

# Share the Care Network Newsletter



Spring 2010

[www.sharethecarenetwork.com](http://www.sharethecarenetwork.com)

## I'm Awfully Well For The Shape I'm In—A Poem

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*There's nothing whatever the matter with me; I'm just as healthy as I can be.*

*I have arthritis in both of my knees; and when I talk, I talk with wheeze, My pulse is weak, and my blood is thin,*

*But I'm awfully well for the shape I'm in.*

*Arch supports I have for my feet, Or I wouldn't be able to walk on the street.*

*Sleep is denied night after night, and every morning I look a sight.*

*My memory is failing; my head is in a spin,*

*But I'm awfully well for the shape I'm in.*

*The moral is, as this tale was to unfold,*

*That for you and me are growing old,*

*It's better to say, "I'm fine" with a grin,*

*Than to let them know the shape we're in.*

*-Author unknown-*



*A weekly visit with Sophie G.*

When I read this poem, I could relate to it, not in a personal way, but relate from the role of a working caregiver.

I visit daily and weekly with many elderly people in their homes. Most are living alone in their homes, yet it is by their choice, because they want to preserve their independent living for as long as they can. And it is that freedom I see that keeps their self-esteem in tact.

Naturally, there are days when I visit they are not in great spirits. That is expected. But if we remember the phrase "I'm awfully well for the shape I'm in," it would change negative thinking which turns to serious depression.

When I visit Sophie, she makes *me* smile. She's always happy telling me funny stories of her days living in Brooklyn, New York before coming California. I know she's has difficult days, but she keeps on smiling. Me too!

*~Shirley Polk~*

Share the Care Network is a in-home health care service providing independent living solutions for the elderly and resources for the caregiver:

- *In-home caregivers and companionship service.*
- *Transportation needs for elderly.*
- *Respite care for family caregivers.*
- *Online internet base caregiver registry. [www.MyPrivateCaregiver.com](http://www.MyPrivateCaregiver.com) ©*
- *First Aid and CPR training classes. [www.OneHeartCPR.com](http://www.OneHeartCPR.com) ©*

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## Share the Care Network and One Heart CPR Joins the LACRC Resource Guide



We are happy to announce that Share the Care Network and One Heart CPR First Aid Training are listed in the Los Angeles Caregiver Resource Center (LACRC) 2010-2011 Resource Guide. Copies of this resource guide is available at our office.

The LACRC is a non-profit organization of University of Southern California (USC) Andrus Gerontology Center. The mission of LACRC is to help families and communities master the caring for person with brain impairing conditions, such as Alzheimer disease and other dementias, stroke, Parkinson's disease.

Share the Care Network has been active in and a supporter of the LACRC programs within the community of Los Angeles. Some services that we do not provide I ask you refer to this guide first. You will find a plethora of information. For more information on LACRC go to their we site [www.losangelescrg.org](http://www.losangelescrg.org).

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## Primary Caregivers are “Care Managers”

Rather than trying to do everything themselves, most caregivers of an ill or elderly loved one eventually learns to be successful “care managers.” Those who don’t delegate various tasks through taking advantage of services offered by their community, friends, or other family members usually suffer extreme stress. Caregivers can burn out quickly. Many actually become ill themselves.

Primary caregivers must not isolate or take on all the care giving chores single handedly. The results can be devastating for everyone in-

involved — especially the care recipients. A primary caregiver is usually the spouse or adult child of a loved one needing help with the activities of daily living. He or she makes the important decisions regarding the care, is generally closest to the care recipient, and therefore knows the care recipient the best.

The primary caregiver is most likely the one who has been given Full Durable Power of Attorney and has been named in the loved one’s Health Care Directive as the one to make decisions if the patient is unable to do

so. In other words, the primary caregiver is definitely the advocate for their loved one. However, it is often difficult for primary caregivers to realize that doesn’t mean they have



to do everything for their loved ones themselves. Delegating certain tasks can help maintain



## May is Stroke Awareness

The month of May is National Stroke Awareness Month, an annual event held within the United States. The aim of National Stroke Awareness Month is to make Americans aware that they may be able to ‘Save A Life’ of a person experiencing a stroke.

The National Stroke Awareness Month is run by the **National Stroke Association** who help individuals ‘Save A Life’ by educating them about:

- Stroke risk factors

- Stroke symptoms
- Stroke preventative measures

National Stroke Awareness Month is also a timely reminder of stroke survivors and how organizations such as the **National Stroke Association** supports stroke survivors through their lifelong journey of recovery.

The National Stroke Awareness Month program places emphasis on making the public aware about **Acting FAST**.

According to the **National Stroke Association**, a person experiencing a stroke can be treated if people have acted FAST - 80% of strokes can also be prevented.

**FAST** being an acronym for things to check in a suspected stroke victim:

- **F - Face** / Does the face droop on one side when the person smiles?
- **A - Arm** / After raising both arms, does one of the arms drift downwards?
- **S - Speech** /After repeating a simple phrase, does the persons speech sound slurred or strange?
- **T - Time** / If any or all of the above

## Spring Flowers Between Pages

A colorful garden is a beauty to the eye. I’ve noticed around my neighborhood a plethora of garden flowers. Thanks in part to the unusual rainy winter season you will see colors that explode like a painting on a canvas.

If you can’t plant in your garden, let the garden come to you. There are plenty of books that have beautiful photos of flower gardens and flora arrangements. Garden

flower books have all the beauty of a visual garden without the bugs! Visit your local library or local book store like Barnes Noble or Borders.



If you are daring to dig in your garden, be careful not to over do it. Strain on muscles not used all winter will ache. So work in moderation and take occasional breaks while bending. Consider a flower pot garden. They are easy on you back.

