

Senior Care Connections

Summer 2010

Tackling the Subject of Elder Abuse & Neglect

For many, the thought of intentionally taking advantage of an aged relation, especially a parent who has cared for them as a child, is difficult to imagine. However the reality is somewhat grimmer with statistics released recently by Age Concern showing that incidences of Elder Abuse and Neglect are still very much present throughout New Zealand and whilst the statistics are worrying enough the greater concern is around those cases of abuse and neglect that go unreported.

Elder Abuse & Neglect can be present in a variety of forms which include:

- o Physical
- o Psychological / Emotional
- o Sexual
- o Financial / Material
- o Neglect – (passive & active)

The most common form of abuse is psychological, closely followed by material/financial abuse. With the abuse being inflicted more commonly on women - of those being abused or neglected up to 70% of these are female.

Of most concern is the fact that that 70% - 80% of abuse is committed by family members.

Situations of where an elderly family member might fall victim to financial & emotional abuse are potentially increased with the recent economic downturn, which has had a major impact on many families throughout New Zealand. Seniors were especially impacted during the downturn, not

only due to witnessing their investments loose value overnight as investment values fell sharply, but also watching family members struggle financially and in the case of Elder Abuse and Neglect,



some seniors may have been pressured emotionally into giving family members access to bank accounts allowing relations to top up their own personal finances.

With over 961 seniors reporting abuse via Elder Abuse and Neglect Prevention (EANP) Services in the year up to Sept 2009, the overall issue is one that Home Instead Senior Care are keen to highlight within the community.

“Increasing awareness of this issue is one of a number of tools we can use to support our elderly with the issue of Elder Abuse and Neglect” says Neil Farnworth, General Manager of Home Instead Senior Care (NZ) Ltd.

“The way in which an elderly person finds themselves the subject of

Elder Abuse and Neglect is often through the abuser making their victim feel powerless to change their circumstances. By giving the victim a voice we can support them, spreading the message that it's not okay to abuse or neglect anyone and that includes the elderly.”

Home Instead Senior Care has produced a short presentation to highlight this topic. The presentation has been formatted to share with community groups throughout New Zealand and will be used in conjunction with copies of the Ministry of Social Developments booklet which focuses on Elder Abuse entitled 'Take The Time – Value Older People'. It is anticipated that the presentation and handout will raise awareness within the community generally.

Anyone concerned about an elderly relative or neighbours safety should contact their nearest Elder Abuse and Neglect Prevention Service operated by Age Concern or they can contact the Police directly if the situation is an emergency or out of regular business hours.

If you are interested in having one of our Home Instead Senior Care team visit to speak about Elder Abuse and Neglect please either call us on 0800 694 472 or refer to the Home Instead Senior Care office directory located on the back page of this brochure.

SEE INSIDE FOR

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- How going online can benefit the elderly
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'Give a Carer a Break' - 2009 Winner

As a follow on to our Spring Edition of Senior Care Connections we would like to announce the 2009 winner of our Give a Carer a Break Essay competition.

As outlined in an earlier edition of Senior Care Connections, this yearly event is sponsored by Home Instead Senior Care via the Family Care New Zealand magazine, a publication specifically designed to support those families with health and disability needs.

Sheryl Evans who lives in Mt Wellington, Auckland submitted an entry which touched our judges and you can read the letter (right) that saw Sheryl win \$2000 of respite care services for her parents, 84 year old Mum, Mavis and Bruce, her 83 year old Dad.

Sheryl who received care via our Remuera Office, which is one of four Home Instead Senior Care offices based within the Auckland region, says:

"Everyone at the Remuera Office was just so nice and helpful, and I really feel like I've made a friend in Jennifer who was Mum and Dad's caregiver. Having the support made such a difference and the competition came at just the right time for me. The highlight was when Dad went into hospital for an operation and I really didn't know how I was going to cope with trying to organise

things as Mum's dementia means I have to watch her closely. However because I had the care from Home Instead, Jennifer just dropped us off and then picked us up later on in the day - it made things so much easier".

