

It's How We Honor Our Parents

Greetings!

More than 44 million Americans provide care to a family member or adult friend. That represents 21% of all U.S. households. The Wall Street Journal estimates that by 2020, **one in three** U.S. households will be involved in caring for an elderly or disabled relative; **one in four** do so now. Our elderly population of about 35 million people over the age of 50 will explode to more than 71 million by 2030, at which time AARP projects that 5.7 to 6.6 million caregivers will be needed. The financial statistics are grim. According to a MetLife Market Institute study, the average caregiver sacrifices not only their time, but loses:

\$566,500 in wages
\$67,000 in pension benefits
\$25,500 in Social Security benefits
\$659,000 Average Lifetime Loss of Income

Even more ominous is the toll that caregiving takes on the caregiver,

so much so that the medical community has coined a new term: Caregiver Syndrome. Depression, anxiety and anger are the hallmarks of this infirmity, and the ongoing, chronic emotional and physical stress can lead to high blood pressure, diabetes and a compromised immune system. Professor of Geriatric Psychiatry at the University of Washington, Dr. Peter Vitaliano, who is an expert on caregiving, likened the status of exhausted caregivers to those suffering from post traumatic stress disorder.

The National Center on Caregiving and the American Academy of Family Physicians have called for every caregiver to be screened for stress and depression, and encourage caregivers to seek relief by looking into other avenues of support.

*"Two roads diverged in a wood and I –
I took the one less traveled by,
And that has made all the difference." -Robert Frost*

"My life has no meaning..."

Here is a true story that demonstrates how LifeSpan works and how LifeSpan WORKS for you:

I was called in to see a patient who was getting discharged from Jefferson Hospital. She had had her second cardiac catheterization, and her daughter (we'll call her Sophia) called LifeSpan because she just did not know what to do. There were no findings on the "cath" study, no recommendations for surgery or any other treatment. The fact is that this 69 year-old Italian immigrant complained frequently of chest pain, had spasms and shortness of breath, sweating, and profound weakness. Since her husband had died of a heart attack several years prior, she lived with her daughter Sophia's family, a husband and three young children, in the suburbs of Marlton, New Jersey. She was at home alone during the day while the rest of the family were at work and in school. She busied herself cooking



and cleaning for the family, but had nowhere to go since she did not drive, her command of English was not very good, and she had never worked outside of the home.

When I interviewed her and reviewed her chart, a long history of the same symptoms and a failure of different attempts at controlling the symptoms were evident. While I was speaking with the mother and daughter, the mother was rocking back and forth in the bed, saying, "Mio Dio!" and mumbling in Italian. I asked for a quick translation, which was, "My life has no meaning; I am so lonely." I said to Sophia, "she's depressed, and what you're seeing are anxiety attacks." "Oh no." she said, "Mother denies any depression. Our family doctor put her on Xanax and Lexapro, but it didn't do any good. He wanted to send her to a psychiatrist, but she wouldn't go."

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Still, I said, she reminds me of my mother in law, and I think she's depressed. I had one of our Care Managers see her to follow up at their home. This particular nurse is also an immigrant Italian, from the state of Abruzzi. She nailed it right away: Depression. Sophia again protested. "Our family doctor said she's not!" The LifeSpan Care Manager recommended that the family try a new doctor, "he speaks Italian, and in a dialect that your mother will recognize." Right away, this nurse later reported to me, a look of horror at the realization of all the hassle she and her mother had gone through, the lost opportunity, wasted time and worry, crossed over her face. It would have saved years of distress if Sophia's mother had just had the right doctor, someone informed about the cultural aspects of her complaints—she was lonely, isolated in the suburbs with nowhere to go, and no outlet for her distress. She only had doctors who wanted to give her pills and try to perform heart surgery. Sophia was relieved to find someone who would listen

enough to make sense out of her mother's complaints, and help sort out the issues that were distracting her from her own children, her husband and her job responsibilities. She regretted the years of wasted time, effort and money spent on treatments that were off base.

Dealing with the problem in a way that the people involved could understand, LifeSpan made it possible for the family to cope in a constructive way.

Nurses do not diagnose disease and cannot promise a cure for complicated and seemingly intractable disease and debility. *What we do promise* is a fresh look at the problem by highly experienced clinicians who will listen to the patient and family and offer new ways of analyzing the issues. We refer to expert doctors and therapists who have the appropriate training to address the problem and to improve the quality of life of the client and family. ♥

Senior Saviors

Contradicting the modern American paradigm that healthcare is about money is the superhero of the future: The Caregiver.

Daughters, sons, neighbors, nieces, husbands and grandchildren are stepping up to the plate to involve themselves in the welfare of their loved ones. Untrained and unpaid, caregivers help with everything: dressing, feeding, toileting, bathing, transportation, scheduling, financial management, medications, shopping, cooking, cleaning, and more. The National Alliance for Caregiving and AARP state that nearly 60% of caregivers have a job, and that a majority of those caregivers work full time.

