



The gardens at Margaret Wagner Apartments

Benjamin Rose today!

HELPING PEOPLE AGE SUCCESSFULLY Vol. 4, No. 1

Partnership Reaches Out to Elders in Need

Benjamin Rose has teamed up with the Western Reserve Area Agency on Aging (WRAAA) in a partnership that could result in more than \$2 million in transitional assistance with medication costs for lower income homebound seniors in greater Cleveland. This is part of the Access to Benefits Coalition initiative funded by the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services and the National Council on the Aging.

Many seniors may qualify for up to \$1,200 toward the cost of their prescriptions in 2004 and 2005 and not be aware of this opportunity.

Through the Medicare-approved Drug Discount Card Outreach and Enrollment Campaign, Benjamin Rose will contact consumers of WRAAA and their 28 home-delivered meal providers in Cuyahoga, Lake, Lorain, and Medina counties to educate and enroll eligible individuals in the drug discount card program. The proactive telephone-based enrollment component of the project will target those consumers whose incomes are below roughly \$19,000 (individual) or \$25,000 (couple) and who are not participating in Medicaid. These seniors may qualify for the \$600 per year of transitional assistance. There is no asset-based eligibility requirement.

Informational materials about the drug discount cards will be distributed to about 5,000 consumers through the home-delivered meal providers and service coordinators in low-income senior housing. According to Sharen Eckert, Vice President for Advocacy and Public Policy Development at Benjamin Rose, an estimated 2,500 individuals will be enrolled in the drug discount program with transitional assistance thanks to this partnership.

"These individuals might not otherwise have access to this important information and assistance," said Eckert, adding that the outreach

(continued inside)

From the desk of Richard Browdie

As the old saying goes, when it rains it pours. And, sometimes that's a good thing. Things have been busy, and they are going to get busier, as some of our efforts to move ahead begin to pay off. As noted elsewhere in this news-



Richard Browdie

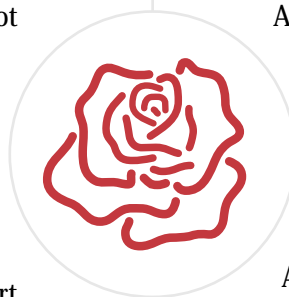
letter, Benjamin Rose and the Western Reserve Area Agency on Aging have been awarded a grant to assist in the provision of assistance with applications to homebound older people who may be eligible for up to \$1,200 in benefits during the first two years of Medicare's new pharmaceutical assistance program.

In more good news, we have been notified that Benjamin Rose will be one of 14 grantees in the country to be a part of a new initiative of the Administration on Aging to develop collaborations among community-based aging service providers,

Area Agencies on Aging, and managed care companies to explore ways to improve access to and coordination of services for older consumers and their families enrolled in managed care systems. This collaboration, convened by Benjamin Rose and involving the Western Reserve Area Agency on Aging, Anthem Blue Cross/Blue Shield, and MetroHealth Systems, will focus first on improving access to an innovative care consultation and counseling model of services for family members caring for victims of Alzheimer's disease.

In the upcoming months, we will begin work with other community partners to plan events

(continued inside)



Technology Grant for Mental Health Program

With a grant awarded by the Cuyahoga County Mental Health Board (CCCMHB), the Benjamin Rose Mental Health Program will purchase laptop computers for line staff and upgrades for other MH staff who need computers but do not carry them into the field. The Mental Health program serves more than 240 older adults who live in their own homes, group homes, or nursing homes.

All of the individuals served have mental health problems such as depression, schizophrenia, bipolar disorder, and anxiety.

The laptops will help the Mental Health staff deal more efficiently and effectively with the necessary documentation, which has increased significantly over the 13 years of the program. These state-of-the-art laptops will not only improve documentation, they also will increase resources and skills. Bert Rahl, Assistant Director of Mental Health at Benjamin Rose, envisions multiple opportunities including ready access to reference materials, client education materials, mental health diagnostic information, medication information, as well as mechanisms to increase productivity with documentation.

Thank You for Your Generous Support!

Every gift, whether unrestricted, restricted, or made in memory or tribute, is important to Benjamin Rose's ability to deliver quality services to greater Cleveland's elderly population. We extend our sincere appreciation to the following donors for their gifts received from June 12 through September 22, 2004.

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Benjamin Rose now accepts donations online through a secure process using a check or credit card. Simply visit www.benrose.org/donation, enter the amount you'd like to give, and proceed to the secure online donation form. You will be able to print a receipt for your records.

Donations can also be accepted over the telephone using a check or credit card by calling The Development Office at 216.373.1607.

