



What's New?

Community Caregivers has a new address!

In an effort to provide better accessibility for volunteers, clients and staff, Community Caregivers is now located at 2021 Western Ave., Albany. We are located in the rear of the building. The phone number remains the same – 456-2898.

And a new Executive Director!

The Board is pleased to announce the appointment of Tom Tipple, the new Executive Director. Tom took over the reins in April and has been busy getting to know the staff, volunteers and community leaders. Tom retired from the NYS Office of Children and Family Services where he served as Deputy Commissioner for Administration. He previously served in the Division of Budget and has an extensive background in finance.

Tom will be the spokesperson for Community Caregivers and guide the organization to ensure the delivery of our services to individuals in need.

Community Caregivers has a new website!

We welcome you to log on to www.communitycaregivers.org and see how easy it is to navigate the site. The redesigned site provides the information a client, caregiver, volunteer, or donor would need to find out more about Community Caregivers.

The What's New section will list all upcoming events including the annual golf outing and gala, volunteer orientations, workshops and other educational programs for caregivers and volunteers.

Falls Among Older Adults

Falls are the leading cause of injury deaths, hospitalizations and ED visits among adults 65 and older. Falls can result in lasting, serious consequences, affecting mobility, independence and mental health. The following simple strategies can reduce the risk of falling and improve the ability of an older adult to live longer and independently:

- Make your home safer by removing items you can trip over (like throw rugs, papers, books, clothes, and shoes) from stairs and other places where you walk. Be aware of pets and pet-related toys; they can create home hazards. Items such as double-sided tape may help to keep rugs from slipping. Keep items you use often in cabinets which you can reach easily without using a step stool. Install grab bars next to your toilet and in the tub or shower. Use non-slip mats in the bathtub and on shower floors.
- Improve the lighting in your home. As you get older, you need brighter lights to see well. Hang lightweight curtains or shades to reduce glare. Put handrails and lights in all staircases.
- Wear shoes inside and outside the house. Avoid going barefoot or wearing slippers.
- Ask your health care provider to review all your medications, including over-the-counter medicines. As you get older, the way medicines work in your body can change. Some medicines, or combinations of medicines, can make you sleepy or dizzy and can cause you to fall.
- Get your eyes checked by an eye doctor at least once a year. You may be wearing the wrong glasses or have a condition like glaucoma or cataracts that limits your vision. Poor vision can increase your risk of falling.
- Begin a regular exercise program. Physical activity makes you stronger and helps you feel better. Exercises that improve strength, balance and coordination (like Tai Chi) are the most helpful. Ask your doctor or health care provider about the best type of exercise program for you.

– *New York State Department of Health*

From the Executive Director



My name is Tom Tipple and I am the new executive director of Community Caregivers. I'd like to take this opportunity to introduce myself to all of the readers of this newsletter and tell you how pleased I am for the opportunity to work here. I actually started my position in April 2011 and have been incredibly impressed with the level of commitment of our volunteers and staff to the mission of helping others in need. Having recently worked for New York State as the Deputy Commissioner for Administration for the Office of Children and Family Services, I really appreciate the chance to work in a community based organization in my home town. I also think this position will provide me with the opportunity to assist the organization in expanding and improving the services already being provided. I have been working hard to understand both the financial and operational aspects of the organization and am excited to describe a new initiative that we are currently working on.

Adding services on Wednesday evening and Saturday 10-3 starting October 1, 2011

Community Caregivers has continuously received requests from clients and offers from potential volunteers to provide services after normal weekday business hours. We plan to expand our hours starting on October 1. The goal is to better meet the needs of our clients by enlisting those volunteers who otherwise are unable to serve. We have often received offers from volunteers who work during the weekday to help others at night or on weekends. Although we have provided training and obtained contact information from these individuals, we have typically been unable to utilize them. By expanding to evening and weekend hours, we believe that we may be better able to accommodate our clients who could use services other than transportation, such as respite or shopping assistance, and also utilize these volunteers. The staff at Community Caregivers will be working to recruit and train additional volunteers and match them to those clients who might benefit from expanded hours of assistance. For anyone who is interested in volunteering or needs services after regular business hours, please e-mail info@communitycaregivers.org or call 456-2898.

