

Caregiver Quarterly

A publication of Caregiver Services,
a program of the Area 1 Agency on Aging.

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Caregiver Services

maintains a registry, matching trained and pre-screened caregivers with potential employers, including In-Home Supportive Services clients. Information and support are available for family and professional caregivers.

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Upcoming Change for Registry Listing Guidelines

Beginning July 1, 2008, there will be a change you will need to know. All homemakers and caregivers who would like to continue to be listed on the Caregiver Services' registry will be required to accept IHSS (In-Home Supportive Services) job referrals until at least one (1) IHSS referral has been accepted and maintained. Once this condition has been met, a homemaker or caregiver may be listed on the registry for private hire job referrals only.

We are committed as Humboldt County's IHSS Registry to both increasing the number of matches made between IHSS providers with IHSS recipients and keeping the private hire job referral part of our service. To be listed for private hire job referrals, homemakers and caregivers will work for a minimum of one (1) IHSS recipient without requesting any pay above IHSS wages.

Regular reviews of IHSS provider records will be performed by the IHSS Public Authority to ensure all homemakers and caregivers who are listed for private hire job referrals are currently working for a minimum of one (1) IHSS recipient. Any homemaker or caregiver who knowingly attempts to list with the registry for private hire job referrals before accepting at least one (1) IHSS recipient may be excluded from the registry. Any homemaker or caregiver who requests additional pay from a IHSS recipient may be excluded from the registry.

If you have any questions about the change and how to keep your Active status with the registry or how to reactivate as a homemaker or caregiver, please call Caregiver Services Monday through Friday between 9am and 4:30pm at 707-443-4363 or toll free at 1-877-977-1604. Any questions regarding IHSS may be directed to Humboldt County In-Home Supportive Services at 707-476-2100 or toll free at 1-866-572-8614.

Respite: A Time of Rest

The Humboldt Senior Resource Center's Linkages Program will have Respite Funds beginning in July. Respite funds may purchase services for caregivers who give regular care to frail seniors or adults with disabilities. Respite funds can be used to hire in-home care providers, pay for adult day care programs, temporary residential care or skilled nursing care. The services are to help primary caregivers take a break from their regular caregiving duties and prevent burnout or accidents. Families are not qualified if they are receiving respite care from another program. Linkages will give families information about caregiver resources and support groups. Call the Linkages Long Term Care Coordinator to learn if you can receive respite funds.

For more information, check online at www.humsenior.org and click on the **Caregiver Respite** link or call the Linkages Program at (707) 443-9747, ext. 272.

Medicare and Scooters

Nearly everyone has heard an advertisement for power scooters on the television or radio promising that Medicare will pay for a scooter. This may not always be true!

Here are the facts:

Due to fraud and abuse, Medicare has revised the way it decides whether or not it will pay for a scooter.

You and your physician must have a face-to-face evaluation and determine that you are not able to perform one or more of these activities in your home because of mobility problems: toileting, feeding, dressing, grooming, and bathing. These are called mobility related activities of daily living.

You must not be able to do these activities by using a cane, crutches, walker or manual wheelchair.

You must be able to safely use the scooter and be able to perform the activities by using the scooter.

A home evaluation will determine if you have enough strength to use the scooter to do these activities and that the scooter can be safely and effectively used in your home.

The results of your home evaluation and face to face evaluation with your doctor will determine whether or not Medicare will cover the cost of the scooter and whether or not Medicare will pay for additional options such as a joystick, lower seat options and other options.

If Medicare has recently paid for the same or similar item, such as a power wheelchair, it is unlikely that Medicare will cover the scooter. You can ask for an Advance Coverage Determination from Medicare after you have had your home and physician evaluation to find out if Medicare will cover the scooter before you order it.

You can call HICAP if you have questions at 444-3000.

Anne Conrad-Antoville manages HICAP for the Area1 Agency on Aging

Caregiver Quarterly is published every three months by Caregiver Services, a program of the Area 1 Agency on Aging. We welcome your comments. Please send letters and change of address notices to *CaregiverServices*, 434 7th Street, Eureka, CA 95501. You can also e-mail us at: caregiver@a1aa.org

Tips For Staying Cool This Summer

By Sean Jara—San Bernardino IHSS Public Authority

Summertime is here and the temperature is steadily rising. During this time of year, it is so important to take the correct steps to keep you, your family and pets safe from the heat.

- Drink plenty of fluids. Water is a natural coolant for your body, so be sure to drink water throughout the day even before you feel thirsty.
- Limit your use of beverages that contain alcohol or large amounts of sugar. These types of beverages can actually cause you to lose body fluid.
- Eat light meals that include salads, fruits and vegetables.
- Try to remain indoors, in an air-conditioned place. If your home does not have air conditioning you may try the shopping mall, public library, or movie theatre.
- Place damp cloths and ice packs around the face and neck areas.
- Wear lightweight, light colored, loose-fitting clothing.
- Check on your pets frequently and make sure they have plenty of fresh drinking water.
- Try to run errands early in the morning or in the late evening.
- Limit your physical activities.
- Attempt to stay in the shade as much as possible.
- Protect yourself from the sun by wearing hats, sunglasses and applying sunscreen of SPF 15 or higher.
- NEVER leave anyone or any pets in a closed, parked vehicle for any amount of time.

