Representatives from leading national aging organizations and agencies convened in Minneapolis, Minnesota, on July 21 to honor the 2009 winners of the National Family Caregiving Awards, sponsored by the National Alliance for Caregiving and MetLife Foundation. The event recognized community-based programs supporting family caregivers of older adults, rewarding innovation, effectiveness, and responsiveness to caregiver needs.

It is amazing to learn about so many diverse and effective programs around the country that support and educate family caregivers in their communities. The programs provide critical help for caregivers especially during these difficult economic times when the time and expense of caregiving are so challenging for so many.

We’re pleased to announce this year’s award winners are:

- Services and Advocacy for GLBT Elders (SAGE) of New York, NY, for the SAGE Caregiver Program, the only program in the country specifically designed to meet the complete care and support needs of LGBT caregivers, who are often marginalized from mainstream service and support;

- The Pro-Bono Counseling Project of Baltimore, MD, for the Caring for Caregiver programs that link low-income, uninsured caregivers with licensed mental health professionals to persons living with cancer, Alzheimer’s, and multiple sclerosis among others;

- James Madison University in Harrisonburg, VA, for its Caregivers Community Network, which recruits and trains community volunteers and students to provide respite and companion care services to families caring for frail elderly;

- The Copper Ridge Institute in Sykesville, MD, for its Dementia Skills Training for the Home Caregiver, an innovative educational program available in English and Spanish, designed to be sensitive to the needs of the caregiver and patient;

- DARTS in Minneapolis, MN, for its Workplace Eldercare Seminars, which support caregivers in the workplace with education and resources bringing confidence to the caregiver, better work-life understanding to the employer, and a needed spotlight on aging and caregiving;

- The Community Action Program East Central Oregon, in Pendleton, OR, for Native Caring, a Native American Caregiver training conference that provides workshops and activities integrally tied to spiritual, physical, and mental needs;
• Lifespan, Al Sigal Center, and the ARC of Monroe County, all based in Rochester, NY, collaborated to create Future Care Planning Services, which provides comprehensive life care planning services to assure peace of mind for caregivers while providing autonomy for people with disabilities;

• MemoryCare of Asheville, NC, for an integrated programs caregivers with a fuller understanding and greater capability to managed their loved one’s dementia;

• Alzheimer’s Foundation of America (AFA) of New York City for AFA Teens, an Alzheimer’s disease online resource offering direct interaction with teens living with families affected by Alzheimer’s disease.

Nonprofit organizations from around the country competed for the National Family Caregiving Awards in the categories of caregiver support and education, either as a small or large community. Applicants were judged by a panel of caregiving experts and awarded $25,000 to continue their support for caregivers. We are all inspired by the work being done to support family caregivers and are honored to work with the MetLife Foundation to shine the spotlight on these excellent programs.

The need to strengthen families in their caregiving roles and to sustain them, as the backbone of our chronic care and long-term care system is essential as our government develops comprehensive health care reform. The excellent work being done by these organizations inspires us all to achieve more and do more. Given the expected growth of older adults coping with complex health conditions, rapidly rising health care costs, and a projected budget deficit for many years, there is an urgent need to promote access to high quality, cost-effective and efficient services.

Providing family members with these training programs and support services will be vital if we are to implement a streamlined and high quality plan of care for older Americans living with multiple chronic care conditions. That’s why we’ve been leading the charge to lawmakers to include chronic care coordination models in Medicare, such as community health teams. Because of the lack of care coordination and poor payment mechanisms, Medicare is plagued with high rates of preventable chronic conditions, and their complications – resulting in avoidable hospital admissions and readmissions. Spending on patients with one or more chronic diseases now represents more than 75 percent of total spending on health care in the U.S, even more than Medicare and Medicaid combined.

Family caregivers understand the importance of chronic health coordination. We will continue to underscore the importance of these issues to lawmakers as they debate health care reform in the months ahead. We look forward to working with you on these issues on behalf of family caregivers throughout the nation.