Gail McDuff, Owner for Remuera Home



Sheryl Evans pictured above (far right), with Jennifer, our Remuera Home Instead Senior Care caregiver, who cared for Sheryl's parents Bruce and Mavis (left).

Instead Senior Care says, "We have just finished the care which included a little bit of home help, but mostly the care was in the form of companionship with us taking Sheryl's parents out on picnics and doing a whole variety of things aimed at getting Mavis and Bruce active, including a trip to see some Christmas lights. Sheryl told me the whole experience has given her mother a whole new lease of life"

Dear Family Care and Home Instead Senior Care,

In mid 2008 I left my job to care for my Mum and Dad. Mum has dementia and

is extremely hearing impaired and my Dad has emphysema and is visually impaired.

I've never had much confidence in my driving, but when Dad had his licence taken away several years ago due to deteriorating eyesight, I knew it was up to me to get over that hurdle so I could drive them around.

Even though I still don't feel overly confident, driving is great. I am able to drive Mum and Dad to Communicare twice a week, to their regular medical appointments, and for the odd outing.

It's sad to watch your elderly parents deteriorating, but it's also very rewarding knowing that I can help.

It's a relief also to know that I no longer have commitments to an employer, and am available to my parents when they need me.

I know how stressful it was if Mum or Dad was unwell while I was at work.

I would desperately want to be at home caring for them, and this is what they wanted too ... but I felt obliged to attend my job, and guilty if I was absent.

Now we just take one day at a time and deal with each hurdle as it comes. I have learned there is great support out there, and some very caring people.

Sheryl Evans - Mt Wellington

Home Instead Senior Care Features on Fox News

Did you know that Home Instead Senior Care was recently featured in a four part



series of Fox News reports? Paul Hogan, CEO and Founder of Home Instead Senior Care, talks about our Home Instead Senior Care philosophy and

why the road to retirement is not a dead end.

To view these reports visit:

<http://www.foxnews.com/search-results/m/27799473/road-to-retirement-part-3.htm>

Meet our Caregiver of the Year 2009

When Ngaire Cowley received the invitation to attend our National Caregiver of the Year recognition ceremony held in Hamilton in November of last year she knew she was in the running as a regional finalist but never expected to win the overall title of 'Home Instead Senior Care New Zealand - Caregiver of the Year'.

Out of a potential 700 recipients nationwide it was 54 year old Ngarie's story and the relationship she has with her clients that took her through to become a finalist representing Tauranga in the national recognition programme, which is externally judged.

Home Instead Senior Care places great emphasis on the important role each caregiver plays with their clients' and likes to recognise those caregivers who display consistency in the level of care they provide, so the introduction of the national awards programme was something everyone within the Home Instead Senior Care group felt enthusiastic about.

"We want to know that the seniors we are entrusted to care for are treated with compassion, respect and genuine consideration" said Kevin Tunstall, National Franchise Manager for Home Instead Senior Care.



Ngaire Cowley, above right with Tauranga & BOP Home Instead Senior Care Owner, Debra Jager.

"When we employ someone as a caregiver we not only do the basics of police checking & reference checking all candidates, along with other normal recruitment procedure, but we also ask ourselves whether the person we are interviewing would be someone we would feel comfortable sending into the home of our own parents. This kind of approach helps us to really consider the needs of the seniors we are catering for".

"With the introduction of a national caregiver of the year award it means we can recognise these caregivers as the extraordinary individuals they are, who go out of their way on a daily basis for seniors and whilst we can't recognise everyone to the level we did with Ngarie

we do also have monthly recognition along with regional recognition programmes" Mr Tunstall says.

Ngarie, who burst into tears on receiving the award was a clear candidate given the feedback from both her clients and the team at Tauranga Home Instead Senior Care. Her manager Debra Jager said the award "couldn't have gone to a more deserving person".

