



The Elder Services Provider Council of Washington County would like to thank the following organizations for making this page possible: Easter Seals Adult Day Services, Somerford Assisted Living and Alzheimer's Care, Hospice of Washington County, Fahrney-Keedy Home and Village., and the Village at Robinwood. Please contact Mindy Propst, Chair, for more information on this page or the Elder Services Provider Council. 301-745-3828. mpropst@eseal.org

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Caregivers' Forums at Robinwood Medical Center held Second Thursday of each month, 11:15 a.m.-1:00 p.m.
March 13 - Communication Dos and Don'ts
Speaker: Merle Wexler, Somerford Assisted Living & Alzheimer's Care
Cost: \$7.00. To register, call 301-791-6360.

Is Living Longer & Better Possible?

Submitted by Dawn Johns, Community Relations Director, Hospice of Washington County

Every year Americans spend billions of dollars on products, services, and ideas with the intent to live longer. We've all heard that medical breakthroughs, vitamins, healthy eating, exercise programs, yoga, stress management, skin care, exercise equipment, massage, acupuncture, etc can potentially help us live longer healthier lives.

Regardless of possible explanations, the fact is Americans are living longer. According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), "Effective public health strategies and medical treatment advances have resulted in a 30-year increase in life expectancy during the 20th century." Living longer and better is an expectation that most Americans want throughout their lifespan, even at the end.

Quality of life is critical no matter what part of the lifespan one may be in. Today, millions of Americans are living longer with chronic illnesses that could have caused an earlier death 30 years ago. While death is not preventable, how we choose to live during the final phase of our lifespan can mean living longer and better through that period with the help of expert medical management by caring, dedicated professionals.

The National Hospice Foundation (NHF) conducted research showing that 80% of Americans wish to die at home. Of the 2.4 million Americans that die each year, less than 25% actually die at home. Of the 700,000 people that are enrolled in hospice services, more than 75% die at home surrounded by the love of family and friends. While some

would choose not to have help from an outside agency like hospice, the majority would welcome the expertise and guidance that can be gained from such a service.

The NHF research also showed that the top four services Americans feel to be important in helping someone live longer and better at the end of life are: **honor** of the person's wishes; **choice** among the types of services the person can receive; **pain control** tailored to the patient's wishes; and **emotional support** for the family.

What care system can provide Americans with the services they deem important? Hospice. The key messages about hospice care that everyone, healthcare professionals and consumers alike, should understand are:

1. Hospice is a philosophy which promotes a special kind of care focusing on relief of pain, symptom control, and spiritual and emotional support. Care goes out to the patient and family caregivers;
2. The majority of hospice care takes place in the home, where the person can be surrounded by family and familiar settings or in nursing facilities or assisted living communities;
3. Hospice costs are covered by Medicare, Medicaid in most states, and by most insurance programs and HMOs;
4. The expenses of all medicines related to the life-limiting illness, medical equipment, and oxygen are covered under the Medicare Hospice Benefit;
5. Hospice provides family and caregiver support through training, encouraging, and listening so family and caregiver feel more at ease with performing some of the daily care for their loved one in the

- home;
6. Bereavement support is available to families for 13 months after the death of their loved one; and
7. The most common statement made by families who chose hospice for their loved one is, "we wish we had known about hospice sooner."

Unfortunately, local residents are only utilizing hospice care for approximately 30% of the actual deaths occurring in Washington County. Obviously, some deaths occur instantly without an impending illness, but for those who have a condition, acute or chronic, hospice care can be a tremendous help. Anyone can refer to hospice by contacting the local provider.

Hospice care, like that provided locally through Hospice of Washington County, is available to support anyone in Washington County with a life-limiting illness [defined as a condition or illness that may limit life if the disease takes its normal course]. Contrary to the inaccurate perception among Americans, hospice is not about making a decision to 'give up' - it is a decision that can actually improve the quality of and indeed prolong the lives of people receiving care. More information on hospice care is available by contacting Hospice of Washington County at 301-791-6360 or by visiting the organization's website at www.hospiceofwc.org.

Make a decision - choose a healthy lifestyle and be informed about your health care options that can make a difference in how you *live!*

Look for the next article in our 6-part series on the Long-Term Care Continuum in the February 24th Picket News edition of the Senior Life Page.

