



The CAREGIVER CONNECTION

Fall 2010

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Important Information

Emergency - 911

Fire (non-emergency)

(925) 838-6640

Police (non-emergency)

Alamo (925) 646-2441

Danville (925) 820-2144

San Ramon (925) 973-2779

Information & Referrals - 211

County Connection

(925) 938-7433

CCC Ombudsman

(925) 685-2070

Community Care Licensing

(650) 266-8800

Crisis Intervention

(800) 833-2900

Grief Counseling

(800) 837-1818

Suicide Prevention

(800) 273-TALK (8255)

San Ramon Senior Center

(925) 973-3250

Welcome!

I would like to introduce you to a wonderful new tool to assist everyone in providing the safest environment possible for the seniors in our community. The Caregiver Connection came about after our November 2009 Workshop for licensees held at the Senior Center in San Ramon. At that workshop we provided an opportunity for all RCF licensees to meet, ask questions and exchange ideas with local enforcement agencies and each other. It became apparent that this exchange would be valuable to maintain on a regular

basis. From that workshop, two very important tools came about;

First, a working group was established comprised of San Ramon Valley Fire Protection District (Code Enforcement, Public Education and Emergency Medical), representatives from the Residential Care Facilities Licensees and local volunteers. The group's objective is simple: regulatory agencies and licensed residential care facilities within the San Ramon Valley working together to problem solve, identify opportunities, and to provide a venue for open communication relative to fire and life safety. **(Cont. pg. 3)**



For many years, a "Do Not Resuscitate" or DNR order was the only way that patients could communicate wishes concerning end-of-life care. In 2009, a new program was launched in California to enhance patient choices, the Physician's Order for Life-Sustaining Treatment (POLST) program.

California's program was modeled after a successful program in Oregon that began in 1995 and has now been or will soon be extended to dozens of other states across the nation.

The POLST form allows patients, decision-makers, and guardians to outline a much wider

variety of choices for patients concerning end-of-life care. The DNR form simply limited resuscitative efforts when a patient had no signs of life. The POLST form allows for choices with regard to aggressiveness of care, transfer or no transfer to a hospital, and use of tube feedings in addition to the DNR designation.

The POLST form is designed to travel with the patient so that the wishes can be understood and addressed across the spectrum of care (at the patient's place of residence, during EMS care and transport, and at the hospital). The form, which is ideally printed on a specified shade of bright pink paper for easy identification, is filled out in conjunction with the patient's physician. The POLST form is legally sanctioned under California law and health care professionals are directed to honor a properly completed form unless

POLST CONT. - the professional believes it would not be medically effective or is in conflict with recognized standards of care. Health care professionals are also extended legal immunities for honoring the form when it is presented.

Patients can make decisions about receiving comfort care only, whether they want limited additional interventions, or

desire full treatment and resuscitation. They can also decide to not be transferred to a hospital unless comfort care measures cannot be met at the facility.

Information about POLST in California is available at www.capolst.org. Resources for purchasing copies of POLST forms and educational materials for patients and health care professionals are also listed on

this website. Additionally, the Alameda-Contra Costa Medical Association is working with many organizations in the East Bay to provide presentations and training on POLST. Contact Donald Waters, ACCMA Executive Director, at 510-654-5383, or at dwaters@accma.org.

Joseph Barger, MD
CCC EMS Medical Director

Safety Tips at Home for the Elderly

According to estimates by the U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission (CPSC), each year nearly one million people over age 65 are treated in hospital emergency rooms for injuries associated with the products they live with and use every day. Slips and falls are the main cause of injury for older people in the home.

The elderly, whose bones are often less dense and more brittle, are especially vulnerable to serious injuries from home accidents. A simple fall that results in a broken bone can become a serious, disabling injury that limits one's independence. As we age, our senses of sight, touch, hearing, and smell tend to decline. Our physical abilities are reduced, and certain tasks such as stretching, lifting, and bending become more difficult. In addition, we also experience a slowing of judgment and reaction time. As a result, we cannot respond as quickly as when we were younger. These normal changes in perception, physical



abilities, and judgment make us more prone to accidents. Therefore taking simple precautions and adjustments can help ensure a safe, accident-free home. These safety tips and guidelines are even more critical when working in various board and care facilities for the elderly.

Some of the things we can do to help prevent injuries, falls, and accidents are:

- Nightlights: Use these in every bathroom, bedroom and hallway.
- Use non-slip rugs.
- Check that outlets are not overloaded.
- Install/use grab bars in the bathroom for better safety.
- Ensure that smoke detectors are in working order in all rooms (at least monthly).

- Have an Emergency Plan/ Kit available in case of an actual emergency.
- Make sure all exits are free and clear of any obstacles, in case of an emergency.
- Make sure all sharp knives, utensils, tools, etc. are stored away properly after every use.
- Make sure there are no wires/cables in any walkway.

Jason Sicat, La Pera Mission Home

References:

Home Décor (Indobase), "Home Safety for Elderly".
Parenthood.com, "Home Safety Tips: How to Keep an Elderly Loved One Safe".
International Association of Certified Home Inspectors, "Home Safety for the Elderly".
North Carolina Cooperative Extension Service, Prepared by Sarah Kirby. "A Housing Safety Checklist – for Older People".

