



Press Release

**For Immediate Release
9/18/07**

**For More Information
EILEEN DOHERTY, MS
Executive Director
303-333-3482**

Finding Help for Seniors Becomes Easier

Denver, Co Seniors and their families struggle daily with crises to remain independent and live in their own homes. A simple fall can cause a broken hip and placement in a nursing home, short term memory loss can cause the electricity to be cut off and placement in an assisted living, or a rise in sugar levels can result in the need for daily insulin injections for someone who is suffering from macular degeneration.

Many of us can relate to these tragedies in the lives of loved ones. But where do you turn to find help? Social workers in hospitals, nursing homes, and home care agencies are often one source of referrals, but many people need more help. Some turn to the internet, while others turn to their doctor. A select few can find help through their employer benefits program. Some talk to other family and friends.

But many seniors and family are left just trying to put the pieces together as best they can with the information available to them at the time of the crises. Much of the challenge in identifying community resources is knowing what questions to ask and where to find the answers necessary to navigate the maze of community agencies.

To help with these crises, the *Senior Resource Guidebook* is a helpful tool to select assisted living, nursing home, retirement communities, independent senior living apartments, home care, adult day programs, and hospice care. In addition to checklists to help with making decisions, the *Guidebook* contains information on prices, as well as services that are offered throughout Colorado.

The *Guidebook* provides insurance checklists for making informed consumer choices. Costs, eligibility and contact information for agencies licensed to provide Medicare managed care, prescription drugs, MediGap plans, and long term care insurance is included.

Medicaid eligibility is source of great confusion to many caregivers who are in crises. Knowing the eligibility, documentation and the process to access help is described as well.

Copies are available for \$5 for handling and mailing. Free copies of the *Guidebook* may also be available at local libraries.

To better assist families, an *Online Senior Resource Guidebook* is available at www.senioranswers.org. A screening tool helps to determine the type of services, costs, and financial assistance that are available to pay for the services. Agencies in the surrounding zip codes meeting the specified criteria are identified as potential resources. Agency details about each resource that is identified can be accessed. Some agencies also have purchased links to their agency site to help families make informed decisions.

The website also contains links and consumer friendly articles on eligibility, costs, and general information on Medicare, Medicaid, food stamps, low income housing, caregiving, and managed care.

More and more employers are providing information and gathering resources about elder care for their employees. Employers are faced with more than \$33 billion in losses each year due to reduced productivity of employees who are engaged in caring for elders during the workday. Employees are encouraged to check with their employer for resources in making these difficult and time consuming decisions.

November has been designated as Caregiver Month in recognition of the tremendous contributions given by family members and neighbors in helping to care for our aging population.

For more information on caregiving resources, call 303-333-3482. To order a copy of the *Senior Resource Guidebook*, send \$5 to cover postage and handling to Senior Answers and Services, 3006 East Colfax, Denver, CO 80206.

Eileen Doherty, MS is the Executive Director of Senior Answers and Services and the Colorado Gerontological Society, 3006 East Colfax, Denver CO 80206. She has more than 30 years of experience in education and training, clinical practice, research, and public policy in gerontology. You may reach her at 303-333-3482 or Doherty001@att.net.