

Join Today!

Join today! The Merrimack County Caregiver Coalition meets monthly to educate, support and empower caregivers to create awareness of community resources and services and to promote an understanding of the impact that caregiving has within our community. If you would like to help develop newsletters like this one, conferences and other events to support caregivers, please call today to join our efforts! We meet in the Concord area, typically on the fourth Wednesday of the month from 1:30-3pm. For more information, and meeting locations, please call (603) 228-6625 and ask for the Caregiver Specialist. You can help in many ways: by participating in meetings, by email and volunteering at events.

NH Caregiver Program Receives National Recognition!!

The Transitions in Caregiving Program received the Council of State Governments Innovations Award recognizing it as an exemplary state program in support of family caregivers.

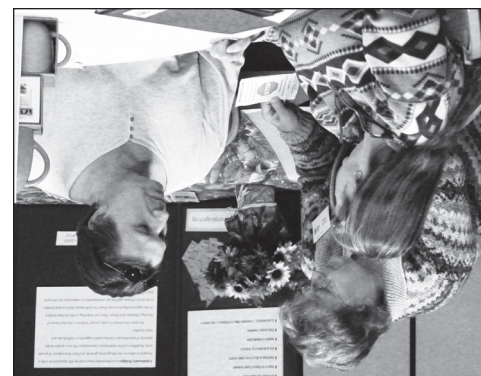
Merrimack County ServiceLink joined the pilot project in the summer of 2009. The program assists caregivers through a consumer-directed approach to find needed resources and supports for caregivers in the county. The program supports caregivers who are not Medicaid-eligible, face day-to-day challenges and have minimal resources to support caregiving needs. The purpose of the program

is to prevent or delay Medicaid nursing home placements.

Transitions in Caregiving is coordinated through partnerships involving the Bureau of Elderly and Adult Services (BEAS), the Administration on Aging, the Weinberg Foundation, the UNH Institute on Disability, ServiceLink, and Gateways Community Services. BEAS will receive the national award in December at the annual meeting of the Council of State Governments annual meeting in Providence, R.I.

We are proud to be part of Transitions. People like the work we do together!!

Donna Hoar chats with Mary and Bruce Shampney at the 7th Annual Caregivers Conference on November 8.



Merrimack County ServiceLink Resource Center
P.O. Box 1016 • 2 Industrial Park Drive
Concord, NH 03302-1016



Holiday/Winter Edition • 2010

Merrimack County Caregiver Newsletter

New Print & Electronic Resources!

Merrimack County Caregiver Resource Guide – UPDATED!

The Merrimack County Caregiver Coalition and members of the original guide came together to update and enhance the family caregiver guide. The new guide will be available at Merrimack County ServiceLink and online for electronic viewing. The caregiver guide has helpful tips for coping with caregiving challenges and provides local and national resources to support you and your family. For

more information, contact Merrimack County ServiceLink.

NEW Email Newsletter!

Merrimack County ServiceLink will be offering a new email newsletter for caregivers. The newsletter will offer current information in an easy-to-read format electronically beginning in November, 2010. If you would like to receive the email newsletter, please email dsemp@mcusercontent.com or call ServiceLink at (603) 228-6625.

Does Your Town Know?

Caregiver Bev Wasson writes: “Last summer I read in our local newsletter about project that the town’s emergency services were working on. They were compiling a list of the residents with special needs in case of an emergency like a power outage, tornado, flood, etc.

If, for example, there was a power outage, and they knew John Smith was on a breathing machine, someone went to check on him. If there was a flood, and they knew Jane Doe down by the river was in a wheelchair, they’d send the appropriate equipment to help her get out (and not just a canoe that she couldn’t get into!). Or if they knew Johnny Jones had Alzheimer’s, and the area had to evacuate, they’d be sure to send someone to the Jones’ house to see if the caregiver needed help getting him out.

I thought it was a wonderful idea, so I contacted them to put my 94-year-old father on the list. They were surprised to hear from me. They all thought my father had gone into a home when mom died. That would explain why

continued on page 2

**ServiceLink
Resources Center**
Toll-Free:
1-866-634-9412
Local: (603) 228-6625
www.servicelink.org

MORE INSIDE ON:

- Activities for the Holidays..... 2
- Winter Travel Tips..... 2
- Emergency Services and Utility Assistance Resources..... 3
- Medicare D Assistance 3
- Resources..... 3
- NH Caregiver Program Wins National Award of Excellence... 4
- Organizing for Better Health.... 0

TRAINING EVENTS:

Going for Guardianship – A Toolkit to assist individuals in petitioning for guardianship of older adults

Wednesday 1/12/11 • 9am-3pm (registration begins at 8:30am) • IOD Professional Development Center, 56 Old Suncook Rd, Concord, NH

Registration Fee: \$30 per session
*Includes continental breakfast, lunch, and materials

Register at www.iod.unh.edu
Phone/TTY: (603) 228-2084

Powerful Tools for Caregivers – Caregiver support training, Strategies for keeping yourself strong, FREE FOR CAREGIVERS

Tuesdays, 4/5-5/10/11 • 1-3pm • Horseshoe Pond Senior Resource Center, Concord, NH

For more information call ServiceLink at (603) 228-6625.

Activities for the Holidays: Caregivers share their traditions to ease and make the holidays enjoyable for themselves and their loved ones.

