



COMMONWEALTH of VIRGINIA
Department for the Aging

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December 11, 2007

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08-25

COMMONWEALTH of VIRGINIA
Department for the Aging

MEMORANDUM

TO: Executive Directors
Area Agencies on Aging

FROM: Tim M. Catherman
Director of Administrative Services

DATE: December 11, 2007

SUBJECT: Preparing America's Seniors for the Digital Television Transition Act

[Lawmakers Keep Prodding on DTV Education](#)

The bill would also establish a grant program for states and others to help seniors navigate the government's [converter box coupon program](#), and would formalize a partnership among the FCC, the National Telecommunications and Information Administration, and the Administration on Aging and mandate specific reporting requirements.



COMMONWEALTH of VIRGINIA
Department for the Aging

MEMORANDUM

TO: Executive Directors
Area Agencies on Aging

FROM: Ellen Nau, Human Services Program Coordinator

DATE: December 11, 2007

SUBJECT: Preliminary Report – Virginia Caregiver Coalition

November, 2007 National Family Caregiver Month

The Virginia Caregiver Coalition (VCC), with aid from the National Alliance for Caregiving (NAC), the Virginia Department for the Aging (VDA), and the videoconferencing services of the Virginia Department of Health (VDH), held a training on November 13, 2007 for caregivers at seven sites located in different areas in Virginia. The conference concluded months of organizing by members of the Virginia Caregiver Coalition and connected caregivers throughout the Commonwealth of Virginia via video conferencing. The project involved preparing pre-training publicity on caregiver issues, organizing training day presentations, and completing a post-training evaluation. Various coalition members participated in technical assistance programs hosted by NAC.

A publicity committee, headed by coalition member Karen Gill, initiated contact with the Richmond, Virginia public radio station. As a result, a program dedicated to caregiver stories and interviews was produced and broadcast by radio and television personality, Charles Fishburne. Mr. Fishburne interviewed Virginia Commissioner for the Aging, Linda Nablo, and various caregivers in the Richmond metro area concerning family caregiver issues. The coalition's training session was mentioned in Mr. Fishburne's radio broadcast and during a PBS radio pledge session that was manned by the VCC's

publicity committee. Several public service announcements about National Family Caregiver Month and the coalition's training were broadcast by the PBS station.

Other members of the coalition publicized the training through flyers, web announcements, agency publications etc. A press release was issued by the Virginia Department for the Aging noting November 2007 as National Family Caregiver Month. Proclamations issued by President Bush and Virginia's Governor, Timothy M. Kaine, declaring November, 2007 as National Family Caregiver Month, were also publicized by the VCC.

The November 13 video conference began with caregivers, located in different areas of the state, sharing their caregiving stories. The first training session was a presentation on caregivers' stress arranged by the Peninsula Agency on Aging. Peggy Morgan from the Virginia Department of Health was the speaker. Session two was arranged by Ted Susac, coalition member from Jewish Family Services of Richmond. It featured a panel discussion on the family dynamics of caregiving. Panel members included: MaryAnn Johnson of the Alzheimer's Association, Greater Richmond Chapter; Kathy Berry, Bon Secours Hospice, and Janina Bogner of Jewish Family Services of Richmond. Jane Ward-Solomon of the Virginia Department for the Blind and Vision Impaired (DBVI) facilitated a session on caregiving for the vision and hearing impaired. Two of her DBVI associates, Susan Kosior and Mary France McAndrews joined her in presenting information during the session. The final portion of the training was coordinated by Julia Trivett-Dillon, coalition member from Mountain Empire Older Citizens, Inc. (MEOC). Ms. Dillon discussed various resources available to caregivers and presented information on MEOC's award winning program that utilizes high school students to train older and rurally isolated caregivers on computer use. Ann Duesing, Outreach Librarian at the University of Virginia at Wise, and Loretta Stapleton, caregiver, assisted Ms. Dillon in this presentation.

Ms. Ellen Nau, facilitator of the Virginia Caregiver Coalition, is currently gathering evaluation forms from the participating video conference sites. Preliminary results indicate that the training was a great success, and that the video conferencing venue was not a hindrance to the training process.

Future activities for the coalition include a picture exhibition of caregivers and their loved ones at the Virginia General Assembly beginning in January 2008 and lasting through the duration of the assembly's session. A review and re-publishing of the Virginia Department for the Aging Caregiver Resource Guide is planned. Due to the response to the November 13 training, a video conference training for caregivers during November 2008 may be in order.



