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In Step with Our Parents: 3-Part Educational Series

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In Step with Our Parents

3-part educational series

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BACKGROUND

- Senior Community Services is a non-profit organization that provides outreach services to elderly individuals in Hennepin County, including the more rural western part of Hennepin County. It also provides caregiver coaching for individuals and families who are caring for family and friends who are elderly.
- The social workers, along with the director of senior outreach have identified a need to educate caregivers in the county they serve, but do not identify themselves with the term caregiver.
- It has been identified by the professional staff at this agency, through interviews, assessments, and counseling of clients, that many individuals are caregiving for loved ones and they are missing out on services and resources because they do not identify with the term "caregiver" and many services and resources are labeled for caregivers. The role of education is to help them identify as a caregiver and access the many resources that are available to assist them and the care recipients.
- The social workers and director of the senior centers for Senior Community Services have identified a need to reach out to and provide education for adult children who are now caring for their parent(s), but who don't self-identify as caregivers.

PURPOSE

The purpose of this project is to educate adult children caring for their parents, so they can identify as caregivers so they can better cope with, identify with, and/or navigate the role of care giving, and be aware of the resources available to them.

PROJECT DESCRIPTION

In Step with Our Parents is a three-part training, with power point and handouts, for adult children providing care to their parents. It consisted of three 1 1/2 hour segments, including the presentation, discussion and questions. The topics that are included are: issues and statistics around caring for aging parents (including self-identifying as a caregiver), legal and financial considerations (utilizing available experts), resources for elders, and family dynamics and communication.

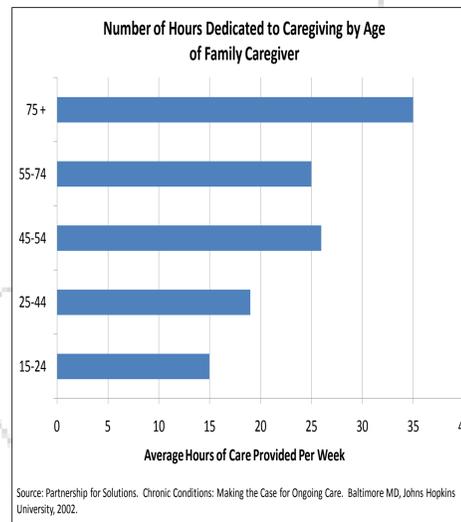
Caregiver Education Series

METHOD (3-part educational series)

Learning objectives: Purpose of this education series

- Through this education series you will be able to:
- Identify the roles and issues of elder caregiving
 - Identify family dynamics in caregiving
 - Use tools for stress management

CAREGIVER DATA



- By 2030, one of every five Americans will be 65+.
- Nearly 25% of US households (more than 22 million) have at least one adult who has provided care for an elderly person at some point in the previous 12 months.
- Nearly two-thirds of Americans under age 60 think they will have elder care responsibilities in the next ten years.

Family Caregiver Alliance, 12/04
National Family Caregivers Association, 2001

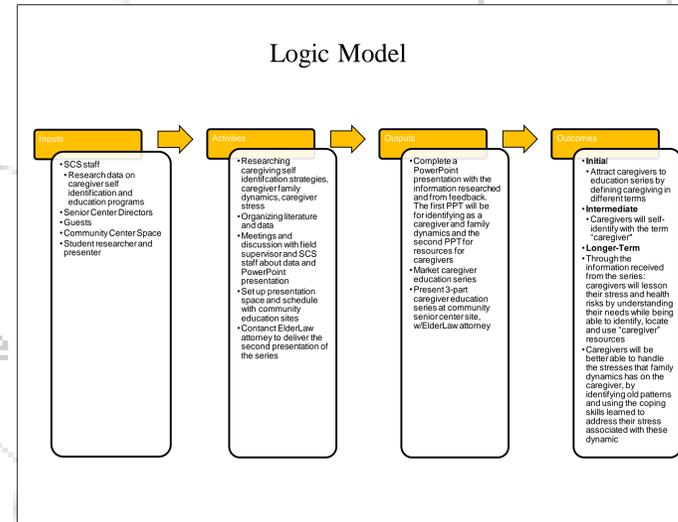
- Most caregivers are reluctant to ask for or use formal help
- Continue to provide care with little support
- May experience consequences to their own health and well being
- Use formal services only as a last resort
- Many caregivers don't see their activities as anything outside the natural bounds of the family relationship (i.e. spouse & child role)
- Three triggers most likely to help caregivers self-identify:
 - Providing personal care for care recipient (dressing, transferring, toileting/continence, etc.).
 - The care recipients diagnosis (ex. Dementia).
 - Interaction with the healthcare system.



There are only four kinds of people in the world—those who have been caregivers, those who currently are caregivers, those who will be caregivers and those who need caregivers."

~Rosallynn Carter

INTENDED OUTCOMES



MARKETING

- Advertised in local community free press papers and church bulletins
- Online at ElderCare Partners
- Flyers placed in local stores
- Community center billboard
- Word of mouth
- Community/recreation registration bulletin

ISSUES ENCOUNTERED

- Lack of registrants for series
- May not have been able to find the correct advertisement
- tools to reach the caregiver who does not identify with the term "caregiver"
- Adjusting schedules with Elder Law attorneys to fit into the second part of the series

CONCLUSIONS

- While we met our initial plan to present the education series in at least one senior center, we were disappointed with the lack of turnout by attendees to the session.
- Another attempt was made to present to a more rural community and only three people registered for the series, so the series had to be cancelled
- Through feedback from the five attendees at the educational series, it would appear that they too had not identified fully with the term caregiver, but throughout the educational series began to identify themselves as caregivers
- Research data and studies strongly suggest the need to educated caregivers about their needs, stress, and health status, to assure they are taken care in order to take care of others. Nearly two-thirds of Americans under age 60 think they will have elder care responsibilities in the next ten years. It is imperative that they be able to locate resources, services and supports to assist in their caregiving efforts. Individuals living in rural areas will need to be educated more than any as to resources they can access in their limited geographic areas

IMPLICATIONS FOR SOCIAL WORK PRACTICE

- The need to educate caregivers is well defined in research data. There are some studies that also discuss this need and its implications in rural communities.
- Our economy in the United States is setting a stage for increased cutbacks in social service programs, that will likely affect caregivers and the care recipients. The rural communities in Minnesota and around the nation will be affected even greater, as they are currently at a disadvantage due to their already limited resources.
- It will be of the utmost importance for social workers to be ever more diligent to assure that the needs of the elderly and their caregivers are met by connecting caregivers with resources and thinking outside the box to have needs met with very limited resources.