



From the Director.....
Sharon Foerster, L.C.S.W.



Elder Independence of Maine

-a division of SeniorsPlus

~ *Caregiving* ~

Due to chronic illness, disability and injury, over 50 million family caregivers are taking care of a loved one* throughout the United States. There is a wealth of information available for caregivers as a result of exhaustive formal research and recognition of the caregiver’s need for support. The person with the chronic illness or disability relies on those caregivers to be in the best shape, physically and emotionally, as possible. And yet, many caregivers are so busy focusing on their loved one, they may forget that taking time to care for themselves is just as important as taking care of others. The stresses of caregiving can be physically, and emotionally, exhausting if they are not somehow relieved. Not recognizing when the stress begins to take its toll and the need to take of one’s self first can lead to “burnout” – signs that the caregiver’s emotional and physical reserves are left empty. Such signs include:



- ◆ feelings of depression
- ◆ withdrawal from social contacts
- ◆ sense of ongoing and constant fatigue
- ◆ feelings of helplessness
- ◆ change in eating patterns
- ◆ increased use of alcohol

to name a few. It can be hard to recognize burnout ourselves, so taking a proactive approach, and not waiting until a crisis, can help. Some steps to avoid burnout include:

- ◆ stay active in a support network
- ◆ maintain a healthy diet
- ◆ vary your caregiving responsibilities
- ◆ exercise to relieve stress
- ◆ attend a support group
- ◆ take a break

These are just to name a few.

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CAREGIVING (CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1)

At Elder Independence of Maine, we recognize the importance of the family caregiver to the “team” of people it takes to help someone stay at home as independently and safely as possible. On a daily basis, the care managers work with over 3,200 consumers, the majority of whom rely on a family member or friend who helps in some way, perhaps providing grocery shopping or even all of the physical care. No matter how much help you provide, or how often, remember the first sentence in the “Caregiver Bill of Rights.” It reads, *“I have the right to take care of myself. This is not an act of selfishness. It will give me the ability to take better care of my loved one.”* It is recognized, very often, the caregiver’s first step of taking the time to do something for him or herself is the toughest step to take. In the long run, it is one of most helpful steps to take for all involved. To refill your “reserves” allows you to be more present and refreshed with your loved one when you yourself are not as stressed. Yes, easy to say, sometimes much harder to do.

To find out more, there are a number of website suggestions in this issue that connect to a wide array of information for family caregivers. CaregiverHope.com is just one among them. Also remember that the EIM care manager can connect you to resources as well. Every Area Agency on Aging (contact information listed below) also provides caregiver support, referrals and information. Please take a moment to visit the websites and inform yourself as a caregiver. Do you have a story to share about your caregiving experience? Maybe you would like to describe how you take time for yourself. If so, please visit the EIM website and select the **“Contact Us” tab** and send your story. Let us know if you would like us to share it with others in another newsletter edition. And, thank you for being a vital part of “the team” of people who support EIM consumers!

* as reported by CaregiverHope.com.

 **SeniorsPlus**Names Executive Director

Betsy Sawyer-Manter has joined SeniorsPlus of Lewiston/Auburn as Executive Director, filling the position held previously by executive director Pam Allen, who retired at the end of June. Betsy assumed full responsibility on July 1, 2009.



Betsy has worked in the non-profit sector for thirty years beginning in direct client service delivery and in various senior management positions, most recently as the Senior Vice President of Organizational Planning and Operations at People’s Regional Opportunity Program (PROP) in Portland, Maine.

Betsy is originally from Aroostook County and attended the University of Southern Maine for her BA in Social Welfare. She is a Licensed Master Social Worker, earning her Masters in Social Work from the University of Connecticut. Betsy has served on a variety of Boards including the Westbrook Housing Development Corporation, Maine Affordable Housing Coalition and the National Association of Social Workers.

Betsy and her husband reside in Portland, Maine.



**From the Desk of Denise O'Connell
Consumer Services Manager**

Planning

“Expect the best, plan for the worst, and prepare to be surprised.”

Denis Waitley

Born 1933

Here it is already August, and some of you may be planning ways to enjoy what we hope will be a sunny and warm end of summer. Planning ahead may ensure that you don't miss out on a fun opportunity or to spend time with your friends and/or family.

