

ELDER CARE UPDATES



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What's New With You?

by Karen Witkowicz

This is a question I get asked frequently and indeed, ask it of others as well. Now I can say something is new with me. First, I am pleased to announce that Debra Benson is now part of my care management team. Debra has an extensive background in working with the elderly and has worked in the field of bill paying and budgeting. We now offer this program to our clients. Debra helps seniors pay bills, keeps track of their checkbooks and assists with budget creation and adherence. She will also have a hand in marketing and care management. She will be my backup in case of an emergency. Please read more about Debra on the second page. If anyone wishes to meet her or to find out more information about this bill-paying program, please call me at 671-9702.

Red Balloon Service –

Up, Up and Away!

The second new service I am excited to announce is our Red Balloon Service which is a brand new long distance placement and travel service for seniors program. I now accompany seniors/family members who need to move across the country or state to be nearer to relatives and/or care services. I arrange long distance placements when needed. Transportation by commercial airlines,



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air ambulances and stretcher ambulances all can be arranged by me. I coordinate door to door services, including transportation to and from the airport. I recently traveled to Salt Lake City, Utah, with a client and her son when she was moving into an assistive living community to be near her family. With families often being separated from their elderly relatives by many miles and states, they are relieved to find help with placement and travel arrangements. Often family members are not accustomed to traveling with a frail elderly person and it is helpful to have someone along who is skilled in handling this stressful situation. One may not think about all the details, such as, carrying all of the elder's medicines with you, not in the suitcase as it can be lost. If you know anyone who could use this service, please call me at 671-9702 for more details. ☐

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. Peace of mind for you."*

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New Associate:

Debra Benson



It is my great pleasure to announce that I now have an associate in my elder care management & consulting practice. Debra Benson has worked with the elderly and their families for over 15 years in several capacities. Her goal is to better the lives of seniors by helping them not only to obtain needed services, but also by helping them achieve their goals for a high quality of life. Debra holds a bachelor's degree in Health Services Administration/ Long Term Care from SUNY Fredonia. She has supervised teams of Home Health Aids, been the Executive Director of an Alzheimer's residential community and has also worked with seniors to help pay bills, becoming Power of Attorney, if necessary. She has also served as a New York State Ombudsman.

Debra has personal experience in obtaining needed services for her own elderly relatives. I am pleased and proud to welcome her as a member of my team.

Isn't An Adult Day Service Like Child Day Care?

The answer to this is a resounding "NO!". The key to understanding this is the word "adult". In an Adult Day Service Program, seniors find a place to belong separate from their families – a place that is "theirs". The opportunity to socialize, make friends, exercise, take advantage of music programs, discussions of current events and have nutritious meals has a tremendous positive social impact on them. This sense of belonging conveys dignity, respect and a sense of contribution to the group even if only a smile, laugh or nod to acknowledge someone else. This seems to me to be fundamentally what caring is all about – acknowledging the presence and uniqueness of another and helping him/her express it.

Attendance at an adult day service program also keeps the participant more alert and interested in what is going on around her/him. It also gives peace of mind to the family, who needs a safe and secure environment for their older relatives during work hours. This type of program may also be used for respite, giving both family and elder a break from each other.

Adult day programs offer a variety of health, social and supportive services in a safe, protected environment during the day, mostly on weekdays. However, some programs offer weekend hours as well. They serve seniors that require some supervision during the day, but do not require 24 hour care. There are three types of adult day programs. Social programs emphasize activities, meals and recreation. Healthcare programs offer intensive health, therapeutic and social services. Dementia programs are geared toward those with Alzheimer's disease or other cognitive impairments.

Adult day service programs can become a positive part of a senior's life, enhancing self esteem. He/she feels proud to attend and has something to talk about at home. Many families and their relatives take advantage of these programs. According to the National Adult Day Services Association, 75% of participants live with a caregiver and have an average age of 72. Encourage your clients, families with elderly relatives and those caring for people with memory loss to try out an adult day service. They will be pleased with the results. ☐

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