Donations are tax-deductible and support the many services provided by Benjamin Rose to older adults and their families.



FALL 2004 Volume 4, No. 1

Benjamin Rose today! is published by the Institutional Advancement division of Benjamin Rose.

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Browdie (continued from front)

contributing to the recently announced White House Conference on Aging, scheduled for October of 2005. And look for announcements of the continuation of our educational offerings from the results of the Margaret Blenkner Research Institute. I guess you could say we are doing what we can to keep the rain coming.

Partnership (continued from front)

effort is part of Benjamin Rose's increasing focus on advocacy regarding issues affecting older adults. Many seniors may qualify for up to \$1,200 toward the cost of their prescriptions in 2004 and 2005 and not be aware of this opportunity. Everyone reading this article is encouraged to think of seniors who may be eligible and advocate for their pursuing this opportunity before December.

Celebrating Sidney Katz

Friends, family and colleagues got together September 8 to honor Dr. Sidney Katz and celebrate his 15th anniversary as Distinguished Scholar in Benjamin Rose's Margaret Blenkner Research Institute.

Tagged *Celebrating a Legacy with Laughter and Love*, the event gave guests the opportunity to talk about the impact Dr. Katz has had on their lives and careers.

Included among the guest speakers were several prominent gerontologists who count Dr. Katz as a mentor, an inspiration, and a friend. Dr. Catherine Hawes of Texas A&M University served as mistress of ceremonies. Offering testimonials that ranged from poignant to humorous were Dr. Katz's wife of 58 years, Beverly Katz; son and granddaughter, James and Abra Katz; Dr. Barry Gurland of Columbia University; Dr. Bill Spector of the federal Agency on Healthcare Research and Quality; Dr. Vince Mor of Brown University; Sister Jane Firestone; and Dr. Charles Phillips of Texas A&M.



Guests viewed a timeline highlighting the many and varied accomplishments of Dr. Katz's more than 50-year career.

Professor Emeritus of Geriatric Medicine and Co-director of the Stroud Center on Scientific Studies of Quality of Life at Columbia University College of Physicians and Surgeons, Dr. Katz has been an advisor to U.S. and world leaders, is a lifetime member of the National Academy of Sciences' Institute of Medicine, and received the Bronze Star for his service in the Korean War. He is listed in *Who's Who in Health Care*, received the Foundation for Health in Aging's Lifetime of Caring Award, and has been honored by dozens of organizations.

Dr. Katz is particularly well-known in the gerontological community as the developer of the Activities of Daily Living — or ADL — assessment, which continues to be a primary tool to determine independence in older adults more than 40 years after it was introduced. In a lighthearted spoof of this notable achievement, Dr. Phillips presented a videotape of a mock interview with Dr. Katz suggesting the idea for ADLs came from space aliens.



Beverly and Sidney Katz enjoy the presentation held in his honor.

Friends and colleagues were invited to write messages to Dr. Katz to be placed in a Book of Memories presented at the September 8 event. Here's a sampling:

- Despite your busy schedule, you were never too busy to provide guidance, advice, and friendship whenever it was appropriate.
- I know of no better physician than Sid Katz — at once thoughtful, kind, patient, and wise. Intelligent, careful, detail-oriented, creative.
- Our family was one of the fortunate few who were part of your family practice. You set a standard of care and caring that was truly remarkable.
- You demonstrate every day that the quality of life is reflected by the effort that one puts into it, not by what one gets out of it.
- In addition to his professional achievements, Dr. Katz is a wonderful human being who always has time for a kind word and smile.
- The stories he tells about himself and Mrs. Katz are funny and sweet and charming and the loving partnership between the two of them is something to which many of us aspire.
- I am ever inspired by your never-ending capacity to grow, both personally and professionally.
- You have been and continue to be an ideal model for demonstrating that one can make important contributions to the field of gerontology and have an extremely successful career without sacrificing personal integrity and a genuine concern and kindness for others.
- Not everyone may know that my kind, loving, and intellectual uncle set a marvelous example for me, from my youth, of the pleasures of practical jokes, the earliest example being his dropping water balloons down on customers of his parents' store!!

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findings
A NEWSLETTER OF THE
MARGARET BLENKNER RESEARCH INSTITUTE
Fall 2004

Save the Date!
Community Forum on
**Building Bridges to Improve Work
Settings for Direct Care Workers
and Their Supervisors**

Wednesday, December 8, 2004
8:30 to 11 a.m.