One of Ngarie's clients Norma Parsons, 89, went on to say she was a "very kind and considerate person". Ngarie who works around 40 hours per week in the homes of clients who wish to remain at home and be as independent as they possibly can says the rewards of the role have nothing to do with recognition for her. "It can be a very challenging job but it really is rewarding. When you see the look on a clients face it makes all the difference".

A very emotional Ngarie concluded with "I never win anything and it was such a shock". Whilst she admits it was a shock to her on the night - it appears no one else was at all surprised with Ngarie being, clearly, a very deserving recipient.

For anyone interested in a career with Home Instead Senior Care they should contact their local Home Instead Senior Care Franchise Office in the directory overleaf.

Going Online Beneficial to the Elderly

Recent research in the United States indicates that for mental health and well-being our New Zealand seniors would benefit from regular internet usage.

In the US less than half of Americans aged 65 and older use the Internet, but a new study has found that those who do opt to use the internet are finding the practise beneficial to their health.

LifeScience reports that research by the Phoenix Center for Advanced Legal & Economic Public Policy Studies indicates spending time online cuts the incidence of depression among senior citizens by at least 20 percent. The results were based on surveys of 7,000 people age 55 and older who were retired and not working, but not living in nursing homes.

"Increased Internet access and use by senior citizens enables them to connect with sources of social support when face-to-face interaction becomes more difficult," said study co-author Sherry G. Ford, a professor at the University of Montevallo

in Montevallo, AL. "Hence, they are less susceptible to depression".

"Considering that depression costs the U.S. economy about \$100 billion annually, Internet use for the elderly may have a significant payoff," the 26-page study concluded.



Closer to home, here in New Zealand, statistics show increasing numbers of older internet users with organisations such as SeniorNet offering assistance to older people who feel less confident using the internet.

As families find themselves spread further apart due to employment needs, elderly parents and grandparents can find themselves becoming increasingly isolated and having regular contact via

e-mail or Skype can play an important part in keeping the senior connected to their family in a very personal way. **For more information on SeniorNet call 0800 736 467 or visit www.seniornet.co.nz.**

Understanding Enduring Power of Attorney

A 'Power of Attorney' is a legal arrangement where you (called the donor) appoint another person (called an attorney) to temporarily act for you, for example if you go overseas.



More specifically an 'Enduring Power of Attorney' (EPA) continues to operate, or only comes into effect, should you become mentally incapable.

There are two types of EPAs:

A **Personal Care and Welfare EPA** appoints one person as your attorney to make decisions about your personal care and welfare on your behalf. These decisions might include agreement to medical treatment or admission to residential care or choice of a residential home. Although you can only appoint one person to be your Personal Care and Welfare Attorney, you can appoint one or more successor attorneys to act if the authority of a previous attorney lapses

A **Property EPA** appoints an attorney to manage and make decisions about your property. This might include how to invest your assets, what to spend your money on, and decisions about your house. If you wish, you can give your attorney authority to manage your property affairs while you still have capacity and to continue to act if you become mentally incapable.

Most people give both types of EPA. The same individual can be both your Personal Care and Welfare Attorney and your Property Attorney. However, a trustee corporation cannot be your Personal Care and Welfare Attorney.

For more information on setting up an enduring power of attorney you should contact your local Age Concern office or visit Age Concern's website at www.ageconcern.org.nz

Senior Moments

"I can't understand why people are frightened of new ideas. I'm frightened of the old ones".

John Cage (1912 - 1992)

Some Practical Advice for Carers

Whilst many people will find themselves quite suddenly in the role of carer for a loved one following an accident or diagnosis, those who become carers to an aging parent may find the process is a more gradual one with sometimes many years of agonising decisions over what should be provided by way of care for a person who at times appears in good health but at other times seems completely unable to function living at home without support.

Where and how to access care are equally as challenging and the process of uncovering entitlements to ease the burden in areas such as finances, travel and respite can become quite daunting for an already busy carer.