"Mom always made her molded salad for the holidays. Now that she's in rehab and will be most likely for the holidays, I wanted to bring this special treat to her this season even though it may not be like home."

"My husband is diagnosed with advanced Alzheimer's. The holidays are a time that he really enjoys watching football. It's amazing how he can follow each play and calculate the scores and penalties. The games bring him great joy. I find the games keep him stimulated intellectually. It's a good thing!"

"Growing up, mom was very sick. All of the responsibilities for care giving fell to Dad. Despite the challenges, he always found time to make this special treat during the holidays. It's a recipe that I've shared with my children and that they enjoy each year too."

Festive Shrimp Salad

1 small can diced beets
1 can small shrimp
1 can crushed pineapple
1 small box elbow macaroni
Hellmann's mayonnaise

Boil macaroni until tender. Drain. Drain shrimp and discard liquid. Drain pineapple and beets, reserving liquid. Mix macaroni, beets, pineapple, shrimp and enough mayonnaise to moisten in a large bowl. Add enough beet juice for color and pineapple juice to taste. Chill and serve.

Handling the Holidays Happily

The holidays can bring additional challenges for caregivers. Lights, smells,

sounds, groups of people can be overwhelming to a loved one. Finding the right balance of stimulation, inclusion and not overdoing activities can prove to be difficult. Here are some tips that caregivers have expressed as being helpful:

- Introduce your loved ones to mealtime slowly or in smaller group settings
- Keep additional background noise to a minimum
- Stick to familiar, traditional schedules and activities as much as possible
- Don't overtax yourself and recognize your own limitations
- Make a list of things to do and be specific about how others can help

Winter Safety Travel Tips

With the upcoming winter weather, you want to be prepared for traveling with your loved one. Here are some winter tips to keep you safe while getting out of the house.

Items to Keep in the Car:

- Cell phone; portable charger and extra batteries
- Shovel
- Windshield scraper
- Battery-powered radio (and extra batteries)
- Flashlight (and extra batteries)
- Water
- Snack food
- Extra hats, coats, mittens
- Blankets
- Chains or rope
- Tire chains
- Road salt and sand
- Booster cables
- Emergency flares
- Bright colored flag; help signs
- First aid kit
- Tool kit
- Road Maps
- Compass
- Waterproof matches and a can (to melt snow for water)
- Paper towels
- Canned compressed air sealant (emergency tire repair)

Source: Centers for Disease Control and Prevention Website

Does Your Town Know?

(continued from page 1)

no one checked on him last February when we had a 23-day power outage. I'd see them go right by our house. I told them he was housebound, has one eye, uses a walker, has dementia, and I was caring for him alone. I then asked if they would like to come meet him. Maybe he wouldn't view them as strangers if they had to come to the house in an emergency. Two ladies came right out and had a good chat with dad. Not only did dad get to meet them, but also the ladies now have a good idea of how we're set up and what kind of help I might need in an emergency. They even noted where we store the transport wheelchair and his extra walker. I feel better knowing that the town's emergency services knows dad is here. Consider contacting your local emergency services!

(Bev serves on the Merrimack County ServiceLink Caregiver Coalition.)

Here Comes the Cold! Be prepared with utility assistance and resources to help you through fall and winter.

Link-Up – Provides a 50% reduction in hook-up charges up to \$30.00 for qualified residential customers.

Lifeline – Provides for a \$1.75 credit applied to the monthly charge and a credit for the carrier connection charge (currently over \$6.00). For more information on Link-Up and Lifeline contact the Consumer Affairs Division of the NH Public Utilities Commission at 1-800-852-3793.

SafeLink – SafeLink Wireless is a government supported program that provides a free cell phone and airtime each month for income-eligible customers. Visit www.safelinkwireless.com or call 1-800-723-3546 to see if you qualify and if the service is available in your area.

Local Welfare Offices – If you are in financial crisis and need immediate

assistance, sometimes your local welfare office can assist you.

Local Churches – Churches often help people in financial need or can offer connections with volunteers to help a neighbor in need.

Community Action Programs – Call (603) 225-3295 for information.

NH Electric Assistance Program – Gives eligible customers a discount on their monthly electric bills.

Fuel Assistance – Assists income-eligible households with paying their energy bills during the heating season.

Weatherization – Provides home improvements and modifications for lowering heating and cooling costs for income eligible individuals.

Disability Specific Resources

ALZHEIMER'S DISEASE

"Later Stage Alzheimer's Disease: A Caregiver's Guide" – This comprehensive book is free to family caregivers who are providing later stage care at home. The guide offers a wealth of practical information to help you manage bathing, bowel and bladder problems, giving medication and many other common challenges. If you are a caregiver and would like to receive your free copy, contact the Alzheimer's Association at 1-800-272-3900 or www.alz.org/nh

Understanding Alzheimer's/ Alzheimer's and Safety – an introductory DVD guide by the Alzheimer's Association. The DVD is available for viewing through the Merrimack County ServiceLink lending library. Stop in to borrow a copy.

CANCER

American Cancer Society Bedford
Phone: (603) 472-8899

MULTIPLE SCLEROSIS

Local Chapter: 1-800-493-9255
Website: www.msnewengland.org

PARKINSON'S DISEASE

The Parkinson's Center at
Dartmouth-Hitchcock Medical Center
Phone: (603) 653-6672

Parkinson's Disease Foundation
Toll-free: 1-800-457-6676
Website: www.pdf.org