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ELDERCARE SERVICES LLC]

CAREGIVING IN THE TIME OF COVID - 19 AND BEYOND

Newsletter – Volume No. 1; Special Edition No. 1

Hello Readers,

Welcome to a special edition of Omega ElderCare Services' newsletter. The newsletter will be published on a quarterly basis. In it, I will address crucial, timely issues that affect the lives of senior adults, and their caregivers.

As a Licensed Master Social Worker and certified Court Evaluator and Guardian with 20 + years of experience, I am deeply concerned about the welfare of senior adults. I have been a long-distance caregiver and know how to navigate the challenges and manage the angst. I intend to provide caregivers with tools needed to care for their loved ones and weather the healthcare crisis caused by the COVID-19 virus, which the World Health Organization (“WHO”) has declared to be a global pandemic.

Are you the caregiver of a parent, other relative, friend or neighbor and were already juggling a lot of responsibilities at home and at the office? You had a system in place to support the senior adult. Then, came COVID – 19 with social distancing, mandatory closings and lots of information and misinformation.

Seriously? What do you do? Stop feeling guilty for being confused and worried. You are human. There are options for help and on-going support. Whatever you do always be mindful that **senior adults are adults**. Yes, they might be dependent on you or someone else for assistance with eating, bathing, toileting, dressing and grooming, but we need to be mindful to always allow them some measure of independence, to the extent possible. Try to do whatever you can to help your parent, relative or friend maintain their dignity.

Some senior adults have prickly personalities which only became pricklier as they age and lose independence. A few weeks ago, I received a call from an agitated woman whose mother was in her 90s. Her mother was widowed early and had risen to the challenges of life. Alone, she raised her children, all of whom are highly intelligent and well-educated. She owns her home and lived alone. She was thought to be healthy but had developed pneumonia and was hospitalized. She went from the hospital to a rehabilitation facility and was scheduled to be discharged the following day.

The woman was savvy enough to buy herself five more days to steady herself and put a support system in place. She received a lot of paperwork from the facility but had no idea what to do. We got to work, I asked questions, made recommendations and lots of calls. Together, we developed a support system which included competent, caring Home Health Aides, who were in

place before the WHO made its declaration. Her Mama isn't easy and struggled with the presence of people in her home, but only for about a little over a week. She is frail, has problems with her balance and is depressed. To her daughter's surprise, her mother was diagnosed with dementia and put on medication.

You can't cover all the bases, so focus on safety, nutrition, which includes hydration and personal hygiene. Try to establish a routine, however informal which conforms to whatever was already in place. Be patient with yourself and the senior adult. Observe body language, especially if the person is unable to verbally communicate. Find ways to promote exercise and engage the attention of the senior adult and try to limit exposure to the news. Because someone is unable to voice their fears does not mean that they are not afraid.

Aha Moments and Tips:

- Keep the home as clean as possible. Clean with non-toxic cleaners, everyone is breathing potentially unhealthy indoor air
- Boost the immune system by increasing the nutritional value of favorite foods. Try making smoothies
- Clear the refrigerator of any dicey leftovers. Now is not the time for a trip to the Emergency Room
- Try to keep areas free of scatter rugs and other items that can cause a fall. Make sure that the bed is readily accessible and that the path to the bathroom is well lit at night
- If you are assisting a senior adult with bathing and dressing, try to keep them covered and warm. Be aware that the skin of senior adults is thin and very sensitive to perfumes and dyes
- If they are not frail, but are incontinent, there might be no need to expect someone to wear an adult diaper when disposable underwear is available
- Bed sores are not inevitable, they are pressure ulcers and can be avoided by moving the senior adult at regular intervals
- Monitor medications and try to have a 60-day supply of prescription medications
- Access online virtual care, upload an app like Teladoc and know the location of the nearest Urgent Care Center
- Have the local pharmacy on speed dial
- Create an emergency plan that incorporates having a set of house keys outside the home and the assistance of a trusted family member, friend or neighbor