Your Care Managers want to do some planning with you...so you don't get stuck in a frustrating and potentially risky situation, (knock on wood) should your in-home care services not be available for an hour, a day or longer.

Your safety at home is a priority for you and for us at EIM. While we all “hope” your services at home will be seamless in their delivery and never have a day when they are not available, but we all know that the possibility is there. Your choice to remain at home does have some risk.

Planning ahead for this will increase your safety and make it easier for you to handle the situation, if needed, as you have will already have a plan in place.

Your Care Managers will soon begin to introduce the “EIM Back Up Plan” with you over the next few months. We hope to discuss with you how to plan for days when your services are not available.

After your planning discussion with your Care Manager, we will put your information/plan onto a one page sheet for you to keep by your phone to remind you of your Back Up Plan.

Please let your Care Manager know if you have any questions.

Enjoy the rest of your summer and fall!

Assistance Available Through Your Area Agency on Aging

Did you know that additional services and resources are available through your local Area Agency on Aging (AAA)? There are five AAAs throughout the state of Maine. Services such as meals on wheels, caregiver respite, support groups, and Medicare D insurance enrollment assistance may be available. Give them a call today!

For contact information or to be connected to your Area Agency on Aging's website, go to EIM's website link or call toll free, **1-877-353-3771** and you will be connected to the Area Agency on Aging in your Area!



Money Management Program

Spectrum Generations Sees Money Management Program Growth

Spectrum Generations is experiencing an increase in the number of area residents taking advantage of the Money Management Program. Designed to provide help with monthly budgeting, the Money Management Program involves a one-to-one match between a volunteer and an income-eligible client.

Since early 2007, volunteers have been working with seniors in the Bath/Brunswick area on budgeting, checkbook balancing, and general financial matters. “We’ve been very fortunate to have as many volunteers as we can use,” said Debbie Atwood, Program Coordinator at the Brunswick Resource Center, “and this recent increase in the number of clients we’re serving means that we can make this program available to more people in the area looking for a fulfilling volunteer opportunity.”

Atwood says that she is not surprised by the sudden increase in clients, given the state of the economy, and she hopes that area seniors will feel comfortable asking for help before they experience financial difficulties.

The Money Management Program comes from AARP and has been active in southern Maine for ten years through the Southern Maine Agency on Aging (SMAA). Called “Money Minders”, the program has served hundreds of residents of York and Cumberland Counties. According to Atwood, SMAA’s Program Coordinator, Maryann McGreehan, has served graciously as a mentor to Atwood and Pat Greenleaf, fellow MMP Coordinator for Spectrum Generations. “Maryann has been an invaluable resource, sharing her experience and expertise generously. We’re lucky to have her,” stated Greenleaf.

For those interested in the program, please call Debbie Atwood at Spectrum Generations’ Brunswick Resource Center at 729-0475 or Pat Greenleaf at the Augusta office at 1-800-639-1553.

For more information about Spectrum Generations programs, the public is invited to call

729-0475 to reach the Brunswick Resource Center or to call our Information & Help Line at

1-800-639-1553. On the Internet, Spectrum Generations can be found at

www.spectrumgenerations.org. Hearing impaired may call our TTY number 1-800-464-8703.

**Contact Pat Greenleaf
Spectrum Generations
1-800-876-9212 Ex 102**



The Importance of your Power of Attorney Documentation Raymond Gagnon, Privacy Officer

Greetings from the Administrative Services Team! One of our Team's major responsibilities is to ensure the information contained in your Consumer Record is protected and only released to those that you grant your permission.

In our last newsletter we reviewed the importance of your Release of Information. This month I would like to answer some commonly asked questions regarding a Power of Attorney documentation. While these documents are unique to each individual the following questions apply to all documents. We hope that you find this information useful. If you have any questions regarding a Power of Attorney document please feel free to call me or your Care Manager at Elder Independence of Maine.

1. If I show my Power of Attorney Documentation to the Goold Nurse Assessor why does Elder Independence of Maine still request a copy?