Sincerely,

Gail Gibson Hunt
President & CEO
National Alliance for Caregiving
Coalition News

United Way of Morris County will host its Caregivers Recognition Breakfast in November: This year the Coalition members decided to increase their advocacy efforts. Because of this, Congressman Frelinghuysen will be the featured guest at the breakfast honoring caregivers. Morris County Freeholders have also been invited. United Way will share with the Congressman and County Freeholders issues faced by caregivers across the lifespan. United Way will also be hearing from Congressman Frelinghuysen and his thoughts and positions on legislation that may impact caregivers and their loved ones. The goals are to:

- Increase awareness of the role and needs of caregivers across the lifespan
- Recognize caregivers for their vital role
- Strengthen the relationship between the Caregivers Coalition of Morris County and our elected officials
- Educate our elected officials on the number and needs of Morris County caregivers

For more information, contact Lori Rubin: lori.rubin@uwmorris.org or 973.993.1160, x139

Southwestern Ohio, First Annual Caregiver Empowerment Conference will host this two-day program on October 14-15, at the Manor House Conference Center in Manson Ohio. The event will include programs and workshops for every type of caregiver, family caregivers, social workers, nurses, friends, recreational therapists and anyone who is recognizing the complexities of life that arise when a family member or friend needs help as they age. The conference will provide information and workshops on – getting information and tips to help family members balance the ups and downs of caregiving; learn what it means to age in place, and what about community resources; hear from experts on topics including, safety, dementia, Alzheimer’s, emergency preparedness, long-term care, nutrition, and estate planning. For more information about the conference, please visit, http://www.help4seniors.org/event-detail.asp?=1008, or www.help4seniors.org

The Family Support Center of New Jersey and the Family Resource Network will host its “National Caregivers Conference,” October 29 from 8 am to 4 pm in Iselin, New Jersey, on Changing the Face of Caregiving. Workshop descriptions include: “What Will Happen to My Child When I am Gone?” “Blended Families: Combining Households and Caregiving Responsibilities,” “You Can Get Organized, While Caring for A Loved One,” “Financial Steps for Caregivers” and “Healthcare Insurance, Medicaid, SSI and Waiver Services.” These are just a few of the workshops available. For more information, please visit, www.njcaregivers.org/content/events/calendar/view_all.php Also, you may contact, Jacqui Moskowitz 1-800-372-6510, or, Jacqui.moskowitz@fscnj.org

If you would like to share information about the creation of your caregiving coalition or other information about your coalition’s activities, please email Jordan Green: Jordan@caregiving.org
State Legislative Update

Arkansas: Arkansas Alzheimer’s Project:

Legislation was enacted (originally, HB 1014) to establish a task force on the effect of Alzheimer’s on residents in the state. The task force would consist of at least one family caregiver and would be responsible for creating strategies and programs to mobilize state resources to assist families impacted by Alzheimer’s disease.

Illinois: Kinship Navigator Program

A bill has been introduced in the Illinois State Assembly (HB 2365) to provide grants for nonprofit organizations to develop a Kinship Navigator Program which would serve as a liaison among state agencies and groups for individuals looking for resources, services, and help with benefit counseling, respite care services, crisis care, transportation needs, nutrition services, mental health programs and other supports and services. The bill also specifies that services should be provided for grandparents who are responsible for children.

Maine: Long-Term Care Needs of Seniors and Disabled

Legislation (LD 400) was enacted to expand long-term care services based on recommendations by the Blue Ribbon Commission to Study Long-Term Home-based Needs Study. The new law would increase funding for homes and community-based services, including consumer-driven programs, in order to reduce waiting lists. The measure also requires government agencies to develop a unified budget for the delivery of long-term care to elders and disabled adults, and to develop a comprehensive, systematic approach to training and providing reimbursement and benefits for direct-care workers.

Minnesota: Respite Care Services

Legislation (SB 1842) was enacted to provide grants to nonprofit organizations to establish statewide lifespan respite care programs for caregivers who live with their care recipient. Eligible organizations must be able to operate on a statewide basis and have expertise in respite care services and issues. The bill would also require lifespan respite care programs to develop best practice guidelines and training curriculum for caregivers.

Pennsylvania: Compensation on Needs Basis for Family Caregivers

Legislation was enacted (HB 826) to increase the amount of reimbursement for family caregivers who meet the qualifications under the state’s Family Caregiver Support Act. Family caregivers whose household income is under the 200 percent of the federal poverty threshold would be eligible for up to $600 per month for out-of-pocket caregiving expenses, and a one-time $6,000 payment for home modifications or assistive devices.
California: Budget Cuts

Governor Schwarzenegger signed a package of bills aimed at closing $23.3 billion gap in CA budget. Cuts of $394 million are to come out of the health and human services programs, including the Child Welfare Services Program, the Healthy Families Program, regional center services for children with developmental disabilities, adult day care programs, family caregiving resource programs, and $82.1 million in cuts from in-home support services for individuals with functional impairments.