Kresge Room, Kethley House,
11900 Fairhill Road

Call 216.373.1674
for registration information

Building Bridges to Improve Work Settings for Direct Care Workers and Their Supervisors

Introducing direct care workers

Most older people who need regular assistance with activities of daily living receive help from family members. When family members are not available to help, or are unable to provide the help necessary, older adults often seek assistance from paid caregivers, in their own homes from *home health workers, homemakers, or personal care attendants* or in nursing homes from *state-tested nursing assistants*.

The help direct care workers provide is essential to the health and well-being of older adults who can't manage to complete activities of daily living on their own. These workers assist with personal care such as bathing and dressing, health tasks such as changing dressings or monitoring vital signs, and household help with laundry, meal preparation, and other tasks. In fact, many home care clients couldn't continue to live in their own homes without routine help from home care providers. When an older adult moves to a nursing home, nursing assistants become an essential part of that person's life.

Yet direct care workers are among the lowest paid employees in the health care industry. On average, they earn about \$8 an hour with few, if any, employee benefits. Most are single women who are raising children and struggling to pay the bills each month. Many must rely on public transportation to get them to and from work.

Why would someone continue to labor at a job that does not pay well and is

not widely understood or respected?

Most say they love helping residents and want to ensure that these older adults are well taken care of. Many have cared for older parents or grandparents and like being caregivers. Some see their job as a "calling."

A crisis ahead

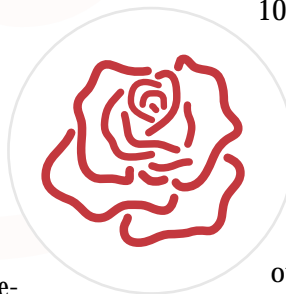
By 2030, one in five Americans will be elderly compared with one in eight in 1994. Those 85 and older are projected to be the fastest growing part of the elderly population. In Cuyahoga County there are now more than 46,000 people aged 65 and over who report a disability that keeps them homebound. The number of homebound older people in the county will continue to grow and so will their need for assistance. Who will care for them in the coming years?

Some experts anticipate a crisis in the long-term workforce that requires immediate action. With better opportunities elsewhere, fewer people are choosing to work in long-term care even though job skill require-

ments are minimal. Some long-term care service providers do not even require a high school diploma, and the State of Ohio only requires 75 hours of entry-level training to become a state-tested nursing assistant. In contrast, veterinary technicians are required to enroll in a two- to four-year training program, and successfully complete a state exam in order to become licensed.



Inadequate entry-level and ongoing training, low wages, few or no benefits, poor supervision, lack of recognition, and occupational hazards such as exposure to communicable diseases and on-the-job injuries, pose major threats to the successful recruitment and retention of direct care workers. Ageist attitudes and a poor public image discourage young people from seeking jobs in the field. It's not surprising that the turnover rate among some direct care workers exceeds 100% annually. The high cost of replacing such workers is only one consequence of this situation. Constant staff changes significantly disrupt the continuity and quality of care and lower the morale of other staff.



Supervision:

A key to job satisfaction

Over the last 15 years, Benjamin Rose's Margaret Blenkner Research Institute has interviewed hundreds of nursing assistants and home health workers as part of the Institute's ongoing studies of direct care workers in home care and nursing home positions.

In one recently completed Benjamin Rose study, nursing assistants described the qualities they value most in their supervisors: a respectful attitude, fair-mindedness, and an appreciation for the work they do. But they were frustrated by inadequate job orientations, lack of mentoring, and inadequate continuing education. Lack of respect from residents' families, problems handling challenging behaviors, emotional disorders of residents, and frequent work-related injuries added to their job dissatisfaction.

In the same study, nursing supervisors were unanimous in saying that they had no formal training to become supervisors and had to learn supervisory skills on the job. Nursing homes and other long-term care facilities struggle to educate

facilities, home care agencies, and nursing homes in Cuyahoga, Lake, Medina, Lorain, and Geauga counties will be invited to participate in this study. Interviews of over 900 direct care workers and 150 supervisors will take place over the next few months.

Project investigators are Drs. Farida Ejaz and Linda Noelker. Dr. Ejaz notes, "By identifying the competencies and types of training that direct care workers and their supervisors in these different settings want, we can work with local organizations to translate the research findings into training programs that are more responsive to their needs." The objective of this research is to ensure that today's and tomorrow's older adults have well-trained workers who are committed

The help direct care workers provide is essential to the health and well-being of older adults who can't manage to complete activities of daily living on their own.

their nurses, but tight budgets and staff shortages make attending educational seminars on management topics all but impossible.

