

Connecticut Care Planning Council



July 2010 Newsletter

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Featured Board Member: [Henry C Weatherby](#)

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**CT Care Planning
Council
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The [Connecticut Care Planning Council](#) (CTCPC) lists companies and individual providers on our website who help families deal with the crisis and burden of long term care.

One purpose of the CTCPC is to educate the public on the need for care planning before a crisis occurs. A second purpose is to provide, in one place, all of the available government and private services for eldercare.

Finally, our ultimate mission is to offer a trusted listing service that the public will recognize and turn to for expert help in dealing with the challenges of long term care.

Call us at 860-769-6938

or click [here](#) to send an e-mail

New Law Helps Veterans with Prescription Drug Benefit

By Lisette Velasquez - Bristol Press
Staff Writer



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The governor signed into law a bill introduced by state Rep. Joseph Aresimowicz, D-Berlin/Southington, that will provide medical benefits for veterans in nursing home facilities.

The bill introduced by Aresimowicz prohibits nursing homes from restricting veterans from accessing prescription drug benefits offered through the state Department of Veterans Affairs. It was signed into law by Gov. M. Jodi Rell Thursday.

Veterans who are in skilled nursing homes, facilities for a higher level of care, could not receive drug benefits directly from the department due to current regulations regarding the packaging of drugs.

"Some nursing homes require medication to be provided in what they call bubble pack, where you have to pop a pill out of a (sealed) sheet versus pills in a medicine bottle," Aresimowicz said.

The packaging for medication was said to be for "quality control" by nursing homes. Since drugs distributed by the VA are not in this type of package, veterans who would otherwise be eligible have not had access to their medication for the same cost provided by the VA, once they had to enroll in a nursing facility.

The VA can pay for room and board, but not medications, thus veterans would then have to pay out of pocket, have family members support or go on state medical for hundreds of dollars more of what they had been paying through the VA.

The law now allows nursing homes to allow unpackaged drugs provided by the VA for all eligible veterans.

"Now that the bill is law, our veterans and their families gain an important benefit," Aresimowicz said. "Both the veterans who are patients in the nursing homes benefit from lower drug costs if they are private payers and the state saves on veterans who may be Medicaid patients."

His staff also researched the issues. They found that an eligible veteran who received drugs from the VA would be entitled to medication for \$8 a month per prescription regardless of income.

However, once that same veteran entered a nursing home, the cost for the same medication would be \$130 to \$150 per prescription and would not be covered by the VA.

The "Concerning Prescription Drug Benefits For Veterans



John Carmon



Doug and Ken Henricksen

Event Calendar:

11/12
Location:
Hebron Senior Center
Topic:
Va Benefits

Contact Us:

34 Jerome Avenue, Suite 310
Bloomfield, CT 06002

(860)769-6938

Offers & Info:
[Veteran's Aid Benefit](#)

In Nursing Home Facilities Act" was passed by the General Assembly in April. The law will go into affect Oct. 1.



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Caregiver Burnout - Adult Day Health Care Services to the Rescue

If you are a primary caregiver for a loved one, you are well aware of the daily stress and emotional and physical impact it can have on your health.

Susan learned this first hand when she and her husband, Tom, brought his Mom home to live with them. Mom suffered from dementia and had to be watched constantly. Susan found that when you become a caregiver, you start by giving up a few things you usually do for yourself to make up for the time needed for caregiving. Even though your service is one of love and you are willing to do the sacrifice on behalf of your loved one, you find yourself giving up a lot more as time goes on.

"As a caregiver," Susan laments, "You are often frustrated that you can't do enough for your loved one and so guilt and feelings of inadequacy set in. Couple that with feelings of being unduly burdened, of resentment, of stress and then of more guilt at having those feelings."

She continues, "Now don't get me wrong, I am very glad that I spent those years in caregiving. There were many cherished moments with Mom that only I experienced."

In order to enjoy those moments and sustain your caregiving momentum, a little respite is essential.

An article posted on About.com by Carrie Hill, PhD states:

Caregivers who use respite care often tell me that although caregiving is one of the hardest jobs they've ever had, they wouldn't trade the experience for anything. Helping a family member or close friend who has Alzheimer's disease can provide a sense of purpose and great satisfaction. Still, the emotional and physical demands of caregiving make it hard to be a caregiver 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. Without respite care -- a temporary break from the demands of caregiving -- you

may be more susceptible to the effects of caregiver stress, such as depression, exhaustion and other health problems.

Carrie Hill, PhD, About.com "Why Caregivers Need Respite Care Giving Yourself a Break Helps You and Your Loved One" Updated: August 3, 2008

Be on the lookout for caregiver burnout. It can creep up on you without your noticing it. Caregiver burnout symptoms can include:

- anxiety, irritability, or anger
- depression
- feelings of exhaustion
- self-criticism
- Withdrawal from usual activities
- trouble with handling caregiving responsibilities
- substance abuse

The need for support for caregivers at home has received national recognition. State Human Resource Departments and Area Agency on Aging Services are offering more counseling and respite services for caregivers. The ARCH National Respite Services is also an organization that is reaching out to educate and support caregivers in many states. There is, however, one service that is highly valuable but very underused:

Care to the Rescue!

Adult Day Health Care respite is two-fold. It gives the caregivers much needed time to themselves and gives their loved ones social and interactive therapy with their peers.

Many adult day services offer such things as:

- Social activities; music, movies, crafts, excursions
- Meals
- Fellowship support
- Assistance with daily living
- Nursing care
- Help with activities of daily living
- Medications
- Physical therapy
- Transportation

Finding an Adult Day Services provider takes a little investigating on your part. It is important to know what you are getting and that your loved one is comfortable with his or her new surroundings.

First: Ask for recommendations.

Check with your local Senior Center, Area Agency on Aging Services, Mental Health Centers, Doctor, Clinic,

Family, Friends and neighbors. The best recommendation is by someone who has used the adult day services or is familiar with those who run it.

Second: Call and ask the facility to send you information.

Ask specifically to be sent the application, eligibility requirements and payment information.

Ask to see the calendar of activities, menus, hours and days of operation are needed to be sure to fit your schedule.

Ask about availability of transportation to and from the location and what is the cost.

Ask who runs the facility. Is it private, non-profit or a franchise or part of an assisted living facility or a nursing home?

Third: Visit the Adult Day Health Care facility.

Go visit the provider location along with the person you are caring for.

See if the staff is friendly.

Check that it is clean and odor free.

Ask about the experience of the staff.

Request a list of references.

Fourth: Find out the cost and payment requirements.

A survey from NCOA/NADSA provides the following information on fees:

"Fees for Adult Day Health Care providers range from \$25 per day to \$70 per day, with the average around \$50 per day. Many facilities provide services with a sliding fee scale."

One last word of advice. Don't feel guilty about taking your loved one to adult day care.

Susan's mother-in-law complained bitterly about leaving home and going to the Adult Day Health Care facility, expounding on how Susan just didn't want her around anymore. This only increased the guilt Susan was already feeling, but Susan was also determined that she needed the respite time the day care would provide and they pressed forward. That evening as Susan picked up Mom and helped her into the car, Mom -- who suffered from dementia -- exclaimed, "That was the nicest resort I have ever been to!"

For assistance in choosing an Adult Day Health provider for your loved one, please call Denise Talbot,

Gerontologist at the LifeCare Planning Law Firm of
Weatherby & Associates, PC, at 860-769-6938.



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