These cuts hit especially hard, because in 2006, California became one of only five states to devote more than 50 percent of its’ MediCal spending for long-term care on home and community based services.

The state budget officials acknowledged that the cuts in these programs will adversely impact low-income seniors and people with disabilities. The state already reported a waiting list of 5,000 for in-home support services before this latest round of cuts.

If you would like to share information on legislation in your state, please contact Jordan Green: Jordan@caregiving.org

National Legislative Update

S. 1257 – Project 2020: Building on the Promise of Home and Community-Based Care, introduced by Senator Maria Cantwell (D-WA) and Senator Debbie Stabenow (D-MI) on June 12, 2009; referred to the Senate Finance Committee. The bill is designed to shift funds away from expensive nursing home care, by granting more funds for home and community-based care services. The measure also calls for the increased use of evidence-based disease prevention, and health promotion programs. The legislation is expected to save Medicare and Medicaid over $1.1 billion over 10 years by reducing the need for more expensive institutional care. Similar legislation has been introduced by Rep. Bruce Braley (D-IA) and John Sarbanes (D-MD), H.R. 2852. For more information, visit www.thomas.gov

S. 245—Retooling the Healthcare Workforce for an Aging America, introduced by Senator Herb Kohl (D-WI) on January 15, 2009; referred to the Senate Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions (HELP) Committee. The legislation was designed to expand education and training opportunities in geriatrics and long-term care for licensed health professionals, direct care workers and family caregivers in order to meet the needs of the growing older adult population. The bill permits state Medicaid programs to do an assessment of family caregivers’ needs and to provide referral to the appropriate services when he or she is caring for a Medicaid beneficiary who qualifies for home and community-based services. Companion legislation was introduced in the House by Rep. Jan Schakowsky (D-IL), H.R. 468 www.thomas.gov

The measure is designed to address the shortage of workers trained in caring for and working with older Americans by strengthening the recruitment and retention of geriatric health professionals, such as physicians, nurses, psychologists, social workers, and other geriatric care workers. The bill would also provide these professionals with loan forgiveness, career advancement opportunities for working in the field of geriatrics. The bill also establishes a Health and Long-Term Care Workforce Advisory Panel for an Aging America. For more information, visit, [www.thomas.gov](http://www.thomas.gov).

**S. 750—Caring for an Aging America**, introduced by Senator Barbara Boxer (D-CA) on March 31, 2009; referred to the Senate Finance Committee and Senate HELP Committee. The measure is designed to address the shortage of workers trained in caring for and working with older Americans by strengthening the recruitment and retention of geriatric health professionals, such as physicians, nurses, psychologists, social workers, and other geriatric care workers. The bill would also provide these professionals with loan forgiveness, career advancement opportunities for working in the field of geriatrics. The bill also establishes a Health and Long-Term Care Workforce Advisory Panel for an Aging America. For more information, visit, [www.thomas.gov](http://www.thomas.gov).

**H.R. 769 -- Social Security Caregiver Credit Act**, introduced by Rep. Nita Lowey (D-NY) on January 28, 2009; referred to the House Committee on Ways and Means. Like last year’s bill, the legislation would allow unpaid family caregivers to claim Social Security benefits as if they had worked for a wage (according to a specified formula) during each month they were engaged for at least 80 hours in providing care to a dependent relative, for up to five years of such service. [www.thomas.gov](http://www.thomas.gov).

**H.R. 1192 – Alzheimer’s Family Assistance Act**, introduced by Rep. Bernice Johnson (D-TX) on February 25, 2009; referred to the House Ways & Means Committee. The legislation provides an income tax credit, starting at $2,000 in 2009 and increasing each year until it reaches $3,500 in 2012 for family caregivers. The bill also includes a tax deduction for long-term care insurance premiums and requires additional consumer protections for LTC insurance policyholders. [www.thomas.gov](http://www.thomas.gov).