The following is a list of medical supplies and other items to purchase

- Pullups or adult diapers in the right size.
- Plant-based bath soap

- Plant-based, fragrance-free body lotion or moisturizer
- Disposable under pads
- Fragrance-free cleansing washcloths and wipes
- Latex-free gloves in at least two sizes
- Hearing aid batteries
- Distilled water for sleep aids

If you think and act as though you can carry the world, other people are often willing to let you try to do so. **ASKING FOR HELP IS NOT A WEAKNESS.** It is preserving your physical and emotional health. We can be reached at info@omegaeoldercare.com. The following is a short list of trusted resources:

- Alzheimer's Foundation of America (<https://alzfdn.org>)
- National Council on Aging (<https://www.ncoa.org>)
- AARP (<https://www.aarp.org>)
- National Institutes of Health (<https://www.nih.gov>)
- Center for Disease Control and Prevention (<https://www.cdc.gov>)

[CLARIFICATION, MY BIO AND MISSION STATEMENT ARE NOT INTENDED TO BE IN THE NEWLETTER, BUT ON LINKEDIN AND MY WEBSITE'S LANDING PAGE]

BIO

Joyce Francis, L.M.S.W is the founder and principal of Omega ElderCare Services, LLC (“Omega ElderCare”). She is a New York State Licensed Master Social Worker, Geriatric Care Manager, certified Court Evaluator and Guardian under Article 81 of the New York State Mental Hygiene Law, a trained End-of Life Doula and an Alzheimer Partner in Care. Ms. Francis is a registered member of the National Association of Social Workers and the American Society on Aging.

As a Court Evaluator and Guardian under Article 81 of the New York State Mental Hygiene Law, she has successfully addressed medically complex cases. She reviewed and assessed the capacity of alleged incapacitated persons to manage basic and instrumental activities of daily living and provided written reports to the Court with recommendations. Ms. Francis has advised on the appropriate nursing facility to best meet the on-going needs of the senior adult, has designed discharge plans and coordinated placement of incapacitated persons in such facilities.

Ms. Francis has considerable legal and financial experience gained as a Paralegal Supervisor and Senior Legal Assistant for major New York City law firms and Fortune 100 corporations. Additionally, she has over 20 years of volunteer experience working in faith-based organizations and in the private sector on such issues as homelessness and immigration.

Ms. Francis founded Omega ElderCare to provide diverse support services to senior adults, their family members and other caregivers based on her professional and personal experiences. As a child, she observed her father's patient, nurturing caregiving of his elderly aunts. His approach had a profound impact on her world view and the kind of services delivered by Omega ElderCare. Ms. Francis knows firsthand the responsibilities and challenges inherent in caregiving for loved ones, especially elderly parents. Her father had two strokes which occurred six-months apart. He lost the ability to speak and walk, but he never lost his spark. Over the course of ten years, one crisis followed another, usually respiratory. His death left her emotionally drained, but savvy in navigating many of the nuances of elder care management.

Omega ElderCare's services are non-medical and non-therapeutic. It is a comprehensive consultation, personalized care-management and care-monitoring and advocacy service. We believe in the value of the individual at every stage of life. Our target market is comprised of senior adults and their caregivers. We assess the current support systems of each senior adult and provide caregivers with recommendations for short-term or long-term strategies to support ongoing needs and fill gaps in care. We evaluate basic and instrumental activities of daily living, assisting caregivers, including those living outside of New York State, in communicating with local professionals to attain required services; monitor existing services; and facilitate access to community resources.

[ADD HEADSHOT]

MISSION STATEMENT

Omega ElderCare Services, LLC is a comprehensive eldercare consultation and management service founded upon the belief that the individual has value at every stage of life. We provide compassionate, practical, hands-on support services for care givers and senior adults. The mission of Omega ElderCare Services is to facilitate the on-going care of senior adults in ways that honor their lives and support their health and well-being while maintaining their independence, to the extent possible. We are dedicated to using our resources to supporting senior adults in living lives of independence, health, dignity and peace.