



# 63 SENIOR CARE<sup>®</sup>

Good morning. I am Mary Ann Klember, administrator of Senior Care of East Hartford. I truly appreciate the difficult decisions you are faced with in light of needed budget constraints and the need to insure appropriate medical/social services.

Senior Care has three adult health centers in Connecticut and provides comprehensive services to more than three hundred seniors/disabled adults. Many of our participants attend the health center 5-7 days a week because of their need for 24 hour care and supervision. We provide nursing services, including medication administration, breathing treatments, wound care, diabetic management, health assessment,

Personal care assistance/showers, incontinence care, therapies, podiatry, 2 meals And a snack meeting the various dietary restrictions, and therapeutic recreational programs designed to meet the specific stimulation needs of our diverse population. These services allow our participants to maintain as much independent function As possible, allowing frail elderly to remain in the community, which is where they Choose to be.

We have 90 year old participants with advanced dementia/alzheimers who are being cared for 24/7 by a child with multiple medical problems. We have younger Alzheimers Clients being cared for by spouses who need to work full time and also assume Provision for all of their activities of daily living. Recently, an elderly man came Off the van and within five minutes, was unresponsive...his blood sugar was 29. He lives alone, is an insulin-dependent diabetic and one wonders what the outcome Would have been if not for the emergency medical care provided at the center. An elderly senior fell at home; was assisted and assessed by paramedics, refused Emergency evaluation, came into our center complaining of discomfort...911 to St. Francis with a fractured hip. I could relate many stories of intervention, Decreased isolation, increased self-esteem, etc..

The funding sources for adult centers are now very limited. We have become very Creative and watchful in providing the necessary services to ensure the best Possible care to our participants and necessary respite to our families. Our Operating day is at a minimum 9 1/2 hours and the present reimbursement rate Of \$63.55 is approximately \$10 an hour for comprehensive care. The cost of one skilled nursing home visit exceeds \$75 and the cost of a home health aide can exceed \$25 an hour. Obviously, health centers are a very cost effective option.

Several years ago, a health center in Moodus serving the out-lying regions of Marlborough, Columbia, Hebron, and Andover closed. On October 30<sup>th</sup> of this year, the Tolland health center, a 60 + enrollment center also closed. This center services Tolland, Ellington, Vernon, Storrs.

We are trying to service these areas by starting van routes an hour earlier as it takes About 45-50 minutes to even reach our first participant in each area. Gasoline prices,

Van maintenance and repairs certainly increased with these additions to out-lying Areas. However, we believe strongly that adult health centers keep at risk seniors More independent with dignity.

Adult health centers already have a very low reimbursement rate; further decreases in rates will seriously impact the ability to continue providing needed services, pushing More and more frail adults into isolation and premature nursing facility placement. Several representatives have visited our health center and recognize that adult Day care is a cost-effective valued service. Please support options for our Elderly and the increase we so desperately need and deserve.

Thank-you.

Mary Ann Klember R.N.BSN  
Administrator