



Keeping In Touch

Summer 2000

News For Family Caregivers

Caring For an Aging Loved One Series

Meeting other caregivers who truly understand what you are going through can be an invaluable source of support. DARTS brings you and other caregivers together so you can discuss concerns with knowledgeable professionals and learn from the real experts — others who are walking down the same road. DARTS service coordinators lead the series.

This free series addresses the many challenges faced by caregivers. You can attend any or all of the sessions, which will be held on six consecutive Tuesdays, October 3-November 7, at the *Shepherd of the Valley Lutheran Church, 12650 Johnny Cake Ridge Road, Apple Valley, from 7-9 PM.*

October 3

Caregiver Issues: Risks and Benefits

October 10

Loss and Transition

October 17

Legal and Financial Issues

October 24

Understanding Memory Loss

October 31

Handling Anger and Guilt

November 7

Caregiving Sources and Resources

You can register by calling the DARTS Information Desk at 651-455-1560. DARTS may be able to arrange for a volunteer to stay with your family member while you attend a session. Transportation to programs can also be arranged. There is no cost for the sessions.

Helping Families and Caregivers Via the Internet

By Lynn Cibuzar, Service Coordinator

As you know, when older adults need help, family members and friends often step in. They buy the groceries, pay the bills, mow the lawn, escort to medical appointments, and sometimes even bathe, dress, and feed the senior. These are caregivers — people who give of themselves to meet the needs of another. Caregiving can be both rewarding and exhausting. It can be both educational and bewildering.

DARTS provides information, support, and relief to hundreds of caregivers each year through respite care, support and education groups, service coordination, a resource library, and the *Keeping in Touch* newsletter.

Among today's caregivers is a new and growing group: people who first turn to the Internet for information and help. These caregivers, often adult children of aging parents, need or simply like the convenience of the web. DARTS is currently exploring how we can support family caregivers through our web site. Here are several ideas:

- Caregiver Bulletin Board. Caregivers could share tips, exchange adaptive equipment, and access this newsletter and library list. We would initiate discussion and monitor the board.
- E-mail Link to a Personal Advisor. Would act as an on-line information and assistance or "ask the expert" area. We would have links to other helpful sites.
- Frequently Asked Questions. FAQs and answers would be posted about health insurance, government program eligibility, and other issues. Personalized health insurance help could also be available.
- Links to other caregiver-related web sites.

We are interested in knowing how much you would use our web site for this information. Are you already using the web to locate information, support, or research? Would you like to have direct contact with staff? Would you like a message board where you could post a question and get input from others? Would you be willing to be part of a focus group to look at these issues? If you haven't looked at our web site yet, here is the address: www.darts1.org.

I'd love to talk to you by way of e-mail or the old fashioned telephone! Call me at 651-234-2248 or e-mail me at lynn.cibuzar@darts1.org.

may we help you?

Thank you for apprentice people

who don't pretend answers before asking questions.

Thank you for enthusiastic people

who capture ideas and run with them.

Thank you for fun people

who carry life lightly with flags of joy.

Thank you for generous people

who adopt unadoptables and live for others.

Thank you for unassuming people

who don't stack their assets for display.

Thank you for deep people

who rub against us with perspective and vision.

*Jeanette Struchen
from Soul Weavings:
A Gathering of Women's Prayers*

A helpful guide on senior lifestyle needs, *A Key to Choice for Seniors*, has recently been published and is available from DARTS for free. The guide helps seniors and their families assess the senior's lifestyle needs and then investigate the many housing and service providers who can supply services or referrals.

The guide has six sections:

- **Lifestyle Needs Assessment.** Helps you analyze values, requirements, and financial resources in relation to current or future housing and service needs.
- **Staying in Your Home.** Describes services that can support this option.
- **Alternative Housing Options.** Describes the array of housing arrangements available when you are

no longer able to stay in your home or when you simply want to make a lifestyle change.

- **Social and Community Activities.** Lists a variety of options for seniors who want to be active in the community.
- **Know Your Rights.** Provides information on consumer rights, health and insurance protection, and financial assistance.
- **Evaluating Your Options.** Presents several typical scenarios of a senior's needs and the costs to manage these needs. Also includes a worksheet so you can compare the costs of various housing and service options.

For a copy of the guide, please call our Information Desk, 651-455-1560, and we will send you one.

From the Caregiver Library

We have three books that focus on seeing Alzheimer's Disease through the eyes of the person with the disease or through the family's eyes.

My Father Forgets is a detailed description of the problems encountered by a family caring for a loved one with Alzheimer's Disease.

Living in the Labyrinth: A Personal Journey through the Maze of Alzheimer's is written by a woman who was only 45 when she first began to struggle with memory lapses and disorientation that signaled the onset of the disease. She wrote a courageous, stirring insider's story.

Painted Diaries: A Mother and Daughter's Experience through Alzheimer's highlights the voyage of a multi-talented mother and daughter with a gift for detail. Faced with Alzheimer's, they used their writing and art to cope, understand, and convey the enormity of what was happening.

These and many more books and videotapes are available by calling Alicia at 651-234-2245. We can mail these to you at no cost.

If you do not want to receive this newsletter, call DARTS at 651-455-1560 and ask to have your name removed from the Keeping In Touch mailing list.