I will be working diligently to attract financial support for this expansion from various funding partners and any ideas or contributions to support our efforts would be greatly appreciated. I look forward to continuing to communicate with you and encourage you to help us keep this great organization going forward.

Neighbors Helping Neighbors

Who are your Community Caregivers neighbors? On one side of the equation, there are the people who can benefit greatly from just a little extra friendly support. There is the man down the street who just had knee surgery and needs transportation until he's back on both feet. There is the daughter whose father needs a ride to the adult day program that sends him home with a smile on his face. There is the woman who enjoys the trip to the ice cream shop with a friendly visitor. There is the neighborhood grandmother whose leaves are raked by fall clean-up teams. These people all have one thing in common. They benefit greatly from just a little assistance and a friendly face . . . the kind of support that many of your neighbors so graciously provide.

Now here is the other side of the equation. True, your neighbors drive people to special programs and medical appointments. Others may periodically phone or visit with the person at the end of your block just to make sure that s/he is OK. Performing these tasks is all well and good . . . and greatly appreciated. However, the thing that makes these neighborhood connections really special is the personal side of the story, the relationships that develop between neighbors . . . the sharing of stories . . . the pleasure of a good laugh . . . the enjoyment that comes from being with another human being. If you are a part of the Community Caregivers neighborhood, we are very glad you are here. If you would like to join us . . . as a client or as a volunteer . . . we would love to hear from you. Please call us at 518-456-2898 or visit our website at www.communitycaregivers.org. We would love to meet you and welcome you to the neighborhood!

Help older Albany County residents make a successful transition from hospital to home.

Become a Community Supports Navigator

– Volunteer training is provided –
**Contact Chris Damon, Program Director,
 Community Caregivers at 456-2898 or visit
www.communitycaregivers.org**

This program is supported in part by the Albany County Department for Aging, the New York State Office for the Aging, and the Administration on Aging.

Tips for Communicating with a Person who has Dementia

We aren't born knowing how to communicate with a person with dementia – but we can learn. Improving your communication skills will help make caregiving less stressful and will likely improve the quality of your relationship with your loved one. Good communication skills will also enhance your ability to handle the difficult behavior you may encounter as you care for a person with a dementing illness. Here are some tips from Family Caregiver Alliance.

1. Set a positive mood for interaction. Your attitude and body language communicate your feelings and thoughts stronger than your words. Set a positive mood by speaking to your loved one in a pleasant and respectful manner. Use facial expressions, tone of voice and physical touch to help convey your message and show your feelings of affection.

2. Get the person's attention. Limit distractions and noise – turn off the radio or TV, close the curtains or shut the door, or move to quieter surroundings. Before speaking, make sure you have her attention; address her by name, identify yourself by name and relation, and use nonverbal cues and touch to help keep her focused. If she is seated, get down to her level and maintain eye contact.

3. State your message clearly. Use simple words and sentences. Speak slowly, distinctly and in a reassuring tone. Refrain from raising your voice higher or louder; instead, pitch your voice lower. If she doesn't understand the first time, use the same wording to repeat your message or question. If she still doesn't understand, wait a few minutes and rephrase the question. Use the names of people and places instead of pronouns or abbreviations.

4. Ask simple, answerable questions. Ask one question at a time; those with yes or no answers work best. Refrain from asking open-ended questions or giving too many choices. For example, ask, "Would you like to wear your white shirt or your blue shirt?" Better still, show her the choices – visual prompts and cues also help clarify your question and can guide her response.

5. Listen with your ears, eyes and heart. Be patient in waiting for your loved one's reply. If she is struggling for an answer, it's okay to suggest words. Watch for nonverbal cues and body language, and respond appropriately. *Always strive to listen for the meaning and feelings that underlie the words.*

7th Annual Golf Outing a Huge Success



On June 20th, Community Caregivers held its 7th Annual Golf Outing at Orchard Creek Golf Course in Altamont. It was a wonderful day and 142 golfers teed it up in three different divisions. The tourney raised \$25,000 for Community Caregivers. Joanne Macklin, Regina DuBois and Golf Chair, Elaine Roemer are shown here greeting the golfers on a beautiful sunny morning.

