

Caregiver Connection

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Welcome to the Caregiver Connection Ezine, your source for the most current information about caregiving events, conferences, and issues that are important to you.



Please consult our website for more information: www.njcaregivers.org.

Quick Links

- Caregivers of New Jersey**
- The Family Support Center of New Jersey**
- The Family Resource Network**

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Walk-a-thon to benefit Caregivers of New Jersey



On Sunday, October 11th, 2009 in Edison, hundreds will gather to support caregivers and individuals with disabilities from across the state by raising money and walking the 5k track around the beautiful lake of Roosevelt Park. Call your family, friends and co-workers and start a walk team today! Your support will help Caregivers of New Jersey to continue to provide you and other caregivers with valuable information and activities, as well as spread awareness of the trials and tribulations of caregiving throughout the year to the legislators in our state government.

Visit www.walkforabrightertomorrow.org for more information and to register online today!

This will be a fun filled day for families and friends. Entertainment and refreshments will be just a few of the day's highlights. If you have any questions please call (800) 376-2345.

Help the Lifespan Respite Care Act Receive Funding!

The New Jersey Lifespan Respite Coalition is seeking funding for the Lifespan Respite Care Act (PL 109-442) in the authorized level of \$71.1 million. Despite its widely supported enactment in 2006, the program received only \$2.5 million in FY09, a small fraction of the \$289 million originally requested.

We are asking that you, citizens of the United States, family caregivers, supporters, friends and advocates, sign on to this petition in hopes that the families of those with disabilities and chronic illnesses may receive the deserved respite care services they desperately need.

Please follow [this link](#) to sign the Lifespan Respite Care Petition.

Thank you in advance for your continued support!



Landmark Survey Highlights Needs of Unpaid Caregivers of People with Diabetes

Diet and exercise plans, managing blood sugar levels and reliable online information cited as top concerns.

The Hormone Foundation, the public education affiliate of The Endocrine Society, in collaboration with the National Alliance for Caregiving released key findings from a first-of-its kind survey (http://www.hormone.org/public/diabetes_caregiver.cfm) aimed at better understanding the daily needs and struggles of unpaid caregivers of people with diabetes.

The online survey completed by 1,002 respondents in April 2009, found that the major challenges in caring for those with diabetes include exercise and diet compliance, patient depression and maintaining target sugar levels. Caregivers reported that the physician is their top information source, followed by the Internet. However, while 73% of caregivers reported using the Internet to obtain diabetes information, many have expressed frustration in evaluating the quality and reliability of online content.

Specific survey findings include:

1. More than half of respondents (54%) struggle with diet-related issues like cooking, meal planning and non-compliance.
2. Nearly half (49%) reported challenges with medical management of diabetes
3. 12% of respondents reported their own stress and emotional health as a significant concern.

"Caregivers are involved with a wide range of diabetes-related responsibilities and as a result, many report some social and personal health sacrifices due to their caregiving," said Gail Hunt, president and CEO of the National Alliance of Caregiving. "The more information we have to understand the issues and burdens caregivers experience, the better quipped we will be to provide them with meaningful assistance."

"To address the needs identified through the survey, the Foundation will be creating Diabetes Caregiver Central, an easy-to-use website with the most up-to-date information relevant to diabetes caregivers. The new website will serve as a comprehensive one-stop shop including resources and information about diabetes, diet and exercise, optimizing blood sugar control, managing complications and coexisting illnesses, and handling patient and caregiver stress and mental health," said Alvin M. Matsumoto, MD, chair of the Hormone Foundation Committee.

Diabetes Caregiver Central is expected to go live in the fall of 2010.

New Federal Government Website for Info on HINI (Swine Flu)



Concerned about the potential flu pandemic? Visit www.flu.gov, the new, one-stop access to US government H1N1, avian and pandemic flu information. Here you will find facts about symptoms, how the flu is contracted, how to best avoid becoming infected and what to do if you do become sick. Also, find the new CDC guidelines to help businesses and institutions of higher education to respond correctly in the event of a Swine Flu case.

NJ Closer to Becoming 11th State with "Silver Alert" System

By D. Roseman

The Assembly Appropriations Committee released legislation sponsored by 6 Assembly Democrats to make New Jersey the 11th State with a "Silver Alert" System to notify the public about missing elderly people.

The plan is based on the "Amber Alert" system used by state police to locate missing children. The measure is sponsored by Assembly members Wayne DeAngelo, Sandi Love, Paul Moriarty, Pamela R. Lampitt, Cary Rodriguez and Elease Evans.

With the panel's vote, the bill now heads to the Assembly Speaker who decides if and when to post it for a floor vote.

According to the Alzheimer's Association, 60% of those with dementia will wander at some point.

Under the legislation (A-2844), the emergency alert plan would be a voluntary, cooperative effort between state and local law enforcement agencies and the broadcast media. Upon notice by the state police, broadcast media would transmit an emergency alert to inform the public of the disappearance of an elderly person.



"This offers a quick way to alert the public and law enforcement about missing senior citizen, and time is often of the essence in these situations, so we should do anything we can to help hastily distribute information," said Love (D-Camden/Gloucester).

According to the National Conference of State Legislatures, New Jersey would join Colorado, Georgia, Illinois, Kentucky, Michigan, North Carolina, Ohio, Oklahoma, Texas and Virginia with "Silver Alert" systems.

The alerts would include a description of the person and how people with information relating to the missing person can contact law enforcement.

The lawmakers aid the legislation takes on even more importance as Baby Boomers age.

"Statistics show at least half of those with dementia who wander away suffer serious injury or death if not found within 24 hours," said Moriarty (D-Gloucester/Camden). "That's reason enough to get this into law."

