

## Long Distance Care Giving

Approximately 7 million adults are long distance caregivers. When one lives many miles away from a loved one with memory impairment, the separation can complicate care giving. It is often difficult to truly know the amount or type of assistance someone needs if you do not see them regularly. A person with memory impairments may not be aware of their needs or may say that things are fine – when they are not. Few long distance caregivers are able to spend as much time as they would like with their loved ones. The key is to use your time effectively. When visiting your loved one, be observant and consider the following:

- Is there food in the refrigerator? Is it spoiled? Is your loved one eating regular meals?
- Is your loved one bathing and grooming themselves?
- What is the condition of the inside and outside of the home? Any safety concerns? (throw rugs, unmanageable stairs)
- Are the bills being paid? Are there piles of unopened mail?
- Is your loved one still able to drive safely?
- Do friends and relatives visit regularly?
- Make appointments with your loved one's doctors, lawyers and financial advisers to handle any concerns. Make arrangements with senior agencies for any care that might be required.
- Meet with neighbors, friends and local relatives to discuss how they feel that person is able to handle day to day activities. Ask if any of them have noticed any behavioral changes, health problems or safety concerns. Enlist their help if they are willing.
- Take time with your loved one to talk about future plans and enjoy activities together.

Once you have established a need for assistance, establish a list of local support contacts. The list should include local family, friends, neighbors, your loved one's doctors, home care agencies, geriatric care managers and other trusted senior professionals. The ElderCare Locator (800/677-1116) can provide local information in all areas of the country.

### SUPPORT GROUP

Support Group for persons with Mild Cognitive Impairment, Early stages of Alzheimer's disease and Memory Loss and their families.

Next meeting: **Nov. 16<sup>th</sup>**

**Time: 9:30am**

**Speaker: Victoria Recio, Senior Center Manager of the Senior Friendship Center**

**Topic: "Mind Your Mind"**

**Location: Senior Friendship Center-Center for Healthy Aging, 1900 Brother Geenen Way, Sarasota**

### THE MEMORY DISORDER CLINIC

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Sponsored by Sarasota Memorial Hospital and State of Florida Department of Elder Affairs

## Signs of Self Neglect

Often around the holidays families spend time with their loved ones. If your loved one lives alone you should be aware of the signs of self neglect. Self neglect describes situations in which older people put themselves at high risk. People who neglect themselves may have impairments that effect their memory or judgment. Knowing where to draw the line between self neglect and a person's right to independence can be difficult. Here are some signs that may mean it's time to intervene:

- **Hoarding**
- **Failure to take essential medications or refusal to seek medical treatment for a serious illness.**
- **Poor hygiene**
- **Dehydration**
- **Confusion**
- **Inability to attend to housekeeping**
- **Not wearing suitable clothing for the weather**
- **Leaving the stove on or water running**

*“There are four kinds of people in this world- those who have been caregivers, those who are currently caregivers, those who will be caregivers, and those who need caregivers”---Former First Lady  
Rosalyn Carter*

## Caregiving Tips for the Holidays

- **Talk about and show pictures of the people who are coming to visit.**
- **Try not to have too many visitors at one time, this can become overwhelming.**
- **Familiarize visitors with the behaviors and conditions of your loved one with memory impairments.**
- **Play familiar holiday music and serve traditional holiday foods.**
- **Use simple decorations.**
- **Name tags are helpful to aid the person with memory impairments to recognize faces.**
- **Watch for signs of fatigue or agitation in your loved one.**
- **Have a “quiet” room that your loved one could rest in if things get too hectic. Have someone stay with them so they do not feel left out.**
- **Prepare for distractions beforehand for example use a photo album to divert attention if behavior problems occur.**
- **Celebrate early in the day or have a holiday luncheon rather than dinner to reduce the possibility of sundowning.**
- **Enjoy the holidays with your loved ones and make special memories to cherish forever.**

## Energy Assistance Available to Qualified Seniors

Most of us are fortunate enough to have loved ones around to help out when times get hard.

Some seniors in the area are not so lucky.

Older adults in danger of having their power shut off may be eligible for assistance through the Emergency Home Assistance Program (EHEAP). Persons 60+ living at nearly poverty level can apply to receive up to \$300 during the heating and cooling seasons. The typical older adult served by this program is one who has past due electric bills, is near poverty level and is faced with many monthly expenses and health concerns. For more information call Senior Friendship Center at 955-2122.

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## SHARE

### Self Help And Resource Exchange

Everyone qualifies for SHARE. Two hours of community service and \$18 cash or food stamps buys groceries at up to 50% savings.

Community service hours could be volunteering at your church, helping a neighbor, taking someone to the doctor—anything that helps another person would count for hours. SHARE host sites require registration and payment of two weeks prior to distribution day. Call SHARE at 1-800-536-3379 for a referral to location near you.

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## Upcoming Events in the Community:

New Class! “Mind your Mind”- Aerobics for the Mind. Class is held Wednesdays, 11:00-12:00 with Harriet Pearson at the Senior Friendship Center. Learn how to stretch thinking, try different ways of stimulating the memory and develop a more creative brain...all while having fun! **This month’s Support Group speaker will provide additional information on this class.**

## “Comedy Corner”

*We know we are getting older when the snap, crackle and pop we hear are not coming from our bowl of Rice Krispies.*



### NOTICE:

**We are in the process of updating our newsletter mailing list. If you have not already done so please mark the appropriate response on the back page of our newsletter and return it to us by mail. Or if you prefer you may call our office at 917-7197 to advise us whether or not you wish to continue receiving our newsletter.**

### News Flash!

**The Johnnie Byrd Alzheimer’s Research Institute is now accepting research candidates**

Contact Lorelei Lindenaux-Balazs MA; LMHC for details. 941-917-7197

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### **Free Memory Screenings**

The Memory Disorder Clinic offers **free memory screenings** at The Senior Friendship Centers on the 2<sup>nd</sup> Monday of every month in Sarasota and on the 1<sup>st</sup> Wednesday of every month in Venice. Call (941) 917-7197 to schedule an appointment.

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### **Sarasota Memorial Hospital**

#### **Memory Disorder Clinic**

#### **Administrative Office Location**

**1700 S. Tamiami Trail**

**Sarasota, FL 34239**

**(941) 917-7197**

**[www.sarasotageriatrics.com](http://www.sarasotageriatrics.com)**

#### **Clinic Locations**

**1921 Waldemere Street**

**Suite 403, Sarasota**

**929 S. Tamiami Trail**

**Suite 203. Osprey**