

# 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.



There are many events going on this season, so please keep reading and make sure to check online for even more activities around New Jersey.

Please consult our website for more information: [www.njcaregivers.org](http://www.njcaregivers.org).

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## Morris County Conference for Caregivers

Saturday, March 12, 2011  
8:30am - 2:00pm  
Frelinghuysen Arboretum  
53 East Hanover Avenue, Morris Township, NJ  
For directions, please [click here](#).

Caregivers, be our guest!

The Caregivers Coalition of Morris County is hosting its fourth annual Conference for Caregivers on Saturday, March 12. Join us for Caregiving Across the Lifespan: Tools for your Journey. Attendees will have access to caregiving information and resources for those who care for loved ones with issues of aging, disability, or mental illness.

The conference is FREE, and includes complimentary breakfast and luncheon.

Workshop topics and speakers will be announced soon. Check back for updates!

Sponsorship opportunities are available. For more information, email [Lori Rubin](mailto:Lori.Rubin@njcaregivers.org) or call 973.993.1160, x139.

To register online [click here](#)

## 2010 NJ Earned Income Tax Credit

The New Jersey Earned Income Tax Credit (NJEIT) is a credit for certain residents who work and have earned income. The credit reduces the amount of NJ tax you owe and may also give you a refund, even if you have no tax liability to NJ. Most residents who are eligible and file for a Federal earned income credit can also receive a NJ earned income tax credit. For 2010 the NJ Earned Tax Credit is 20% of the applicant's Federal earned income credit. For example, if your Federal earned income credit is \$3,000, the amount of your NJEITC will be \$600 (2010 NJEITC=Federal EIC x 20%). Part-year residents who qualify for the NJEITC must prorate the amount of the credit based on the number of months as a NJ resident.

NOTE: If your filing status is married/civil union partner, filing separate return, you may not claim the NJEITC

### How to Apply

To receive the NJEITC, you must file a NJ resident income tax return. This is true even if you are not required to file a return because your income is below NJ's minimum filing threshold. The minimum filing threshold for 2010 is \$20,000 or less if your filing status is married/civil union couple, filing joint return, head of household, or qualifying widow(er)/surviving civil union partner. The minimum filing threshold is \$10,000 or less if your filing status is single.

for more information visit <http://www.state.nj.us/treasury/taxation/eitcinfo.shtml>

## A New Nursing Home Population: The Young

December 2010

There's one age group that's going into nursing homes at a higher rate. And it's not the elderly.

Young people ages 31-64 now make up 14 percent of the nursing home population, an analysis of federal data from the Department of Health and Human Services by NPR's Investigative Unit found. That's up 10 percent just 10 years ago.

The data do not show why this age group is entering nursing homes in such higher numbers, but Michelle Fridley's fight to stay out of a nursing home may provide a clue.

Ten years ago, Fridley was nine months pregnant and 23 when, driving on a rural road in upstate New York's Amish country, she came over a blind hill and swerved to miss a horse and buggy. Her car hit a tree and she was left a quadriplegic.

At the time, Fridley was driving home to decorate for her baby shower. Her daughter was born nine days later. Ever since, Fridley, who is now 33, has fought to stay out of a nursing facility and continue living in her own home.

[continue reading](#)

## With Alzheimer's Patients Growing in Number, Congress Endorses a National Plan

Congress has voted unanimously to create, for the first time, a national plan to combat Alzheimer's disease with the same intensity as the attacks on AIDS and cancer.

The bill, expected to be signed by President Obama, would establish a National Alzheimer's Project within the Department of Health and Human Services, to coordinate the country's approach to research, treatment and caregiving.

Its goal, the legislation says, is to "accelerate the development of treatments that would prevent, halt or reverse the course of Alzheimer's" and "improve the early diagnosis of Alzheimer's disease and coordination of the care and treatment of citizens with Alzheimer's."

The project will include an advisory council of representatives from agencies like the Centers of Disease and Control and Prevention, the National Institute of Health, and the Department of Veterans Affairs, the Food and Drug Administration, the Indian Health Service and Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services. Scientific experts, health care providers and people caring for relatives with Alzheimer's would also be included.

[continue reading](#)

## National Caregiver Support Line

Caregivers are the family members and loved ones who provide care for Veterans who are living with the effects of war, disability, chronic illness, or aging. They deserve VA's highest level of support. On February 1, 2011, the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) is opening a toll-free National Caregiver Support Line housed at the Canandaigua VA Medical Center campus in Canandaigua, New York. The support line will serve as a primary resource/referral center to assist caregivers, Veterans and others seeking caregiver information to help in the care of our Nation's Veterans. Calls to The National Caregiver Support Line will be answered by VA employees who are licensed clinical social workers.