In 2002, The National Family Caregivers Association published a state-by-state analysis of Family Caregiving. California had the most unpaid caregivers (3,184,776, representing 465 million hours), while Wyoming had the least (47,569, for a total of 51 million hours). In the Delaware Valley:

State:	# Unpaid Family Caregivers:	# Hours Per Year:
Pennsylvania	1,229,219	1,317 million
New Jersey	831,953	891 million
Delaware	76,822	82 million

This comes out to an average of more than 1000 hours a year, or about 20 hours a week per unpaid caregiver, a staggering number for the national economy as well as the individual caregiver.

Two crises are converging in America. Our population is



getting older and there is a critical shortage of paid caregivers, many of whom can make more money working at McDonalds than they can taking care of someone else's family member. As a result, the lion's share of care that is given in America is given by private citizens with no medical experience and no monetary recompense.

Whether out of a sense of love or duty or necessity (or a combination of any and all of those three), we observe that the well being of the caregiver is the key to the health of the patient. Be smart. Ask for help and surround your self with knowledgeable people who can support you in ways that are constructive. Consider this:

A full year of LifeSpan's Concierge Service costs less than:

- Two months in an Assisted Living Facility, OR
- A 20 day stay in a Nursing Home, OR
- One day's stay in the hospital!

AND:

- It enables the Senior to be safe while staying at home, AND
- Enables the client and their family to be SURE that all treatment and care options are considered, as well as alerting the family to whatever pitfalls may be lying ahead.

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LifeSpan Care Management preserves the financial assets of the family and controls the costs of care.

Since an admission to the hospital carries the same amount of risk for injury or death as bungee jumping or mountain climbing, AND

- The number of outpatient prescription drug *injuries* has doubled from 1998 to 2005, while *deaths* tripled, SO
- Smart families should take steps to assure that their loved ones are safe at home, because low-skill home companions and nursing agencies are not able to prevent injuries and declines in the safe functioning of the Seniors.

LifeSpan Care Management, LLC has the people and the experience to assist families to make sure that their members are safe at home and the assets of the family are preserved. ♥

Our Management Team

We truly thank Dr. Sebastian Dovi and all the members of our management Team and Board of Advisors for their contributions



LifeSpan's Vice President of Medical affairs is Dr. Sebastian Dovi, a leader in the Medical Management and Clinical Integration arena. His experiences as a clinical physician, instructor at an academic medical center, market medical director, and consulting practice leader have enabled him to assist Managed Care Organizations develop the structure, process, information technology platform, and measurement criteria to succeed

in today's highly competitive and challenging healthcare market. He has 19 years of clinical and 22 years of managed care experience.

Dr. Dovi has been medical consultant for Centene Corporation and was a principal at two big five firms accounting firms and the leader of their Health Care Consulting Clinical Integration Practices. He was employed by Coopers & Lybrand as the regional director of Medical Management and Aetna Health Plans as a market medical director in charge of Pennsylvania, New Jersey and Delaware. He was a physician in the United States Navy for 10 years and served as Chief of Medicine at Roosevelt Roads, PR. He practiced Internal Medicine and Cardiology for 19 years and chaired the Credentialing Committee, ICU/CCU Committee and Pharmacy Committee at Memorial Hospital.

Dr. Dovi is a Diplomat of the National Board of Medical Examiners. Dr. Dovi has had several speaking engagements including "When Capitation Knocks", the "Future of Health Care" and has addressed the American Association of Cost Engineers on the "Drivers of Medical Health Care Costs"

Websites We Love

www.ilcusa.org/pages/projects/the-caregiving-project.php

In an action-oriented partnership with the the Schmieding Center for Senior Health and Education and the International Longevity Center, the Caregiving Project for Older Americans seeks to develop a national systematic approach to address the burgeoning caregiving crisis.

www.njconsumeraffairs.gov/njpdn

This is an online tool that lets residents in the state of New Jersey compare prescription drug prices at local pharmacies. Brand new in September of 2007, the website lists the prices charged for 150 of the most commonly prescribed drugs, allowing comparison shoppers to get the best deal, an excellent resource for saving money because prices vary widely, even within the same neighborhood.

www.fullcirclecare.org

Comparing the evolving needs of families to the changing seasons, here is a website that offers a helping hand with the education, information, and assistance needed to support your efforts to keep your older family members living at home in a secure and loving environment for as long as possible.

www.caregiver.com

Founded in 1995, this organization was the first to publish a national magazine on the topic of giving care. The website, developed for caregivers, about caregivers and by caregivers,

For previous issues of this newsletter,
visit:
www.lifespancm.com/news.aspx

What do you want to talk about? The topic index for a newsletter focusing on healthcare is vast, but we'd like to know what subjects you'd like to discuss. Drop us a line at info@lifespancm.com and fill us in on the pressing issues in your life. Thank you

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