PNC Bank Offering Loans to Improve Handicapped Accessibility

PNC Bank is offering personal unsecured loans through a new "Self-Reliant Loan" program to qualified disabled New Jerseyans for a range of services that enable independent living. Bank officials and activists with non-profit New Jersey Citizen Action provided details about the program Tuesday at a Statehouse press conference in Trenton.



The loans, for example, can be used to provide computers with adaptive software, remodeling a kitchen or bathroom to improve accessibility and for the care of a service dog. In addition to a reduced interest-rate loan offer, PNC will award a \$1,000 grant to borrowers who close on a Self-Reliant loan.

"The current economic environment has further heightened the need for creative solutions and close partnerships in serving the needs of physically challenged individuals," said Phyllis Salowe-Kaye, Citizen Action director. "At a time when it's most needed, what could be more exciting than delivering a solution that advances the independence of people with physical challenges and the additional hurdles that presents?"

"PNC has an established history of working with highly regarded organizations dedicated to improving and strengthening the local communities that we are privileged to support," said Bill Best, a PNC senior vice president. "Today we clearly see the benefit and impact that the shared focus of PNC and New Jersey Citizen Action has for the varied communities we serve."

Debi Thompson, of Toms River, one of the loan program's first participants, said she used her loan to remodel a bathroom that will support wheelchair accessibility.

To learn more about the loan program visit: www.pnc.com.

- TOM HESTER SR., NEWJERSEYNEWSROOM.COM

Employer Best Practices for Workers with Caregiving Responsibilities



In 2007, EEOC issued guidance explaining the circumstances under which discrimination against workers with caregiving responsibilities might constitute discrimination based on sex, disability or other characteristics protected by federal employment discrimination laws.

This document supplements the 2007 guidance by providing suggestions for best practices that employers may adopt to reduce the chance of EEO violations against caregivers, and to remove barriers to equal employment opportunity. Best practices are proactive measures that go beyond federal non-discrimination requirements.

Currently, many workers juggle both work and caregiving responsibilities. Those responsibilities extend not only to spouses and children, but also to parents and other older family members, or relatives with disabilities. While women, particularly women of color, remain disproportionately likely to exercise primary caregiving responsibilities, men have increasingly assumed caretaking duties for children, parents and relatives with disabilities.

Employers adopting flexible workplace policies that help employees achieve a satisfactory work-life balance may not only experience decreased complaints of unlawful discrimination, but may also benefit their workers, their customer base, and their bottom line.[5] Numerous studies have found that flexible workplace policies enhance employee productivity, reduce absenteeism, reduce costs, and appear to positively affect profits. They also aid recruitment and retention efforts, allowing employers to retain a talented, knowledgeable workforce and save the money and time that would otherwise have been spent recruiting, interviewing, selecting and training new employees.

The benefits of these programs remain constant regardless of the economic climate, and some employers have implemented workplace flexibility programs as an alternative to workforce reductions. Such programs not only enable employers to "go lean without being mean," but they also can position organizations to rebound quickly as soon as business improves.

To view the entire article, visit: <http://www.eeoc.gov/policy/docs/caregiver-best-practices.html>.

African American Conference on Mental Health

An African American Conference on Mental Health promoting mental health and wellbeing in African American communities will take place on Saturday, October 24, 2009 at the address below.

Rutgers University Labor Education Center
50 Labor Center Way
New Brunswick, NJ 08901

Please visit <http://www.naminj.org/programs/AACTNOW/AACTNOW.htm> for more information.

Resources for Military Families



Military OneSource - Military OneSource is a 24/7/365 resource for military members and their families. The website links to a comprehensive body of information on topics such as childcare, personal finance management, relocation assistance and emotional support during deployment. www.militaryonesource.com

Real Warriors Campaign - Created by the Defense Centers of Excellence for Psychological Health and Traumatic Brain Injury, the Real Warriors Campaign promotes resilience and recovery for service members returning from war and combats the stigma associated with seeking psychological care. The website features stories of service members who successfully sought treatment and information about 24/7 confidential call center for military members and families. www.realwarriors.net



National Center for PTSD: "Returning from the War Zone: A Guide for Military Personnel" - Available from www.ncptsd.va.gov/ncmain/ncdocs/manuals/guideformilitary.pdf. This resource assists returning service members in recognizing and getting help to cope with combat-related stress during the transition back to civilian life. The National Center for PTSD encourages veterans to disregard the stigma associated with seeking help and seek assessment and treatment if they experience post-traumatic stress symptoms.

Accessible Beaches in Monmouth and Cape May Counties - Correction

Please read below for a story that should have been included in last month's edition of Caregiver Connection:

As the summer days near an end and Labor Day Weekend rounds the corner, consider Cape May County as the perfect summer destination. With 30 miles of clean, white sandy beaches along the Atlantic Ocean, visit the resorts of Ocean City, Sea Isle City, Avalon, Stone Harbor, the Wildwoods, and Cape May. Each of the resort communities of the Jersey Cape offers a wide variety of activities for seashore getaway as well as a multitude of disability friendly beaches and amenities. Please visit <http://www.cmcods.org/> to download a guide of accessible beaches in Cape May County.



Thank you for reading Caregiver Connection! If you have any information you would like included in our e-zine, or know of anyone that would like to be added to our listserv, please email me at dgoldberg@njcaregivers.org or click the "Join Our Mailing List" button on the top right side of the newsletter.

Additionally, CNJ is dedicated to spreading awareness and knowledge of caregiving, so we invite you to utilize the "Forward Email" button at the bottom of this email.

Sincerely,

Dana Goldberg, Administrator
Caregivers of New Jersey

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