

Boomers, Elders, and More E-Newsletter

2140 Belcourt Avenue
Nashville, TN 37212

<http://vanderbilt.edu/child-family-center/>

Message from the Coordinator

The Child & Family Center will sponsor the second annual Virtual Dementia Tour, which provides the opportunity to experience life as an individual living with Alzheimer's disease or dementia. If you are caring for someone with Alzheimer's disease or dementia, the tour can increase your understanding of your loved one's limitations and improve your communication, patience and care, by allowing you to temporarily see life through his or her eyes. "Embracing those with dementia into the fabric of our communities requires us to take a moment to walk in their shoes" says inventor of the Virtual Dementia Tour.

The tour will take place on April 20 from 9 a.m. to noon, and from 1 p.m. to 3 p.m. in a camper located behind Light Hall between Langford and Eskin library. Although the tour lasts 10 minutes, plans should be made to arrive 10 minutes before your schedule time to allow for preparation.

Individual debriefing will be available after the tour. If you are unable to stay for the individual debriefing you can attend the group debriefing on April 21 from noon to 1 p.m. in Light Hall, room 416.

Last year more than 60 Vanderbilt employees participated in the tour. The tour generated an overwhelming response. To sign up, go to <https://form.jotform.com/60416301576955>.

If you have questions, contact Stacey Bonner, at 936-1990 or stacey.l.bonner@vanderbilt.edu.



News Highlight

Meeting the demands of a rapidly aging population

By Linda Bryant

When Governor Bill Haslam gave his annual State of the State address, he proposed a \$34.8 billion plan providing new spending on colleges and universities, road projects and a large deposit into Tennessee's emergency budget reserves.

Senior citizens weren't mentioned.

In a political atmosphere where the demand for investment dollars is high and taxes are expected to stay low, it's not unusual for aging citizens to be passed over. But those who work closely with seniors in Tennessee believe the day will soon come when the needs of seniors will be front and center. That's because a massive amount of Americans are joining the ranks of those 65 and older.

"10,000 people turn 65 every day," says Adrienne Newman, associate executive director and living at home services director at Nashville's FiftyForward.

"That began in 2010 and will continue until 2030. Davidson County's population of persons age 65 and over is expected to increase from an estimated 75,199 in 2015 to 150,484 by the year 2050. Even though we know this big wave of seniors is coming, we aren't really prepared for it as a nation or state."

What will this army of aging seniors and their adult children caregivers demand?

- The ability to stay at home as long as possible and be in control of circumstances
- Qualified substitute caregivers for adult children or other fulltime helpers
- Safe and reliable transportation
- Services that fit the individual's needs, including services from businesses such as grocery stores to shop for the customer
- Homes refitted for safety
- More easy-to-understand information about health care and health care benefits (Medicaid and private insurance)
- Housing alternatives like cohousing or granny pods (a backyard cottage for an elderly parent)
- Sound financial advice along with easy-to-understand information about retirement funds

"As a nation, we're going to have to come to terms with aging Americans," says Tim Howell, CEO at Senior Citizens Home Assistance Service in Knoxville.

"We're going to have to do it pretty fast or we're going to have an overwhelming amount of people needing services and help, and they aren't going to be able to get it. What we worry about is that there's going to be millions of people unable to pay for the care and services they need."

Howell says aging baby boomers, a generation of an estimated 78 million that make up 26 percent of the nation's population, are going to rise up to shine a light on senior issues.

"As they start to require services and realize how many unmet needs there are, I think the baby boomers will start to question the whole system and ask, "Why aren't we changing this?" Baby boomers aren't afraid to speak out and question the powers that be."

Susan Long, director of Knox County's CAC office on Aging, a public non-profit agency and clearinghouse that plans services and develops resources for seniors, thinks Howell might be on to something.

"We have programs designed to help seniors that make a big difference to a lot of people, but so much of the problem that's coming is going to be about dealing with the sheer numbers of people needing services," Long explains. "It's already difficult to find and keep qualified caregivers, and it's only going to get more challenging."

Widely published projections show that by 2050, for the first time in history there will be more elderly people than young people in the world. The number of people under 65 who would be available to provide care for the older people is dropping from a current 12:1 ratio to 4:1.

Read more at <http://www.tnledger.com/editorial/Article.aspx?id=87145>



Living Longer with Palliative Care

By Helen McNeal

Executive Director of the California State University Institute for Palliative Care at California State University San Marcos

It is estimated that 1.5 to 1.6 million patients in the United States received hospice or palliative care services in 2012. Anecdotal accounts indicate that many more who would benefit by this care did not have access to it or had to wait so long that services were provided during their final few days of life.

