



A Step By Step Approach to Geriatric Care Management

Geriatric Care Management is a highly specialized service that works with seniors, families and caregivers to find safe and affordable solutions to their needs. Geriatric Care Managers are trained, skilled, and licensed professionals who usually have backgrounds in Nursing, Social Work and Mental Health. These care managers are problem solvers, advocates and case managers. They are well established in their professional network and have an intimate knowledge of the aging services and housing options available in the community. They specialize in long term care problem solving as well as managing short term needs of seniors and their caregivers.

Who needs care management? Those who could benefit from these services include:

- an older adult who is unsafe at home for any reason;
- unavailable caregivers, whether out of town, working, or emotionally and/or physically unable;
- an older adult who is medically unstable and complex, has frequent falls, frequent trips to emergency room and/or hospitalizations, and frequent medical appointments;
- an older adult who can no longer take responsibilities of home, bill paying, shopping, banking and medical legal issues; and
- those in declining health with new diagnosis of dementia, cancer, stroke, etc. and difficulty dealing with medical management.

Who seeks care management? Clients include older adults, family members, friends, churches, neighbors, guardians, conservators, trust officers, lawyers or anyone who is concerned for the safety and health of an older person.

Who are Geriatric Care Managers? Geriatric Care Managers are professional advisors in aging and issues regarding senior care, evaluating problems and facilitating solutions. They assess the medical, social, and financial needs of the client to assist them in finding support services that will keep them independent in their own homes or provide them with other living options. They consult with medical doctors and all other specialists involved in a client's care.

Geriatric Care Management is well utilized throughout the United States but New York State has a limited number of Geriatric Care Management Practitioners. When searching for a Geriatric Care Manager, always check credentials and experience, as these are very important. Geriatric Care Management is not covered by Medicare or Medicaid and only a select number of Long Term Care Insurance Policies cover the services of a Geriatric Care Manager. Geriatric Care Managers are most often paid through private funds but can be well worth the investment by helping a person cut through the red tape on all levels.

NY Connects Niagara County can provide information about Geriatric Care Management services in our community. Individuals in need of information regarding NY Connects Niagara County, Geriatric Care Managers, or other available long term care services are encouraged to call (716) 438-3030 for assistance.

Florika Miranda, RN, GCM and Roxanne Sorensen L-MHC, GCM are Geriatric Care Managers with Elder Care Solutions of WNY, LLC, a private Geriatric Care Management business specializing in working with out of town families. They accommodate families by extending hours to evenings and weekends. Additional information is available by calling (716)823-1476. The NY Connects column appears in the Union-Sun & Journal the last Saturday of each month. Submissions for topics or agency spotlights for future articles are welcome. To recommend a topic or make a suggestion, call 438-3030 or email nyconnects@niagaracounty.com.