

MYDIGNITY.CA NEWSLETTER

**Volume 3, Edition 2
June, 2011**

Welcome to MyDignity.ca.

Through this quarterly newsletter, it is our objective to keep our clients, partners and associates fully informed on issues involving aging and elder care.

WHAT'S NEW AT MY DIGNITY?

.Listen for us on the radio.

Miles Posner, President, My Dignity, will be discussing critical illness and long-term care insurance on AM740. The dates and times are as follows:

Critical Illness Insurance –September 10, November 12

Long-Term Care Insurance – July 30, October 29, December 3 and December 31.

The segments can be heard at 11:40, 12:40, 1:40 and 2:40 on each date.

.See our videos on MyDignity's new and improved website.

.Stay tuned for information on our 50UP show being held in October.

THE VIEW FROM OUR PERSPECTIVE

An open letter to Mr. Stephen Harper

Dear Mr. Prime Minister,

During the recent Federal election, the promises made to our nearly five million family caregivers might suggest that major support to families providing home care may be in the offing. We hope that this will be the case – it will be long overdue. Certainly the current system of financial support for family caregivers is frighteningly inadequate and falls far behind that in other developed nations.

Your Conservatives, now in power with a majority government, promised a Family Caregiver Tax Credit – a non-refundable 15% credit

that may be claimed against a maximum \$2000 in expenses. This, it is estimated, would help approximately 500,000 family caregivers and would provide a maximum benefit of \$300 a year. In light of the fact that home care may cost over \$20,000 yearly out-of-pocket, this is a meager offering and would do little to assist Canadians to remain in their own home as they age. In fact, this plan would provide no help at all to the thousands of family caregivers who themselves are seniors. Why not a Universal Family Caregiver Benefit? And why not fashion this benefit after the Universal Child Care Benefit? Surely we value the care given to our loved ones later in life as much as we value that provided to young children.

Such a modest measure of tax assistance to families grappling with the challenges of providing home care to loved ones falls far short of what is needed. It is, Mr. Harper, a drop in the bucket and does little to give any credibility to your party's claim to understand the needs of families and the seniors they love.

What we need is not more rhetoric or glib remarks about the importance of families and how we value our elders. We need a complete re-working of our policies affecting financial support for family caregivers. We need this in conjunction with a revamping of our home care systems, in full recognition of all of their complexities – respite care, licensing of home care providers, certification of educational programs for home care providers and assistance to employers, for whom this issue may well be the Human Resources dilemma of this century. And, Mr. Prime Minister, we need it now.

Respectfully,

MyDignity

DID YOU KNOW?

Yoga may be even better than walking for lifting low moods because it boosts levels of a natural anxiety-easing brain chemical called gamma-amino-butyric acid. Yoga also increases blood levels of serotonin, dopamine and endorphins, three natural feel-good brain chemicals.

CAREGIVERS' CORNER

MyDignity offers individual and group coaching and counseling for family caregivers. Our counselors are certified eldercare specialists who can provide guidance and solutions and are always available to listen and offer support.

We also offer ongoing educational for family caregivers. Call to see when our next caregiver series is being offered in your area at 416-410-4155, Extension 227.

DIABETES AND ALZHEIMER'S DISEASE

Diabetes and Alzheimer's disease are connected in ways that are not fully understood. While not all research confirms the connection, many studies indicate that people with diabetes – particularly Type 2 – are at higher risk of eventually developing Alzheimer's disease.

Taking steps to prevent or control diabetes may help reduce your risk of Alzheimer's disease. Because diabetes damages blood vessels, it has long been recognized as a risk factor for vascular dementia, a type of cognitive decline caused by damaged blood vessels in the brain.

Ongoing research focuses on confirming the link between Alzheimer's and diabetes and understanding why it exists. The link between Type 2 diabetes and Alzheimer's may be especially strong as a result of the complex ways that Type 2 diabetes affects the ability of the brain and other body tissues to use glucose and respond to insulin. Greater insight into this connection may eventually reveal new strategies to avoid Alzheimer's as a complication of diabetes.

Preventing diabetes or managing it successfully will help you to avoid other complications such as heart disease, and damage to your kidneys, eyes and nerves in your feet.

Steps you can take to prevent or manage diabetes include:

.Follow your health care provider's recommendations about the best plan for monitoring your blood glucose, cholesterol level and blood pressure

.Eat healthy foods, including fruits, vegetables, lean meats, whole grains, and low-fat dairy products

.Exercise at least 30 minutes three to five times a week

.If medication has been prescribed for you, take it on schedule and as prescribed

.Remember that small steps can make a difference. In a large study funded by the National Institute of Diabetes and Digestive and Kidney Diseases, participants with blood sugar levels slightly above normal cut their risk of developing Type 2 Diabetes in half by losing as little as 5 to 7% of their body weight and exercising for 30 minutes at least five times a week.

At My Dignity, we are always delighted to come out to your group, association or workplace, to speak on issues related to aging and eldercare. We enjoyed meeting the members of the Halton chapter of CARP when we spoke there in late April. We hope to visit other CARP chapters soon.

SUMMERTIME SAFETY FOR SENIORS

Some tips from our partners at Elderpath:

1. Watch your footing!

In the summer, many people choose to wear sandals or flip-flops. However, for aging individuals, these summer-type shoes can be a tripping hazard. As people age, they often lose feeling in their feet and toes. If a senior trips and stubs their toe, they may not immediately feel it or know the extent of the injury, which could cause prolonged damage if not treated properly.

2. Hydrate, hydrate, hydrate

Drinking water is even more important in the summer. As we get older, our thirst for water changes. The less water seniors drink, the less thirsty they become. For seniors, dehydration is a very serious condition and one of the top reasons for hospital visits during the summer. Six to eight glasses of water is recommended daily. Remember that coffee, tea and alcohol dehydrate the system. For every cup of coffee or glass of wine consumed, you should drink two glasses of water.

“Years may wrinkle the skin, but to give up enthusiasm wrinkles the soul”.

Samuel Ullman

BY THE NUMBERS

344,000 Canadian baby boomers will turn 65 this year.

Generally, there are 15 years between retirement age and current life expectancy.

39% of retirees return to some type of work out of boredom.

The staff at MyDignity wishes you a safe and wonderful summer filled with fun, family and friends.

We are always here to assist you with eldercare issues and needs. Please visit us at www.mydignity.ca or call at 416-410-4155.