

FACES OF CAREGIVING PUBLIC AWARENESS CAMPAIGN KICKS OFF

ADOD Georgia spousal caregiver featured in inaugural article

Following is an excerpt from the first Faces of Caregiving interview, the centerpiece of the Coalition's new public awareness campaign.

"God has been with us, and He will walk with us now as we go on this long journey." Ron Gregory, who was diagnosed with early-onset Alzheimer's Disease over a decade ago, recalls these words as his wife's first comment when they were given the diagnosis by his neurologist. Joyce Gregory, his partner in marriage for 48 years and his caregiver for the past 12 years, has demonstrated not only the power of her faith in supporting the couple on this "long journey," but the strength she has found in herself. These words were used in the nomination of the most recent West Central Georgia regional winner for the Georgia Caregiver of the Year Award for family caregiving, awarded by the Rosalynn Carter Institute. Joyce Gregory has taken time to reflect on the changes that a diagnosis of a chronic and progressive illness has brought into the lives of her family, and offer advice to others facing this challenge. A soft-spoken woman, Gregory focuses on her husband's own efforts, the support of her family, friends, and community supports, rather than her own efforts, in helping them cope with the challenges of Alzheimer's. But just a few moments of conversation with her reveals the role her own tenacity has played. From the time she first learned her husband's diagnosis, she has been proactive in her approach -- learning more about the disease, seeking out supports for her and her family, advocating on behalf of Alzheimer's funding and providing support to other caregivers in her community....



Joyce Gregory goes on to describe many lessons learned in her caregiving experience. She offers advice to policymakers, legislators, and other caregivers, shares her personal motto, and discusses the rewards and challenges of being a spousal caregiver. At the conclusion of the article, her husband is quoted from his remarks in her nominations for Georgia Family Caregiver of the Year:

"She never made me feel inadequate or tried to keep me from doing what I could for myself. Now I see how precious that was and continues to be... we both have remained very active in what we can do and [don't] dwell on what we can no longer do."

To read the full interview, visit www.rosalynncarter.org and click on the article link on the home page. New caregiver interviews will follow at least monthly.

GEORGIA CARENET COALITION

NEWS FOR THE CAREGIVER'S ADVOCATE.

JUNE 2010

🕒 ADVOCACY ALERTS 🕒

CAMPAIGN FOR BETTER CARE ADDRESSES NEW HEALTHCARE LEGISLATION

The following information is excerpted from materials provided by Campaign for Better Care, a national advocacy group addressing healthcare reform, including caregiver issues.

The Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS), has released two publications related to the Campaign's priorities:

1. Brochure—"Medicare and the New Health Care Law: What It Means for You":

Throughout the past week, Medicare beneficiaries across the country began receiving copies of a brochure "Medicare and the New Health Law – What it Means for You" in their mailboxes. The mailing from CMS outlines key provisions of the Affordable Care Act for people with Medicare as well as members of their families. The mailing is being sent in both English and Spanish.

The brochure points out improvements in Medicare that will be particularly important to the Campaign for Better Care, as they are implemented over time. For example:

- The legislation will create community health teams that provide **patient-centered care** so you **won't have to see multiple doctors who don't work together**.
- If you're hospitalized, the new law will help you return home successfully—and avoid going back—by helping to **coordinate your care** and connecting you to services and supports in your community.

The brochure will also be posted on the Campaign for Better Care website (www.CampaignforBetterCare.org).

2. "Your Discharge Planning Checklist":

CMS has a newly updated "Discharge Planning Checklist". It is a helpful guide for patients and their caregivers as they prepare to leave a hospital, nursing home, or other health care setting. CMS tested the checklist with a broad range of audiences including, consumers, family caregivers, clinicians (including discharge planners), and patient advocacy groups. The checklist is available on the Medicare.gov website and will also be posted to the Campaign for Better Care website (www.CampaignforBetterCare.org). Print versions should be available for order in June. The document will also be translated into Spanish in the near future.

You may want to share these resources with your members, partners, and constituents.

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CAMPAIGN FOR
Better Care

COALITION WORK PLAN UPDATE SCHEDULED FOR JUNE MEETING

The next Georgia CAREnet Coalition meeting is scheduled for Monday, June 21 at 10:00 a.m., at the Methodist Home for Children and Youth in Macon.

A special guest for the morning will be Mrs. Rosalynn Carter. During the afternoon session, a planning session will focus on goals and strategies for the second half of the year, in keeping with the overall 2010 action plan. All CAREnet chapters are encouraged to have representation at this important meeting. To confirm attendance and reserve lunch, please contact gcncinfo@gmail.com.



Mrs. Rosalynn Carter, Coalition members, and RCI staff at winter Coalition meeting.

CARENET OF THE MONTH: WEST CENTRAL GEORGIA

Georgia REACH relies upon local support

At the April meeting of the West Central Georgia CAREnet in Columbus, Naomi Latini, RCI coordinator for Georgia REACH, provided an informative presentation on the history and progress of the two-year old state initiative. Serving communities around the Columbus, Americus, and Albany areas, the REACH project provides caregiver support through training, home visits, and telephone outreach.

A primary focus of the West Central CAREnet is the promotion and support of the REACH project. Representatives from a variety of organizations serving elderly individuals and their families have made referrals, shared ideas, and spread the word about the project since its inception. Initial outcome data from the project is promising, indicating reductions in feelings of caregiver burden over time.

NOMINATIONS SOUGHT FOR 2010 GA CAREGIVERS OF THE YEAR

It's time again for nominations to be submitted for Georgia Caregiver of the Year. As in previous years, this year nominees will be selected in three categories: family, volunteer, and professional caregivers. State winners will be honored at the annual awards gala in October. Regional and state winners will also be eligible for inclusion of their stories in the Coalition's "Faces of Caregiving" public awareness campaign. Nominations are needed from all CAREnet regions.

If you have not yet received a nomination packet, please contact Daniel Luque at gcncinfo@gmail.com.

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UPCOMING EVENTS:

June 21 --

Quarterly Georgia CAREnet Coalition meeting,
Methodist Home for Children and Youth, Macon
campus, 10:00 a.m.

October 20-22 –

Rosalynn Carter Institute Annual Summit, “Averting
the Crisis,” Georgia Southwestern State University,
Americus

Please check the RCI website for the full
training calendar: www.rosalynncarter.org.

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www.rosalynncarter.org/CaregiverCoalition

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