COMMONWEALTH of VIRGINIA
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MEMORANDUM

TO: Executive Directors
Area Agencies on Aging

FROM: Ellen M. Nau, Human Services Program Coordinator

DATE: December 11, 2007

SUBJECT: Caregiving Issues

Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EEOC) – Enforcement Guidance on Caregiver Discrimination

The EEOC has issued guidance for employers on discriminating against employees who are fulfilling family obligations. According to the Center for Worklife Law, lawsuits by employees claiming they have been discriminated against on the job because of their family caregiving responsibilities have risen by 400% in the last decade. For further information from a *USA Today* article on this subject, visit:

http://www.usatoday.com/money/workplace/2007-10-24-caregivers-work-discrimination_N.htm

The full workplace EEOC guidance can be found at:

<http://www.eeoc.gov/policy/docs/caregiving.html>

The University of California Center for Worklife Law website:

<http://www.eeoc.gov/policy/docs/caregiving.html>

Evercare Study of Family Caregivers – What They Spend, What They Sacrifice
The Personal Financial Toll of Caring for a Loved One

This study was released in November 2007 by the National Alliance for Caregiving and Evercare, a division of UnitedHealthCare Services that provides care coordination for people who have long-term or advanced illnesses, are older or have disabilities. The study states that half of the persons caring for persons over 50 years of age – possibly

17 million persons – are spending more than 10 percent of their income on caregiving. Long-distance caregivers spent the most money, followed by persons living with the care recipient. Those spending the least monetary amount were caregivers living near their loved ones. Caregivers stated that time used for caregiving duties was their real sacrifice – a sacrifice they were most willing to make. A fact sheet on the study and how it was conducted is attached to this email. The whole study can be accessed on the Evercare website at: <http://www.evercarehealthplans.com/>
The study has received much publicity from news sources including: the New York Times, Hispanic PR Wire, Medical News Today, and the Senior Journal.

More Resources Help Caregivers Help Themselves

A November 28 article in the *Wall Street Journal* cites the above-mentioned NAC/Evergreen study, and names several sources of support for caregivers. Noting the benefit of counseling for spouses caring for Alzheimer's patients, the article cites the Alzheimer's Association as an excellent resource for this service. (alz.org) Holiday stress relievers can be found at the website for the CancerCare.org. The full article can be accessed at: http://online.wsj.com/public/article_print/SB119620901923805879.html

Fairfax Area Agency on Aging Recognized for Caregiver Support

An October 11, 2007, Washington Post article, *A 'Blessing' for Children Who Parent*, outlines the Fairfax Area Agency on Aging's support for family caregivers. Fairfax County has allocated \$66.2 million for all senior programs, an increase from \$51 million in FY 2006. Barbara Antley, Director of Adult and Aging Services, Fairfax County Department of Family Services, noted in the article that the county is refocusing its services from direct care for seniors living in their homes to helping caregivers care for elderly relatives. Two caregivers helped by the agency are quoted in the article that can be accessed at:
<http://www.washingtonpost.com/wpdyn/content/article/2007/10/10/AR2007101000986.html>

Federal Caregiving Legislation

American's Giving Care to Elders (AGE) Act

This legislation introduced in Congress on October 31, 2007, seeks to aid the sandwich generation – those who are caring for elderly relatives in addition to raising their own children. The legislation would establish a National Caregiving Resource Center to aid family caregivers, strengthen the National Family Caregiver Support Program, create a tax credit for elder care costs and protect consumers with long term care insurance by establishing a review board to address complaints about the denial of benefits by

insurance companies. Sponsors are U.S. Senators Barbara Mikulski of Maryland and Amy Klobuchar of Minnesota.

Caregiver Assistance and Relief Effort (CARE) Act

On October 1, 2007, Senator Robert Menendez (D-NJ) reintroduced the Caregiver Assistance and Relief Effort (CARE) Act, which would allow taxpayers to receive a nonrefundable tax credit if they provide care to a family member with long-term care needs. The bill would increase funding for the National Family Caregiver Support Program (NFCSP) to \$250 million in FY 2008, from \$156 million in FY 2007. It would also allow a tax deduction for long-term care insurance premiums and apply certain consumer protection provisions to long-term care insurance contracts.

Caregiving News from the States

Illinois: New Consumer Direction Law Allows Family Members to be Paid for Caregiving

Illinois H.B. 652 to amends the state's Community Care Program to allow family members to be a participant's designated, paid home care provider. The program provides home and community-based services to adults 60 years and older. All program participants are required to be enrolled in Medicaid. The bill also ensures that care recipients have the right to choose the services contained in their care plan, that they can direct how those services are provided, and that services are available in evenings and on weekends. The bill was signed into law by Illinois Governor Rod Blagojevich in August, 2007.