Therefore a booklet launched recently by the Associate Minister of Social Development and Employment, Hon. Tariana Turia, will offer some comfort. Entitled 'A Guide for Carers' the booklet provides practical help for people caring for family or friends who are older or have ill health, a disability or a mental health, alcohol or other drug issue.

The guide includes information on the government-funded services and supports available for carers, such as:

- financial help
- needs assessments (NASC)
- help at home
- help if you need a break
- help related to children with special education needs
- health and disability rights
- equipment and modifications.

Limited hardcopies are available by contacting Carers NZ on 0800 777 797, or Work and Income on 0800 559 009. Versions can also be down loaded on the Ministry of Social development website: www.msd.govt.nz/what-we-can-do/community/carers/index.html

New Zealand Offices

HOME OFFICE
Unit 3/27 Norton Rd, Frankton,
PO Box 4245, Hamilton 3247
Freephone: 0800 694 472
Tel: 07 959 0006
Fax: 07 839 6704
info@homeinstead.co.nz

RODNEY DISTRICTS
Shop 6, Hillary House
1 Alice Avenue, Orewa
PO Box 484, Orewa 0946
Tel: 09 426 9911
Fax: 09 426 9921
rodney@homeinstead.co.nz

NORTH SHORE
126A Lake Rd
PO Box 32181, Devonport
North Shore City 0744
Tel: 09 445 8055
Fax: 09 445 8055
northshore@homeinstead.co.nz

MT ALBERT
106/19 Surrey Cres, Grey Lynn
PO Box 47438, Ponsonby,
Auckland 1144
Tel: 09 361 3425
Fax: 09 361 3427
mt.albert@homeinstead.co.nz

REMUERA
Meadowbank Shopping Centre,
35 St Johns Rd, PO Box 87237,
Meadowbank, Auckland 1742
Tel: 09 528 4476
Fax: 09 528 8462
remuera@homeinstead.co.nz

HAMILTON
Unit 3/27 Norton Rd, Frankton,
PO Box 4245, Hamilton 3247
Freephone: 0800 694 472
Tel: 07 959 0006
Fax: 07 839 6704
hamilton@homeinstead.co.nz

TAURANGA
Historic Village Complex 1
PO Box 841
Tauranga 3140
Tel: 07 571 4228
Fax: 07 571 4229
tauranga@homeinstead.co.nz

BAY OF PLENTY
Historic Village Complex 1
PO Box 841
Tauranga 3140
Tel: 07 571 4228
Fax: 07 571 4229
tauranga@homeinstead.co.nz

MANAWATU
Suite 1 Remax Building
132 Princess St, PO Box 12176
Palmerston North 4410
Tel: 06 357 8488
Fax: 06 357 8489
Freephone: 0800 336 636
manawatu@homeinstead.co.nz

KAPITI COAST
Unit 3, 110 Rimu Rd
PO Box 645
Paraparaumu 5452
Tel: 04 904 4288
Fax: 04 904 4290
kapiti@homeinstead.co.nz

HUTT VALLEY
11 Hardy St
PO Box 45015,
Waterloo
Lower Hutt 5042
Tel: 04 566 4476
Fax: 04 566 4475
huttvalley@homeinstead.co.nz

WELLINGTON
Level 1, 250 Cuba St
PO Box 6621,
Marion Square
Wellington 6141
Tel: 04 890 3798
Fax: 04 890 3915
wellington@homeinstead.co.nz

CHRISTCHURCH SOUTH
Suite 14, 1025 Ferry Rd,
Ferrymead
PO Box 18643, New Brighton
Christchurch 8641
Tel: 03 384 8484
Fax: 03 384 8485
southchch@homeinstead.co.nz

DUNEDIN
295 South Rd,
Caversham
PO Box 2024
Dunedin 9044
Tel: 03 487 7797
Fax: 03 487 7796
otago@homeinstead.co.nz

Each Home Instead Senior Care office is independently owned and operated