Learning About Dementia

Recently Chris Damon, Community Caregivers' Program Director, was contacted by an individual expressing concern about a friend who had received a diagnosis of dementia and appeared to be declining rapidly. The caller indicated that she and others were experiencing difficulty when interacting with this friend in social situations and asked if there were any programs that could help them understand the disorder so that they could better engage their friend. Chris contacted the Alzheimer's Association and arranged for an information session on "Improving Communication With a Person With Dementia," which many of the concerned friends attended.

The communication tips that were provided included positive ways to approach their friend, being clear in what they were trying to communicate, being aware of body language and tone of voice, and how to stay tuned in to their friend's emotional state. The session stressed patience and allowing their friend extra time to process what had been said in order to respond, as well as how important it is to – listen, listen, listen.

"We shared these helpful tips with mutual friends and feel we have all gained a better understanding of dementia and what our friend is experiencing. I would recommend that anyone with a loved one who suffers from dementia participate in this program. I can't thank Chris enough for her assistance."

– A grateful session participant

Frequently Asked Questions

Q: What is a caregiver?

A: A caregiver is anyone who provides help to another person in need. Usually, the person receiving care has a condition such as dementia, cancer, or brain injury and needs help with basic daily tasks. Caregivers help with many things such as:

- grocery shopping • house cleaning • cooking • shopping
- paying bills • giving medicine • bathing • using the toilet
- dressing • eating

People who are not paid to provide care are known as informal caregivers or family caregivers. The most common type of informal caregiving relationship is an adult child caring for an elderly parent. Other types of caregiving relationships include:

- adults caring for other relatives, such as grandparents, siblings, aunts, and uncles
- spouses caring for elderly husbands or wives
- middle-aged parents caring for severely disabled adult children
- adults caring for friends and neighbors
- children caring for a disabled parent or elderly grandparent

Q: Who are our nation's caregivers?

A: Most Americans will be informal caregivers at some point during their lives. During any given year, there are more than 44 million Americans (21% of the adult population) who provide unpaid care to an elderly or disabled person 18 years or older. Altogether, informal caregivers provide 80 percent of the long-term care in the United States.

- Sixty-one percent of caregivers are women.
- Most caregivers are middle-aged.
- Thirteen percent of caregivers are aged 65 years and older.
- Fifty-nine percent of informal caregivers have jobs in addition to caring for another person. Because of time spent caregiving, more than half of employed women caregivers have made changes at work, such as going in late, leaving early, or working fewer hours.

Q: What is caregiver stress?

A: Caregiver stress is the emotional and physical strain of caregiving. It can take many forms. For instance, you may feel:

- frustrated and angry taking care of someone with dementia who often wanders away or becomes easily upset
- guilty because you think that you should be able to provide better care, despite all the other things that you have to do.

Caregiver stress appears to affect women more than men. About 75 percent of caregivers who report feeling very strained emotionally, physically, or financially are women. Although caregiving can be challenging, it is important to note that it can also have its rewards. It can give you a feeling of giving back to a loved one. It can also make you feel needed and can lead to a stronger relationship with the person receiving care. About half of caregivers report that:

- they appreciate life more as a result of their caregiving experience
- caregiving has made them feel good about themselves.

U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Office on Women's Health

Join our Annual Giving Drive!

Name: _____

Company: _____

Address: _____

City/State/Zip: _____

Phone: (____) _____

Email: _____

____ My employer will match my gift. The form is enclosed.

I will fulfill my gift in the following manner:

Check Enclosed

MC/Visa/Discover/American Express

Card # _____

Exp. Date ____/____

Name on card (PRINT) _____

Signature: _____

Zip code associated with card _____

Mail this form and payment method to:

Community Caregivers, Inc., 2021 Western Ave., Suite 104
Albany, NY 12203

Enclosed, please find my tax-deductible gift of: \$ _____
to support Community Caregivers, Inc.

Community Caregivers is a nonprofit organization, registered as a 501(c)(3) with the Internal Revenue Service. Your gift is tax-deductible to the extent of the law. Copies of our annual report or IRS Form 990 are available from the NYS Charities Registration Office at 162 Washington Avenue, Albany, NY 12210 or by calling our office at (518) 456-2898.