State and Federal laws require that we view and understand the contents of your Power of Attorney documents. Your Power of Attorney document is specific to you and outlines your wishes and how what decision-making authority you have granted to your Power of Attorney.

2. Will my Care Manager still contact me to discuss my care if I have granted decision making regarding my care to my Power of Attorney?

Yes. Elder Independence of Maine will always stay in touch with you to be sure that your needs are being met and to regularly review your wishes in the best possible way that works for you. While you may have granted decision-making authority to your Power of Attorney we believe that it is important to maintain a relationship with you.

3. Can I instruct my Care Manager to always contact my Power of Attorney to discuss my Plan of Care?

Yes. You may request this but your Care Manager will still contact you to check in occasionally with you to see how you are doing and that you still wish that we communicate directly to your Power of Attorney.

4. Can I change my Power of Attorney?

Yes. If you are able to make your own decisions you can change your Power of Attorney at any time. The resources listed below can assist you in learning how to make changes to your Power of Attorney.

If you have any questions regarding a Power of Attorney Document please feel free to call me or your Care Manager at Elder Independence of Maine.

If you interested in exploring if your Power of Attorney meets your current needs or are considering having one created here are some excellent resources to assist you:

Your Area Agency on Aging:	1-877-353-3771
Legal Services for the Elderly:	1-800-750-5353
Maine Ombudsman Office:	1-800-499-0229
Pine Tree Legal:	784-1558

Next Issue! Some answers to commonly asked questions regarding Guardianship.

Elder Independence of Maine Consumer Satisfaction Survey Results Are In!

A very special note of thanks to all of you who took the time to respond to our Annual Consumer Satisfaction Survey. We appreciate and value your feedback. We use this information to evaluate our processes. Here are our results!

Question 1: Since you have been receiving home care services, has your ability to stay at home increased, decreased, or remained the same?

Increased: 35%
Decreased: 4%
Remained the Same: 61%

Question 2: Are the number of hours of home care you are receiving more than enough, enough or not enough?

More Than Enough: 4%
Enough: 83%
Not Enough: 12%
Not Applicable: 1%

Question 3: Has your EIM Care Manager offered you choices in you home care services?

Yes: 81%
No: 14%
Not Applicable: 5%

Question 4: Through your EIM Care Manager, have you learned about any new ways to get the help you need to stay at home?

Yes: 63%
No: 29%
Not Applicable: 8%

Question 5: Are you satisfied with the way your EIM Care Manager helps to arrange and monitor your care?

Yes: 90%
No: 5%
Not Applicable: 5%

Question 6: Are you satisfied with the quality of the services you receive in your home?

Yes: 96%
No: 0%
Not Applicable: 4%

We want to learn more about your experience being a consumer of our services.

If you are interested, please contact Tammy Thatcher at EIM at 1-888-234-3920, extension 3353 or by e-mail at tthatcher@elderindependence.org. She will take your name and contact information and ask how you want to participate. Thank you for considering.

Hello to our EIM Family Members!

All EIM consumers have some injury or chronic disability and many rely on assistance from a family member or friend. For instance, approximately 19% of our consumers have dementia but are able to stay at home with our care coordination, in-home supports and *your* care. We want to make sure that you have up to date information on tools and resources that may be of assistance to you as a caregiver. Our knowledgeable Care Managers will continue to share information with you when you talk during a call or in-home visit but here are a few more “tidbits”. If you have questions about available resources, please ask your care manager.



THIS CARING HOME

This site provides solutions and tools to enhance safety and daily living for persons with dementia.

<http://thiscaringhome.org/index.aspx>

AREA AGENCIES ON AGING

The five Area Agencies on Aging in Maine are the central resource for elder services. They can help you either directly or by referring you to the appropriate agency in your area.

Call 1-877-353-3771 from anywhere in Maine to contact the Area Agency on Aging that serves the town you live in to ask about support for family caregivers.

ENVIRONMENTAL GERIATRICS

Environmental Geriatrics is the study and application of design principles to interiors and products to optimize the health, function, and well-being of older adults. This website has helpful information and tools for making the home safe for persons living with dementia.

www.environmentalgeriatrics.org/

OFFICE OF ELDER SERVICES

This state of Maine agency promotes programs and services for older adults, their families and for people with disabilities. Visit the site often to stay updated on important issues. Check out the Caregiver page.

