



Welcome to the Accountable Aging Newsletter May 2009 edition

Our aim is to serve you as a trusted conduit of information from scientific and academic sources and to highlight those services we offer that meet the needs of senior adults and their families.



DID YOU KNOW?

Accountable Aging, Inc. (AAI) is a single source for seniors and their families to attain knowledge, resources and on-going assistance with the challenges related to aging or caring for an elder loved one. The firm, founded in 2002 by Mary and Mick Koffend, specializes in helping families navigate the maze of eldercare options in Austin, the DFW Metroplex, and San Antonio by providing a unique combination of elder care consulting and care management. AAI also works closely with professionals whose clients face eldercare decisions. AAI has become an invaluable resource for families who need a "guidance counselor" along the aging journey.

How it Works: AAI works with a family to uncover the needs and unique situation of the elder and the family. Then AAI recommends the best solutions to meet the needs and desires of the elder and the family. At that point, Accountable Aging Care Managers can provide a broad spectrum of services and support, including, but not limited to: manage care giver schedules and activities, monitor care giver performance (in the home or in a facility), arrange transportation services, accompany clients to doctor's appointments, pay bills, ensure compliance with medication prescriptions and assist beneficiaries with managing expenditures. AAI care managers monitor each situation and provide an accurate flow of information. Our unique multi-disciplinary team approach allows us to manage all aspects of our clients' situation: Medical, Psycho-social, Financial, Legal and Spiritual.

Caring.com is a website where real people can get real answers to their questions. The goal for the site is that people will tell their friends that it saved them time, helped them make better decisions and left them feeling less alone. The questions come from people dealing with the complex issues of aging and the answers are specific enough to help that particular family, but generic enough to assist others with similar issues. The site uses "experts" to answer the questions. Mary Koffend, Accountable Aging's president, was recently recruited to serve as an expert. Listed below are the first two questions she was asked to answer. For the answers, go to this link.

www.caring.com/authors/mary-koffend

Questions:

My Mother is 61 years old and has heart disease and diabetes. She is living on a fixed income, and recently sold her home, and bought a small house with a bond for deed (owner financed) mortgage. She complains of "being broke" on a daily basis. She is resistant to sharing her financial information with my sister and me. My sister and I give her money here and there, and my sister pays her to babysit, but we have no idea what the actual financial picture is. There are lots of little mysteries about her finances - someone's cell phone in her name, a car payment that she is responsible for, with a friend "giving her the money." There are people in her life that I think are taking advantage of her. She gets angry when we try to talk to her about her finances - she keeps telling us that we should be doing more for her. However, a few months ago when I gave her a check for \$1200 toward her bills, she immediately bought a computer and printer, and a week later was crying that she couldn't pay her electric bill. She was not poor when my father was alive, but they apparently did not do financial planning. It is stressful for her, as well as the entire family. Both my sister and I are starting out, recently married, trying to get on our feet. My sister and I want to pull together and work things out as a

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family with her. Should we contact a financial planner, and try to get her to sit down with all of us to analyze the situation, make a budget, etc. I feel like if I knew how much she was short every month, I could budget an amount of money to help out. But I want to make sure that she is paying the things that need to be paid. As it is, when I send her money, she treats it as a "gift" and uses it for luxuries that she can't otherwise afford. How would you suggest we approach her without putting her on the defensive? I have mentioned seeing a planner in the past, but her response is "I don't have anything, what's the point?" Thanks for any advice.

— Question from Caring.com Community Member, beethoven

My dad has Alzheimer's and has become too much for my mom to handle. They have recently hired a caregiver to come for 8 hours a day. Is there any way that the cost of the caregiver can be a tax deduction for them? We do not want to move dad to [assisted living](#) yet, but if that is a taxable expense and the caregiver is not, we might want to reconsider our decision. This whole process is very expensive and we need to make the best financial choices to support my parents.

— Question from Anonymous Caring.com community member

Announcement



Mary Pat Smith was honored by the Austin Groups for the Elderly with the 2009 Professional Spirit Award in April. A nurse for over 30 years, Mary Pat's career has grown into a commitment and a passion far beyond nursing. She has actively served on the RSVP board for over 5 years and spearheaded a new non-profit that provides transportation services for seniors in southwest Austin. Mary Pat has been working with Accountable Aging since 2006 and was nominated for the Professional Spirit Award by Accountable Aging because of her incredible energy and commitment.

ACCOUNTABLE AGING

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Accountable Aging is a single source for seniors and their families to attain knowledge, resources and on-going assistance with the challenges related to aging or caring for an elder loved one. We serve seniors in Austin, Dallas, San Antonio and the surrounding areas.

For more information or for speaking arrangements, please contact us:

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Visit us online: www.accountableaging.com

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