

SENIOR CONNECTION

Information for Seniors & Caregivers

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WINTER 2011-2012

Boomers On the Rise ...but to what end?



Robert P. Dwyer, Ph.D.,

Preliminary numbers for the 2010 Census show that the population of older persons in Central Massachusetts will have climbed to over 150,000. These numbers indicate that the number of caregivers of older persons will reach perhaps well over 60,000.

To any of us who have followed the numbers over the years, we are not surprised. People are living longer due to breakthroughs in medicine and advances in home care. And, of course, the "baby boom" generation is growing older, some finally filing for social security and Medicare.

At the same time, the aging network has talked quite a bit about preparing for this "age wave." Fifteen years ago when I first started at CMAA, folks in Boston and in Washington talked about the need to get ready for this aging cohort. Even the 2005 White House Conference on Aging theme was "The Booming

Dynamics of Aging."

Yet, the reality is that with all of the talk, and with so much talk about being "boomer ready," the last years have seen a decline in revenue and a tightening of services even for the most frail elders. Here in the Commonwealth of Massachusetts, the State Home Care program administered through the aging services access points are looking at the possibility of waiting lists for eligible seniors. At the same time, hospitals are looking to reduce the number of readmissions, and Medicare and Medicaid are seeking to reduce payments to save money. While many nursing homes across the Commonwealth have closed, and though the State Home Care program has proven itself a cost-effective alternative, funding for in-home services continues to be scrutinized and demonized in favor of institutional care.

The upshot is that far from preparing for the "onslaught" of the boomer generation, Massachusetts and the federal government are falling behind in caring for the older Americans who need care the most. Revenue shortfalls and the continued medicalization of aging services are causing many of the day to day needs of the frail to be ignored, as though transportation, bathing, shopping and house-keeping are not necessary.

If we can't offer appropriate care to our current frail elders, what will happen when we boomers need the help? Only time will tell....

Helping an Older Adult: A Caregiver's Journey project Part I

*A collaboration with UMass Medical School
Population Health Clerkship*



The twelve UMass Medical School Population Health Clerkship students (Lilly C., Matt D., Natasha D., J. Tessa D., Peter G., Matt J., Emilia J., Alessandra M., Juan R., Michael R., Chau T., and Kelley W.) under the tutelage of Dr. Carole Upshur and Dr. Lee Hargraves, did an amazing job for us regarding our "Helping an Older Adult; A Caregiver's Journey" project. We would like to extend a sincere note of appreciation to each of them for their time, skills and interest in the public health issue of caregiver stress.

The twelve students, and the two doctors who facilitated the group, put in a tremendous effort to create and administer a survey. The survey assesses the physical and emotional effects that the role of caregiving has on those individuals who provide such care. The students accompanied CMAA staff to community health fairs and also visited a geriatric physician's office where they surveyed caregivers who volunteered to participate in the survey.

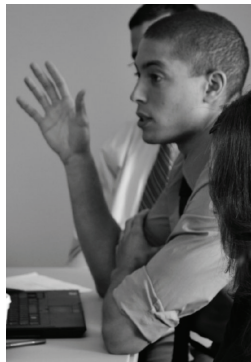


Other caregivers contacted the *SeniorConnection* Department to note their interest in participating. In total the students surveyed 102 caregivers. The results of the survey were presented to a group of individuals at our office as well as in a poster presentation at UMass Medical School. Their research found statistical results not unlike national information known about caregivers and their individual journeys.



We would be remiss if we did not express our sincere thanks to all of those caregivers who volunteered their time. Their efforts helped us test the survey questions and also gather preliminary results.

CMAA must also thank the aging and caregiving network professionals from community programs who offered lectures for the students: Julie McMurray-Alzheimer's Association- Central MA Region, Dennis Goguen-UMass Memorial Health Care, Clinton Hospital Geriatric Medical Psychiatry Program, and Chris MacWade-Family Services of Central Massachusetts. In addition we would like to thank all the other medical professionals from UMass Medical School who helped educate the students about aging and caregiving issues.



Keep an eye on www.SeniorConnection.org because we will be uploading the survey onto a new page on our website. This new page, "Helping an Older Adult; A Caregiver's Journey", will allow caregivers to assess their own stress level and find resources that can help ease the caregiving journey. We will keep you posted as to when this exciting new project will be finalized and on our website!



**CENTRAL MASSACHUSETTS AGENCY ON AGING
TITLE III PROGRAMS FOR FY 2012**

Effective October 1, 2011, thirty grants in the amount of \$ 2,108,452 were awarded to sixteen non-profit organizations serving older adults throughout Central Massachusetts. These federal grants, authorized under the Older Americans Act, are targeted to meet the highest priority needs of persons 60 years of age and older. A volunteer allocations committee reviewed all grant applications and recommended funding for the following programs. The Advisory Council and Board of Directors approved the recommendations.

Agency	Program	Grant
Central Mass Housing Alliance	Elder Home Repair	\$54,400
Centro Las Americas	Hispanic Elder Program	\$25,306
Community Legal Aid	Senior Citizen and Law Advocacy Project	\$115,000
Edward M. Kennedy Community Health Center	Medical Transportation	\$5,000
Elder Services of Worcester Area	Crisis Intervention	\$23,140
	Family Caregiver Support Program	\$113,621
	Money Management	\$8,706
	Nutrition Project	\$461,597
Jewish Family Service	Guardianship	\$48,660
Leominster Spanish American Center	Ancianos Latinos Unidos	\$29,757
MAB Community Services	Medical Transportation	\$3,000
	Vision Rehabilitation For Low Vision Elders	\$9,846
MassMedLine	Medication Management	\$11,230
Montachusett Home Care Corporation	Crisis Intervention	\$23,480
	Family Caregiver Support Program	\$85,217
	Money Management	\$10,002
	Ombudsman Program (North)	\$84,256
	Ombudsman Program (Central)	\$114,099
Montachusett Opportunity Council	Elder Home Repair	\$24,433
	Nutrition Project	\$310,354
	Seniors On The Move	\$3,436
New England Homes for the Deaf	Drop-In Center	\$6,582
Tri-Valley, Inc.	Crisis Intervention	\$26,000
	Family Caregiver Support Program	\$85,217
	Money Management	\$9,978
	Nutrition Project	\$324,311
	Ombudsman Program	\$73,404
VNA Care Network	Osteoporosis Education and Prevention	\$5,918
VNA Greater Milford-Northbridge Area	Alzheimer's Project	\$5,770
Worcester Elder Affairs Division	Osteoporosis Prevention Project	\$6,732



Congratulations to Johnnie from Worcester who was CMAA's raffle winner of a gift certificate to O'Connor's Restaurant during Senior Spectacular 2011 at the DCU Center.

From the left, Zeenat Islam, CMAA Intern, Johnnie, and Dianne Krikorian.

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SeniorConnection Update Request

Just a reminder, the update requests for agencies whose name begins with A-L have been mailed.

If you have not yet done so, we ask you to review the information for any changes, correct, sign and return them, even if you do not make any changes. A stamped self addressed envelope was provided for your convenience or you may fax it to 508 852-5425. Updates for agencies beginning with M-Z will be mailed in the spring of 2012.

Please contact the Information & Referral department at (508) 852-5539V/TDD if you are not listed in our database but would like to be included.