Call Toll Free Nationwide & Canada 1-800-262-2232 8am to 5pm; TTY (800)606-0215 or www.maine.gov/dhhs/oes/

BENEFITS CHECK UP

This site is a service of the National Council on Aging. This on-line service allows you to inquire, apply or enroll in various medical and financial state, federal and local programs.

www.benefitscheckup.org

ALZHEIMER'S ASSOCIATION

The Alzheimer's Association is the leading voluntary health organization in Alzheimer care, support and research. The Alzheimer's Association mission is to eliminate Alzheimer's disease through the advancement of research; to provide and enhance care and support for all affected; and to reduce the risk of dementia through the promotion of brain health.

www.alz.org

FAMILY CAREGIVING 101

The National Family Caregivers Association (NFCA) and the National Alliance for Caregiving (NAC) – leaders in the movement to better understand and assist family caregivers — have joined together to recognize, support and advise this vital group of Americans. The site is designed to provide caregivers with the basic tools, skills and information they need to protect their own physical and mental health while they provide high quality care for their loved one.

www.familycaregiving101.org



Healthy IDEAS: Identifying Depression, Empowering Activities for Seniors

Healthy IDEAS is a program that Care Managers use in their work with older adults. It is “evidence based,” meaning the program results have been tested and show proof that the program works to relieve signs of depression.

Some of the Care Managers at EIM make regular home visits to older adults on certain programs. As part of their regular visits to the older adults, the Care Managers have been doing Healthy IDEAS screenings. The screenings are a series of questions about mood and feelings, and can help identify signs and levels of depression symptoms.

The Care Managers provide education about depression to the older adults and sometimes their families or caregivers. They can link the older adult to their doctor or a mental health professional. They can work with the older adult on improving their mood through setting goals to identify and do activities they enjoy.

The evidence shows that older adults who participate in Healthy IDEAS may:

- ◆ learn ways to improve mood by doing activities
- ◆ recognize signs of depression
- ◆ feel less depressed
- ◆ feel less pain
- ◆ improve general sense of well-being

Nearly 1 in 5 Americans 65 years or older experiences symptoms of depression. An older lady who had recently participated in Healthy IDEAS stated, “I’m a lot more comfortable talking with my doctor about my feelings now – I never talked about this before”.

- Sally Kelley, Care Manager Team Leader

SeniorsPlus New Education Center Officially Open



(From left to right: SeniorsPlus Board of Director Member Margaret Ross, SeniorsPlus Advisory Council Chair Connie Tutlis, SeniorsPlus Board of Director Chair Patricia McCluskey, State Senator Margaret Craven, SeniorsPlus Director of Community Services Connie Jones, SeniorsPlus Executive Director Betsy Sawyer-Manter)

SeniorsPlus, the local Area Agency on Aging for Androscoggin, Franklin and Oxford Counties, held the ribbon cutting ceremony of their new Education Center located at the SeniorsPlus office on 8 Falcon Rd in Lewiston on Thursday, August 20th. State Senator Margaret Craven was on hand to cut the ribbon and noted Portland speaker Susan Arledge gave the keynote address on “Ages 0 to 100, Learning Never Grows Old”. Members of the community as well as various community partner agencies were able to have their questions answered, view the equipment and resources that are available.

“The SeniorsPlus Education Center offers classes and workshops of interest to older adults, important information to make educated decisions, wellness classes, new learning opportunities such as art classes and creative writing as well as the chance to meet and make new friends,” says Connie Jones, Director of Community Services. “Classes will be conducted by community partner agencies as well as SeniorsPlus staff.”

For more information on the classes being offered at the Education Center please call SeniorsPlus at 207-795-4010 or 1-800-427-1241.

The ribbon cutting.....



(From left to right: SeniorsPlus Board of Director Chair Patricia McCluskey, State Senator Margaret Craven, SeniorsPlus Advisory Council Chair Connie Tutlis, SeniorsPlus Board of Director Member Margaret Ross, SeniorsPlus Executive Director Betsy Sawyer-Manter)