Initiatives to improve jobs

Benjamin Rose's Margaret Blenkner Research Institute continues to take a leading role in national and local initiatives to improve working conditions for workers and supervisors in home care, assisted living, and nursing home settings. Earlier this year, the Institute launched a two-year research project with funds from the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation and Atlantic Philanthropies and support from the Institute for the Future of Aging Services under the auspices of the American Association of Homes and Services for the Aged (AAHSA).

This project will build on the Institute's earlier research on how the job satisfaction and commitment of direct care workers are affected by the entry-level and continuing training these workers receive. Supervisors of direct care workers employed in a sample of assisted living

to providing the highest quality of care that will improve the daily lives of those they care for.

This innovative research complements the efforts of the Long-Term Care Workforce Subcommittee of the Senior Success Vision Council that is working to improve the recruitment and retention of the direct care workforce in Cuyahoga County. With support from United Way, The Cleveland Foundation and other area foundations, local agencies and educational institutions are collaborating to improve entry-level training for direct care workers, create career ladders, improve their public image, and advocate on their behalf to improve wages and benefits.

All these efforts at the local and national level have one overarching goal: to ensure that direct care workers are well-trained, respected, and committed to the quality of care they provide. In turn, quality care will improve the quality of life of our seniors and ensure a better future for the increasing numbers of elderly people in our population.

Internet Resources

The following links provide additional information and resources regarding the direct care workforce.

National Clearinghouse on the Direct Care Workforce

Provides information resources needed to effect change in industry practice, public policy, and public opinion.
www.directcareclearinghouse.org

What Makes for Good Working Conditions for Nursing Home Staff: What Do Direct Care Workers Have to Say?

A report by the Nursing Home Community Coalition of New York State (NHCC), June 2003.
www.nhccnys.org/documents/WorkingConditionsBooklet_000.pdf

Institute for the Future of Aging Services

A policy research institute housed within the American Association of Homes and Services for the Aging. Includes "Developing a Quality Workforce" for long-term care, and links to other sites. The institute also manages the Better Jobs Better Care project which is a \$15.5 million research and demonstration program designed to achieve changes in long-term care policy and practice that help to reduce high vacancy and turnover rates among direct care staff.
www.futureofaging.org and www.bjbc.org

LEAP

(Learn. Empower. Achieve. Produce)
A comprehensive workforce development program for nurses and certified nurse assistants working in long term care sponsored by MatherLifeways
www.matherlifeways.com/LEAP

Nursing Assistant Resources On The Web

A Web site created by direct care workers, for direct care workers. Includes links to other useful sites.
www.nursingassistants.net/

National Association of Geriatric Nursing Assistants

Organization committed to the idea that high quality care to elders is achieved by elevating the professional standing and performance of the caregivers.
www.nagna.org/

We Depend on You!

As a nonprofit organization, Benjamin Rose relies on the generosity of individuals like you to further its mission of advancing the health, independence, and dignity of older adults by raising the standards for quality of care. Please consider making a donation today!

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Taking Charge of Care

The second community forum sponsored this year by Benjamin Rose's Margaret Blenkner Research Institute opened a dialogue on promoting the successful use of community services by older adults and their families. *Taking Care, Taking Charge: Making the Best Life Possible for Older Adults and Their Families* was held at Kethley House on July 28. More than 60 professionals and other interested individuals attended.

The forum brought together researchers, practitioners, and consumers to discuss the successful use of services and resources designed to help older adults and their families cope with chronic illness and care. Speakers — including Dr. David Bass, Director of the Research Institute; Sharen Eckert, Vice President, Advocacy and Public Policy Development for Benjamin Rose; and Diane Graham, Family Caregivers Respite Coordinator for the Cleveland Area Chapter of the Alzheimer's Association — described ways care managers, care consultants, and consumers plan strategies to meet needs and enable older adults to continue to live at home. A care manager and caregiver from the PASSPORT program of the Western Area Agency on Aging shared their personal experiences, and



Sharen Eckert, Vice President, Advocacy and Public Policy Development for Benjamin Rose, discusses barriers to service use.

findings from Benjamin Rose research shed some light on ways to find and use services and resources in the community.

While these services and resources can provide invaluable assistance when accessed, current use is less than optimal. Participants in the forum discussed ways to empower older adults and their families to overcome common barriers to service use, such as consumers' negative beliefs about services, providers' mistrust of other service organizations, and lack of knowledge about service availability.

The next community forum, *Building Bridges to Improve Work Settings for Direct Care Workers and Their Supervisors*, is scheduled for December 8, 2004. (Please note change in date from earlier published materials.)

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