Caregiver Resource Library Book Review

It Takes More than Love, A Practical Guide to Taking Care of an Aging Adult

By: Anita G. Beckerman and Ruth M. Tappan
May 30, 2004 Review By: **A Customer** at **Amazon.com**

Caregiving is a hot topic in books and magazines these days, but usually only a couple of aspects of caregiving are addressed. This book covers everything: what to do day-to-day; how to care for yourself, too; how to deal with simple health issues; and how to find support outside your home. The presentation is so accessible--charts, lists, illustrations--so you can go right to the information you need on any given day. It's full of other people's stories, which made me feel like we all go through a lot of the same things. It helps you do what you need to do and at the same time recognize when you're taking on too much, and what to do then. The book also discusses more medical topics (incontinence, falling, foot care, medicines) in a way that's easy to read and makes problems less intimidating.



Tips and Tricks for Bed Baths

Bed baths are given in place of a tub or shower bath for people who are unable to bathe themselves.

Daily baths are usually unnecessary and not recommended for those with frail skin. If the person you care for is incontinent, it is necessary to cleanse the effected area at least once a day, but a daily *full* bath may not be needed.

For many people, it can be embarrassing to give or receive a bath from a caregiver. Please keep in mind that the person you care for's dignity needs to be respected as much as possible, but good hygiene is essential. As you prepare to bathe, let the person you care for know what you are about to do and encourage **him/her to participate as much as possible**.

How to Give a Bed Bath

- ✦ Use a mild soap (ie. Dove, Ivory, or baby soap)
- ✦ Fill a basin with warm water and place on a table next to the bed.
- ✦ Beginning with the head, wipe the patient's eyes, from the nose towards the ear, with an unlathered cloth.
- ✦ Lather the cloth and continue washing the face and neck.
- ✦ Rinse the washcloth and remove soapy residue from the skin; dry well.
- ✦ Bathe each arm separately.
- ✦ Rinse off soapy residue and dry.
- ✦ For a thorough hand washing, place the hand in the basin of water while washing it.
- ✦ Wash the chest, abdomen, each leg, and then feet, following the steps described for the upper body. Remember to wash off the soapy residue and dry each area well.
- ✦ Clean the genital area by folding the washcloth into a mitt and gently wiping area with a small amount of soapy water. Rinse away soapy residue and dry area.
- ✦ Help your loved one onto his or her side.
- ✦ Wash and dry the back.



Tips for Giving a Bed Bath

- ✦ Wear gloves if there is any chance that you might come in contact with blood, drainage, or other body fluids.
- ✦ Keep the person you care for covered during the bath except for the area you are cleaning. This helps keep them from getting chilled.
- ✦ Wash cleaner areas of the body first and the dirtier areas last to help reduce the spread of germs.
- ✦ Place a towel under the part of the body being washed. A towel will absorb any excess bath water and keep bed sheets dry.
- ✦ Wash and dry well between folds of the skin.
- ✦ Keep the washcloth wet, but not so wet that it drips.
- ✦ Remove all soap residue.
- ✦ Dry the skin after it has been rinsed.
- ✦ Replace the water if it cools during the course of the bath.
- ✦ Apply lotion to the skin after bathing to help restore moisture to the body.



Basic Hair Care

- ✦ Gently brush or comb hair to remove tangles.
- ✦ Lay plastic sheeting or towels over top part of the bed.
- ✦ Position the person you care for with head slightly over the edge of the bed, with pillows under neck and shoulders for support.
- ✦ Place a basin (or large bowl) beneath head on a table or chair.
- ✦ Use a pitcher or cup to moisten hair.
- ✦ Shampoo.
- ✦ Rinse using the pitcher or cup.
- ✦ Towel dry as much as possible.

TIP:

There are some dry shampoos available. (Ask your local drug store if they have any in stock.) These can be used between traditional washings, but should not replace them.

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CAREGIVERS' CORNER

Top 10 Ways for Caregivers to Spend Dollars Wisely **By Kris Maxham, Staff Writer, Caregiver.com**

Many caregivers grapple with financial choices that can allow them to continue providing care, support their loved one's needs and keep them safe. Here are some actual ways that caregivers have wisely invested their dollars:

1. An Adult Day Program to support the care receiver and allow the caregiver some respite or the ability to stay employed.
2. Durable medical equipment such as bath benches, safety bars, raised toilet seats or portable commodes.
3. ID or medical alert bracelets especially for those with dementia or chronic medical conditions.
4. A personal emergency response system (PERS) to summon help when the caregiver is out of the home.
5. Home delivered meals to support the nutritional needs of both the caregiver and the care receiver.
6. Personal care attendant to accompany the caregiver and their loved one to weddings, reunions, meetings or parties.
7. Weekly house-keeping services and chore services for lawn care, snow removal and repairs.
8. Personal wandering alarm, home alarm or door alarms to support the safety of a loved one who may wander.
9. A lawyer to assist with questions, prepare legal papers and get personal affairs in order.
10. Use of in-home or group respite programs to allow time for personal needs or time to attend a local caregiver support and education group.

There are many options available to support the role of the caregiver. Spending dollars where they will matter the most can be the key to a caregiver's capacity to endure and to the well-being of the care receiver.