

Support & Counseling Programs

The Dementia Caregiver's Support Group

provides an opportunity for family and friends of those with dementias and/or memory disorders to share experiences and to gain information and mutual support. The group also offers new information about resources, research, drugs and caregiving. It meets the 1st & 3rd Wednesday from 5-7 p.m. at Franklin County Home Care, but that schedule occasionally changes, so call to confirm.

Other Community Resources:

N. Quabbin Alzheimer's Caregiver's Support Group. Meets 2nd Wed/month from 3-4 pm. Call Louise Smith at 978-248-9470.

Henry Haywood Hospital Group for Caregivers. Meets 4th Wed/month from 3-4 pm. Call Ann Fenlason at 978-630-6349.

Dementia Evaluations: Baystate Medical Center, 3300 Main St., Springfield, MA. 413-794-5555.

Publications:

Free from Franklin County Home Care

- ❖ You've Just Been Told Your Loved One has Alzheimer's Disease, What Does It Mean to You and Your Family. (Informational).
- ❖ And So We Share (resources).
- ❖ Alzheimer's Services found in Franklin County (resource).

Search www.800ageinfo.com or call 1-800-AGE-INFO (1-800-243-4636) for information & services for Massachusetts elders & their families.

Franklin County Home Care Corporation/Area Agency on Aging (FCHCC) is a private, non-profit corporation, which develops, provides, and coordinates a range of services to support the independent living of elders, people with disabilities and caregivers.

FCHCC serves all Franklin County towns plus Athol, Petersham, Phillipston and Royalston in Worcester County.

We are committed to preventing or postponing the need for institutional care, facilitating the return home after an institutional stay, advocating for elders and people with disabilities, funding local projects and providing support to local Councils on Aging and Senior Centers.

FCHCC is committed to diversity in employment practices and service delivery. Our agency prohibits, discrimination and takes affirmative action in these areas, to serve people in our community with fairness and respect for all. We recognize that many differences among people may be barriers to inclusion. These differences include race, physical appearance and ability, sex, age, nationality and ancestry, class, religious and political beliefs, marital status, sexual orientation, and gender identity. We welcome and value all persons and we dedicate our agency to an ongoing effort to achieve the goal of greater diversity among our employees, clients and others whom we serve.

Franklin County Home Care Corporation/Area Agency on Aging is funded in part by the federal Older Americans Act, the state Executive office of Elder Affairs, the Division of Medical Assistance, Department of Public Health and other sources both public and private. FCHCC is operated by a local volunteer Board of Directors, a majority of whom are, by law, elders. The agency is an AA/EOE employer, and does not discriminate in program admissions, access, services or employment practices.



Dementia Caregivers Support Group



A Service of
Franklin County Home Care Corporation
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What is a Memory Disorder?

As we age, there is a slowing of the retrieval system in the brain. This means that it is sometimes difficult to remember as quickly as we do as younger adults.

However, when this slowing process is accompanied by a loss of problem-solving ability, language difficulties, and a general deterioration of thinking ability and behavior changes severe enough to interfere with activities of daily living, there may be a memory disorder present.

Some commonly known memory disorders are Alzheimer's disease, dementia, & Lewy Body syndrome.

What causes a memory disorder?

The main cause of memory loss is a form of dementia (a loss of the brain functions responsible for thinking) caused by Alzheimer's Disease. This progressive, degenerative disease of the brain results from the death of brain cells, causing a loss of thinking and remembering ability.

Other conditions like a very small stroke in the brain can cause vascular dementia. There are over fifty types of disorders which can cause dementia. Early, complete evaluation is important because some types of dementia are treatable such as dementias caused by nutritional deficiencies, medication reactions or even depression.

What should I do if I think a family member has a memory disorder?

Call us! With twenty-five years of experience, we know who provides what services in the area and can connect you with them in a timely fashion.

We urge families to obtain a complete diagnostic work-up for their loved one. There are clinics and medical centers that specialize in diagnosing memory disorders. These facilities can rule out other illnesses and diagnose memory disorders with a very high probability when correctly tested.

What are the warning signs?

- ❖ Asking the same question over and over again.
- ❖ Repeating the same story many times.
- ❖ Forgetting how to cook, make repairs, or play cards—any activity previously done with ease & regularity.
- ❖ Losing the ability to pay bills and balance the checkbook.
- ❖ Neglecting to bathe, wearing the same clothes over and over again while insisting they have taken a bath or that they are wearing clean clothes.
- ❖ Relying on someone else, such as their spouse, to make decisions or answer questions they previously would have handled themselves.

Assessment & Planning

The Family Caregiver program is a free program which provides elders & caregivers with information and help with issues like:

- ❖ Memory disorders
- ❖ Housing
- ❖ Caregiving & caregiver respite
- ❖ Elder Law
- ❖ In-home Care
- ❖ Navigating the elder care system
- ❖ Short-term care advice, support & guidance...and much more!

Our individualized intake process assures that the needs of the person with dementia and their caregiver(s) are addressed. Service plans are developed which may include respite for caregivers, services from homemakers and personal care workers, Meals on Wheels, SHINE Counseling and caregiver grants.

Our Community Options Resource Specialist can come to you in the comfort of your Franklin County or North Quabbin home if desired. Phone consultations are also available. (Other services discussed may charge fees)

Support for Caregivers

The following services can give caregivers a break OR even pay for the care they provide: Respite Services for Caregivers, Family Caregiver grants, the Adult Family Care program, Consumer Directed care, Personal Care Assistance.

For more information

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