Holiday Spirits

The holiday season can, unfortunately, be a very difficult time for our senior residents. Here are some helpful tips to beat the holiday blues:

- Contact your local Rotary Club, many club members will come to your facility and entertain the residents.
- Check your local Community Centers and Senior Centers they often have holiday activities that are perfect for seniors.
- Call your nearby schools and churches. Through them, you may be able to invite Girl Scouts or Boy Scouts to come entertain your seniors. Sometimes they even bring goodies!



Gina Licup, Trinity Care Home

Burnout

Care giving is one of the most rewarding yet stressful jobs. The amount of work involved in caring for a loved one or a client alone is enough to cause stress, adding to it the financial burden and the changes that have to be made in order to accommodate the sick. Stress, when not taken care of, takes its toll and can add up to cause caregiver burnout.



TIPS TO PREVENT CAREGIVER BURNOUT

Learn as much as you can about the person's illness and about care giving. Equipped with the knowledge, you will become effective and will feel better about your efforts.

- Establish your limits. Be realistic about how much of your time and yourself you can give. Set clear limits, and communicate those limits to the people involved.
- Respect your feelings. Caregivers are confronted with feelings of anger, fear, resentment, guilt, helplessness, and grief. As long as the well-being of the person receiving care is not compromised, it is okay to let yourself feel what you feel.

- Talk about your feelings. Confide your feelings. Talking to trusted friends and family members can help ease the burden.

Stephen R. Covey, author of "The Seven Habits of Highly Effective People" recognizes the need of every individual for self rejuvenation. The seventh habit, which is called "sharpening the saw", emphasizes an activity that we do in order for us to sharpen- to be new again, to recover. Just as sharpening takes away the dullness of the knife, so does a healthy happy activity to a dull life.

Sharpening the saw is not plain taking a day or two off. It is about doing an activity that makes one happy. It could be going to the movies, eating a slice of your favorite luscious cake, dining out, canoeing, getting together with friends, going to the spa, the beach, site seeing. Whatever it is, it should be something that allows you to get away from work. Even the great Abraham Lincoln said "if I had eight hours to chop down a tree, I'd spend six sharpening my axe". A happy rested individual makes a highly effective not-burned-out caregiver.

Gina Licup, Trinity & Valle Verde Homes
Amy Libao, Tri-Valley Personal Home Care Services

(Welcome Cont.) Second, this electronic newsletter was established as a vehicle to accomplish our objective, to reach all the licensees within the San Ramon Valley.

Currently, the working group meets monthly and will produce this newsletter quarterly. You will notice that many of the articles, ideas and comments were written by your counterparts, actual licensee from our community. The purpose of this is to address real concerns that are real to YOU by sharing ideas, successes and failures so that we all can learn and be able to pull energy, effort and resources.

Guest speakers at past working group meetings have included: Introducing the Slips, Trips and fall program, identifying what resources are available through the Fire Departments Public Education Office, Emergency Medical Operation questions and answers which included a 45 min. discussion on POLST. This resulted to our first article in the newsletter provided by the County EMS Medical Director. We will also be hosting fire extinguisher training for RCF staff.

We hope you enjoy your first issue of "The Caregiver Connection". We invite you to ask questions and give suggestions for future topics. Email us at caregiverconnection@srvfire.ca.gov or call (925) 838-6600.

Debbie Vanek, SRVFPD

Save **2nd Annual**
Residential Care
Facility Workshop
the **Wednesday, February 16, 2011**
1:30 - 4:00 p.m.
San Ramon Community & Senior Center
9300 Alcosta Blvd., San Ramon

Stay tuned for more details
and registration information

CONNECT · LEARN · SHARE
Date



Announcements

Quick Tip...

If you suspect a stroke,
think **FAST!**

- F**ACE - Smile, is one side drooping?
- A**RM - Raise your arms, does one drift down?
- S**PEECH - Are your words slurred?
- T**IME - Call 911 **FAST** if you experience any of these symptoms!

Residential Care Facility Working Group

- Sylvia Sicut, Beatitudes Mission Home
- Jason Sicut, La Pera Mission Home
- Amy Libao, Tri-Valley Personal Home Care Service
- Gina Licup, Trinity & Valle Verde Care Homes
- Gerlita Del Castillo, Golden Hills Home Care
- Kristine Reyes, Our Ladys Care Home
- Anabelle Galera, Better Living Care Homes
- Donna Maxwell, San Ramon Valley Fire (Volunteer)
- Debbie Vanek, San Ramon Valley Fire
- Joyce Castro, San Ramon Valley Fire

Contact us...

caregiverconnection@srvfire.ca.gov

or (925) 838-6600



Upcoming Events
San Ramon Senior Center

- Holiday Boutique
11/16 & 11/17
- Community Thanksgiving Dinner
11/25 at 5 p.m.
- Holiday Variety Show
11/15 from 1 to 3 p.m.

Remember!

Change the batteries in all your smoke alarms when you change your clocks for day light savings time on Sunday, November 7th!

Take CERT

(Community Emergency Response Team) training
www.firedepartment.org/community

THREE FEET FROM THE HEAT!

KEEP ANYTHING THAT CAN BURN AT LEAST THREE FEET FROM ANY HEAT SOURCE!

Winter Safety

If out during darkness, carry a flashlight and walk with a partner; there is strength in numbers. Dress for changes in the weather and always be aware of your surroundings!