Catherine A. Drummond, PA
Attorney At Law

Wills
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Home, Nursing Home, & Hospital Visits

21 Summit Avenue
Hagerstown, MD
301-791-1490

Calendar of Events

FEB. 20: First in a Six Part Series on Dementia and Alzheimer's. Memory Loss -Is It Time to Worry? Presented by Debbie Bauer Alzheimer's Association. Wednesday, 4:00 PM-5:30 PM at Somerford Assisted Living & Alzheimer's Care. Lite Fare Provided. Please call Sheri Evans for more information or to register at 301-791-9221 x213 Please ask about our free on site caregiving for your loved one. FREE

FEB. 21: Reverse Mortgage-Imagine the Possibilities. Broadmore Assisted Living. 1:00PM-3:00PM Light Lunch buffet Served. Call 301-766-0066 for more information and seating is limited. FREE

FEB. 21: Faith in Action a Program for Reach Caregivers Training for Volunteers Held at Reach Center - 140 W. Franklin Street, Suite 300, Hagerstown, MD Thursday 6:00PM Due to limited seating reservations are necessary. Contact Kevin Collins Program Director at 301-733-2371 x100 **If Thursday evening are not good a special training session can be arranged. FREE

FEB. 21: Alzheimer's Support Group at Loyaltan Assisted Living. Thursday 2:00pm-3:00pm Call Sheri Woolcock at 301-733-3353 FREE

FEB. 23: Dancing with the Stars of Washington County. Benefiting the Alzheimer's Association, Greater Maryland Chapter Fountain Head Country Club Saturday 8:00PM-11:00PM For information or tickets please contact Terry Miller Alzheimer's Association at 301-797-4892

FEB. 26: Alzheimer's Support Group at Homewood at Williamsport Community Center. Tuesday 10:00Am-11:00Am Call 301-582-1750 to register or for more information. FREE

MAR. 4: Alzheimer's Support Group. Somerford Assisted Living & Alzheimer's Care. Tuesday 5:30PM-6:30PM Please call Sheri Evans for more information at 301-791-9221 x213 Please ask about our free on site caregiving for your loved one. FREE

MAR. 4: Learn How to Get One Step Closer to a Healthy You. Speaker Dr. Thomas Amalfitano of Mid-Atlantic Orthopedic Specialists. Topic: What to Expect with Joint Replacement Surgery - Tuesday, 11:00Am-12:30Pm Call for reservations at 301-790-1000 Program and Lunch is \$8.00

MAR. 6: Parkinson's Support Group Homewood at Williamsport Hilltop Assisted Living Building. Thursday, 1:30PM-2:30PM 1:30PM Lunch provided no charge. 2:30PM Guest Speaker. Call to register at 301-582-1750 FREE

MAR. 11 & 12: AARP Driving Safety Class at Loyaltan Assisted Living. Tuesday and Wednesday, 9:00am-1:00PM Registration is required. Please call Judy at 301-790-0275 x220

MAR. 19: Are Pills the Answer? At Somerford Assisted Living & Alzheimer's Care. Speaker: Debbie Bauer, Alzheimer's Association. Wednesday, 4:30PM-6:00PM Lite Fare provided. Please call Sheri Evans to register at 301-791-9221 x213 or for more information. Please ask about our free on site caregiving for your loved one. FREE

MAR. 20: Wellness Fair at Broadmore Assisted Living. Topics include: Diabetic Health, Importance of Foot Care, Acupuncture and Information on Various Cancers. Thursday Speakers will start at 11AM, 11:30AM, 1Pm and 1:30PM For more information please call 301-766-0066 FREE

MAR. 25: Alzheimer's Support Group at Homewood at Williamsport Community Center. Tuesday, 10:00Am-11:00Am Call 301-582-1750 to register or for more information. FREE

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An Emeritus Senior Living Community
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Ask About Our WINTER MOVE-IN SPECIALS

February is National Heart Month.
Did you know that Hospice can care for people with serious heart disease?
LEARN MORE.

Hospice of Washington County, Inc.
747 Northern Avenue
301-791-6360
www.hospiceofwc.org

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