Considering that 90 percent of American adults live with a chronic illness before they die, this is an important issue. While some manage well on their own with minimal assistance from healthcare professionals and/or friends and family, others may need more hands-on care and supervision, particularly as their disease burden becomes heavier. We cannot forget that as the population ages, people with multiple illnesses or conditions will require more supportive care.



Doctors, nurses, social workers, chaplains, and allied health professionals play a vital role in educating the public about palliative care and the fact that it is much more than just hospice. Sharing the same philosophy and patient and family-centric approach, palliative care is the broader umbrella of care for those with a serious or chronic illness and goes hand-in-hand with curative treatment. Palliative Care is care that may be given while someone is receiving treatment that they

hope will either cure them of their illness or prolong their life. Hospice on the other hand is the intensive end-of-life care offered to patients who are projected to have less than six months to live and who have elected to discontinue curative treatment.

The other role that health professionals, in particular physicians and nurses, play is in referring patients to palliative care. When we explore the reasons why health professionals are not referring their patients to palliative care, many surface. Some of these reasons include the fact that services are not available in their area or that they are afraid of “losing” their patient. The first reason is valid; the second is not, as most palliative care is consultative. But the reason that is hardest to understand is when providers do not refer because they believe that a palliative care referral means giving up on life. In fact, the opposite is true.

There are benefits to the health care system of palliative care...it reduces readmissions, results in few admissions for futile care, and in general, reduces costs associated with serious illness and end of life care. But, as important as reducing costs is, it pales besides the human imperative to enhance the quality of life of those we care about. And, no one would disagree that enabling those we love and care for to live as long as possible with the highest quality of life possible is a higher order goal.

Palliative care is an approach that requires close teamwork, from everyone involved in the healthcare team including nurses, physicians, social workers, pharmacists, dietitians, chaplains, counselors, and family caregivers all working together to ensure the best outcome for the patient. Thanks to this teamwork, the needs of the patient and family can be assessed, understood and addressed. And, thanks to this teamwork, palliative care professionals are helping patients with serious and chronic illnesses, live longer, and enjoy their lives more.

Source: http://www.caregiver.com/articles/print/longer_living_palliative_care.htm

Living in Today

By Pat Samples (Daily Comforts for Caregivers)

I spend a lot of my time wondering and worrying about what will happen tomorrow, next week, next year. I get fearful that my loved one won't be able to manage, and neither will I. I'm afraid that money, time, and energy will run out.

It's easy to get hooked into concentrating on the future. And of course it's wise to prepare for the future as best I can. But keeping my thoughts churning about possible future catastrophes is a waste of time and energy. It raises my blood pressure and makes me tense and unhappy. If I spend my energy absorbed in tomorrow's potential problems, I can't enjoy whatever is in front of me right now. The present moment is really all I have, and I don't want to miss it.

I leave the future to the future and live in the now.

Upcoming Events

Dr. Mohana Karlekar, director of palliative care at Vanderbilt Medical Center, will explain the difference between palliative care and hospice care. She will discuss when palliative care is appropriate, and how to access palliative care services. She also will cover the roles of palliative care team members. This month's Boomers, Elders, and More Luncheon session will be held on Wednesday, March 16, 2016 from 12 p.m. to 1 p.m. in Medical Center East 8380A. Please feel free to bring your lunch.

Vanderbilt Family Resource Center's Caregiver Support group will be held on Wednesday, April 13, 2016 from 12 p.m. to 1 p.m. in Medical Center East Room 8380A. The caregiver support group is a time to share information and openly discuss your problems without judgment, to process your feelings, and to hear others talk about their experiences.

Vanderbilt Child & Family Center will be partnering with Seniors Helpers to host its 2nd Annual Virtual Dementia Tour on Wednesday, April 20, 2016 from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. in the alley between Langford and Eskind Library (behind Light Hall). This is an opportunity to see life through the eyes of someone with dementia or Alzheimer's. The free, 10-minute tour is designed to increase your: understanding of their limitations, level of patience, communication, and overall care for your loved one. Register today by going to: <https://form.jotform.com/60416301576955>

Debbie Miller, qualified dementia care specialist and care coordinator for the Alzheimer's Foundation of America, will answer any questions you have pertaining to the virtual dementia tour and how it relates to someone who has dementia. This month's Boomers, Elders, and More Luncheon session will be held on Thursday, April 21, 2016 from 12–1 in Light Hall room 419. Please feel free to bring your lunch.

If you need information or resources to assist you in your caregiving role, contact Stacey Bonner, Family Services Coordinator, at stacey.l.bonner@vanderbilt.edu or 936-1990.