The Support Line will provide information on VA/ community caregiver support resources and "warm" referral to dedicated Caregiver Support Coordinators located in every VA Medical Center; emotional support for the caregiver will be an integral component of this service. The National Caregiver Support Line is also available to respond to inquiries about the caregiver benefits associated with Public Law 111-163, Caregivers and Veterans Omnibus Health Services Act of 2010.

The National Caregiver Support Line will be open Monday through Friday 8:00 a.m. to 11:00 p.m. and Saturday 10:30 a.m. to 6:00 p.m. Eastern Time. The National Caregiver Support Line Toll-Free number is 1-855-260-3274.

Please also see VA's updated caregiver website: [www.caregiver.va.gov](http://www.caregiver.va.gov)

## FRAUD, WASTE, AND ABUSE IN MEDICARE AND MEDICAID

**By Charles Clarkson, Esq., Coordinator Senior Medicare Patrol (SMP) of New Jersey**

No one likes to think of themselves as being susceptible to health care scams and unethical practices; however, not considering the possibility results in exposure to wide spread fraud, waste, and abuse. Take, for example, the true story of a Medicare beneficiary admitted into a hospital for a routine procedure. Everything goes smoothly, and she returns home to recuperate. Ninety days later her Medicare Summary Notice arrives in the mail. The summary clearly states that "this is not a bill." The amount indicated was enormous. The beneficiary realized hospital stays were expensive, but her charges seemed over-the-top. Although it was not in her nature to complain, and she wasn't interested in making waves, curiosity reigned and she phoned the hospital to request an itemized invoice, something every hospital patient should insist on. Upon request hospitals have to produce an itemized statement. About a week or so later it arrived. Scrutinizing the statement, she noticed some extraordinary expenses,

including sheets and towels, which are supposed to be included in the price of a double room, a mucus recovery system (a box of tissue for \$129), and a charge for a nursery crib. It had been over forty years since the delivery of her youngest child. An unusual story? No, not really. Errors occur all the time. Double billing, charging twice for the same service, and *upcoding*, assigning a medical billing code for a more expensive procedure are common occurrences. If you do not check your Medicare Summary Notice, it is a pretty safe bet that eventually you will be cheated.

[continue reading](#)

## Cleaning For A Reason

If you know any woman currently undergoing chemotherapy, please pass the word to her that there is a cleaning service that provides FREE housecleaning - once per month for 4 months while she is in treatment. All she has to do is sign up and have her doctor fax a note confirming the treatment. Cleaning for a Reason will have a participating maid service in her zip code area arrange for the service. This organization serves the entire USA and currently has 547 partners to help these women. It's our job to pass the word and let them know that there are people out there that care.

<http://www.cleaningforareason.org/>

## NAC Sets National Coalition Meeting for April 27, 2011

The National Alliance for Caregiving will host its 5th National Conference for Caregiving Coalitions on April 27. The Conference will be held in conjunction with the ASA-NCOA Conference on Aging in San Francisco, CA.

## Caregivers of New Jersey is Social Networking, Are You?



[Click here to become a fan of Caregivers of New Jersey on Facebook.](#)



Stay up to date on activities and network with other caregivers and professionals around NJ. [And click here to follow us on Twitter too!](#)

## Caregiving Events Calendar "Check it out"

In each issue of the Caregiver Connection, Caregivers of New Jersey likes to provide you with a few highlighted special events and workshops that are being held across the state. Since we couldn't possibly write about each and every event, we have created the Caregiving Events Calendar. This is an interactive, online calendar that allows agencies and professionals to post their events while also giving caregivers access to all that is going on around the state on a month-to-month basis.

We invite all groups hosting events to post the details on our public calendar, and we encourage all caregivers to check out the listings to find informative and supportive events in your area.

[Click here to view the Caregiving Events Calendar.](#)

## Date Set for Shore Walk for a Brighter Tomorrow

Please join Caregivers of New Jersey on May 15, 2011 for a 5k walk on the beautiful Seaside Heights boardwalk as we raise much needed funds for caregivers of the aging, disabled and chronically ill.

For more information please contact Heather Comstock at 609-392-4900

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 [msmith@familyresourcenetwork.org](mailto:msmith@familyresourcenetwork.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,

Michelle Smith, Administrator  
Caregivers of New Jersey

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