

Richard A. Courtney, CELA
Certified Elder Law Attorney
4400 Old Canton Road, Suite 220
Jackson, Mississippi 39211
601-987-3000 or 1-866-ELDERLAW
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New Survey Illustrates Financial & Health Consequences of Caregiving

Baby boomers are getting stressed out by caring for an ill or injured parent or other family member while balancing a full-time job, and as a result they're missing work themselves, according to a new survey by The Hartford and a major provider of employee-assistance programs. (Source: Hartford Courant (April 23, 2010) Full story: http://www.courant.com/business/hc-hc-baby-boomers-stressed-042.artapr23_0_1194883.story)

"Our research found a troubling trend of baby boomer caregivers being pushed to their limits," said Barbara Campbell, regional vice president of the Group Benefits Division at The Hartford Financial Services Group. The survey of 862 people born between 1946 and 1964 found that a majority of boomers are stressed out about caring for a child, parent or spouse. They're also worried about how their job is affected by caring for someone at home.

More than half of boomers 55 and older and 68 percent of younger boomers, 45 to 54, say they have missed work or left work early in the past six months because of responsibilities as a caregiver. Additionally, boomers take more leave due to their own illness — of which stress is a contributing factor — than any other age group, according to a separate study of 91,000 workers at 171 businesses that contract with The Hartford for employee-benefits packages.

The Care Manager Solution

A solution to the problem of caregiver stress or burnout is the help of a Care Manager, sometimes called a Geriatric Care Manager. A Geriatric Care Manager is a health and human services professional, such as a gerontologist, social worker, public benefits case manager, or nurse, with a specialized body of knowledge and experience related to aging and elder care issues. A Professional Geriatric Care Manager (PGCM) is a geriatric care manager who is a member of the National Association of Professional Geriatric Care Managers (www.caremanager.org) and has committed to adhering to the GCM Pledge of Ethics and Standards of Practice.

The PGCM assists older adults and persons with disabilities (and their families) in attaining and maintaining their maximum independence, functional potential and security. The PGCM strives to respect the autonomy of the individual and delivers care-coordination and support services with sensitivity to preserve the dignity and respect of each individual. In addition, the PGCM is an experienced guide and resource for families of older adults and others with chronic needs.

Our firm's professional Certified Care Manager, Leigh Leverette, BA, CMC is certified as a Care Manager by the National Association of Certified Care Managers. Leigh provides

personalized, client-centered services to identify client health needs, obtain resources to meet these needs, coordinate the health-related services of the client, and educate and assist family caregivers in caring for the client with chronic health problems.

If you are a caregiver and would like to know if a Care Manager can help you, call Leigh Leverette today at 601-987-3000 or toll-free at 866-ELDERLAW.