a good reason why you are so tired and don't have time for yourself.
4. **Group your list into categories** such as: personal care for your loved one, transportation, household chores, healthcare activities, etc.
5. **List your caregiving worries.** Who will help Mom if she falls and no one is around? Where will we get the money to pay for John's medications? Who will care for Mary if I get sick? Where can I find affordable respite care?
6. **Group your worries.** Possible categories might be: emergency worries, financial worries, your own health worries.
7. **Pat yourself on the back!** Sorting through all of your responsibilities and worries aren't an easy thing to do, but you have now reached a milestone on the "getting help" path. You have a clearer picture of your responsibilities and your concerns. You are getting closer to being able to ask for precisely the kinds of help you need.
8. **Review your lists with the intent of sorting the current items into four new categories:** Things you really think you can't hand off to someone else, those tasks you enjoy or which give you some satisfaction, responsibilities you really dislike or find difficult, and miscellaneous items that just have to get done. If after reviewing the list you decide that you can't possibly allow someone else to do any of the tasks, then you need to review the list again. The idea isn't to prove how indispensable you are, but to help you improve the quality of your life and that of your loved one as well.

9. **Show your list** to a family member, a good friend, the nurse in your doctor's office, your clergyman or the employee assistance counselor at work. The intent here isn't to get actual physical help from this person, but to let you have the benefit of hearing someone else's ideas and insights. Two brains focused on solving a problem are always more powerful than one!
10. **Do it! Take a deep breath and actually ask someone to help** with one of the tasks on your list or ask for guidance in resolving your most persistent worry. Start with something small. It might take a while to relax with letting go of some of your responsibilities. With practice, it does get easier, and soon you'll wonder what took you so long. Also, don't forget to be open to those offering to help. With your list in hand, you'll be better able to take advantage of opportunity when it knocks. Good luck!

Tips on Finding Information for Family Caregivers

Finding information, services, resources, and sources of support for our family member and yourself can be quite overwhelming. Here are some tips that can make the search faster, easier, and a little less frustrating.

- **Ask someone else to help.** Friends and family will often ask you if there is anything that they can do to help. Looking for information and resources is an ideal task to ask someone else to help with.
- **If you can, use the Internet.** The Internet is an easy and quick way to obtain information. One caveat: information on the Internet is variable and sometimes inaccurate. It is important, therefore, not to rely on one site alone. Also, is the sponsoring organization a reputable and reliable source of information? What is its financial stake, if any, in the information provided? When was the website last updated?
- **Be sure to use *both* the Internet and the telephone to obtain information.** New information is always available and things might have changed since they were posted on a website. It's a good idea to verify information by calling the agency and talking with one of its representatives.
- **Before you call an agency, write down specific questions to ask the agency representative, and be as concrete and detailed as possible.** Take advantage of the fact that there is actually someone on the line to talk to you. If you find this person helpful, get his or her name and ask to speak with him or her if you need to call again.
- **Many agencies will send you information that overlaps with or repeats information you have already received from other organizations.** If you obtain a good list of places to call for help, therefore, do not look for other lists until you have exhausted your current one.
- **Expect a delay in receiving information you have requested.** Make sure you let the agency know that you need the information as soon as possible, and ask for information over the phone until you receive materials in the mail. If you have not received anything within two weeks, chances are you never will. Do not hesitate to call back and request the information again. Usually, a second request receives prompt attention.

- **If you have to leave a message when you phone an organization, be sure to call again.** Many agencies that help caregivers are too small to have someone always available to answer the phone. Leave a message, but be sure to call again if you have not heard back in a few days.
- **Be creative.** Many of the services offered by even the largest agencies do not serve everybody. Create your own personal resource network. This could include contacting community-based agencies to find out what kinds of support services are available in your area. It could involve contacting your local grocery or drugstore to make special arrangements for home delivery of food, medications, or other items. You might consider contacting local businesses, boys and girls clubs, or schools to find out if they have special volunteer programs that might be of assistance. Being creative could also include speaking with government representatives for help, support, and referrals to services.
- **BE PERSISTENT.** No matter how much you may want to, do not give up. You may have to go through several series of phone calls, letters, agencies, programs, and institutions to get what you need.

Reprinted from Next Step in Care and can be found on their website at www.nextstepincare.org

Reminder!!! You can always contact the Office for the Aging for information and referral on Caregiver and Long Term Care services at 274-5482.

If you would like to be taken off our mailing list, please contact Caryn at 274-5450 or cbullis@tompkins-co.org. If you would like to be taken off our mailing list but added to our Email list, please also contact Caryn.

Thank you!!!

The Caregivers' Resource Center and Alzheimer's Support Unit

Please call or visit us at the
Tompkins County Office for the Aging
214 W. Martin Luther King, Jr./State Street, Ithaca

Rodney Maine, CRC Coordinator and Newsletter Editor

Telephone: 607-274-5491

Email: rmaine@tompkins-co.org

Caryn Bullis, Project CARE Coordinator and Newsletter Editor

Telephone: 607-274-5450

Email: cbullis@tompkins-co.org



Websites of Interest to Family Caregivers:

Tompkins County Office for the Aging: www.tompkinscountyny.gov/cofa

- *Click on "Local Resources for Older Adults" to access our Tompkins County Resource guides.*

Family Caregiver Alliance: www.caregiver.org

CaringBridge: www.caringbridge.org

Caregiver Action Network: www.caregiveraction.org

AARP Caregiver Resource Center: www.aarp.org/home-family/caregiving

Next Step in Care: www.nextstepincare.org

Note that articles marked "reprinted with permission" may not be further reproduced, except for private use, without permission of the original publisher. Other material in this newsletter may be freely copied with proper credit given to its original source.

This newsletter is made possible in part by a grant from the NYS Office for the Aging