**S. 1131 – The Independence At Home Act**, introduced by Senator Ron Wyden (D-OR) on May 21, 2009; referred to the Senate Finance Committee. The measure is designed to provide a coordinated team-based approach to primary care for the chronically ill Medicare beneficiaries in their own home. The bill creates incentives for providers to develop better and lower cost health care for the highest cost beneficiaries – those with multiple chronic care illnesses. The bill would create a pilot program to provide in-home care starting off with a comprehensive health care assessment and needs assessment. The assessment will serve as a plan of care that is directed by the physician, nurse-practitioner, or physician’s assistant in collaboration with the patient and the patient’s family caregiver. Medication management and electronic medical records and the use of health information technology must be employed as part of the plan to reduce medical errors, improve patient care, and reduce costs. [www.thomas.gov](http://www.thomas.gov).

**S. 434 – Empowered At Home Act**, introduced by Senator John Kerry (D-MA) on February 13, 2009; referred to the Senate Finance Committee. The bill ensures that Medicaid spousal impoverishment protections available for couples in nursing homes are also made available to those who choose home and community-based services (HCBS). The bill also removes barriers and makes it easier for states to offer HCBS for Medicaid demonstration grants for evidence-based health promotion and disease prevention programs. The legislation also provides a $3,000 tax credit for caregivers caring for dependent family members. [www.thomas.gov](http://www.thomas.gov).

**H.R. 824 – Family and Medical Leave Enhancement Act of 2009**, introduced by Rep. Carolyn Maloney (D-NY) on February 3, 2009; referred to the House Education & Labor Committee and Committee on Oversight and Government Reform. The legislation would broaden the protections of the Family and Medical Leave Act to allow employees in companies with more than 25 employees to take family and
medical leave. Current law applies only to companies with 50 or more employees. The legislation would also provide up to 24 hours per year of unpaid Parental Involvement and Family Wellness leave, which would allow parents and grandparents to attend parent-teacher conferences, attend school activities, or take children, grandchildren, or parents to doctor appointments.

**News, Reports and Publications**

**Consumer Reports Launches Online Tool on Patient Satisfaction to Compare Hospitals**
The Consumer Federation of America’s (CFA) Consumer Reports’ has launched an online tool designed to provide patient satisfaction rating for more than 3,400 hospitals across the United States. CR’s new website, which will go live August 3, will make information that is available through CMS much user-friendly and easy to understand. Subscribers to www.ConsumerReportsHealth.org will be able to look up their hospitals to see how they rank. Consumer Reports’ team of statisticians and health experts analyzed government data to develop the new website’s ratings. The Health Ratings Center also integrated intensity of care rankings, revealing a link between patient satisfaction and intensity of care. The intensity of care rankings are based on data from the Dartmouth Atlas of Health Care and the Dartmouth Institute for Health Policy and Clinical Practice. For more information, visit www.ConsumerReportsHealth.org

**National Poll Shows Broad Support for Long-Term Care in Health Reform**
The National Omnibus Survey of Long-Term Care, conducted by Lake Research Partners on behalf of the SCAN Foundation, surveyed over 1,000 randomly selected adults (aged 18 and older) in June to gauge opinion on long-term care coverage and health reform. Results released on July 8 show that nearly eight in ten Americans believe health reform would benefit them personally if it included coverage for home and community-based long-term care services. The survey revealed that 79 percent of those are concerned about their ability to pay for long-term care services for themselves or a family member. For more information, visit www.scanfoundation.org

**CMS Announces New Website, Help Line for Expediting Review of Denials for COBRA**
The Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services announced a new website and help line July 17 where unemployed workers may request expedited review of a denial by their former employers of eligibility for COBRA premium assistance, according to a press release from the Department of Health and Human Services. The release said the requests would be reviewed by MAXIMUS Federal Services Inc., a subsidiary of MAXIMUS Inc., for expedited review of denials. MAXIMUS will make recommendations—subject to CMS's review—on whether individuals are eligible for health insurance premium assistance under the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act's (ARRA, PL. No. 111-5) expansion of COBRA continuation coverage.

COBRA is health insurance coverage that workers can elect to purchase after they lose coverage under an employer-sponsored plan. The ARRA provides a 65 percent subsidy for health insurance premiums, so that workers can retain coverage for themselves and their families. To ensure that the premium assistance is targeted at workers who are most in need, the subsidy generally will be available only to people whose income does not exceed $125,000 for individuals and $250,000 for families, the release said. These services will provide assistance by helping individuals request an expedited review of denial when an individual's former group health plan denies access to ARRA's premium assistance. The website is
available at [http://www.ContinuationCoverage.net](http://www.ContinuationCoverage.net) and the toll-free helpline is 1-866-400-6689 and is available from 8 a.m. to 8 p.m. EST.

**Tackling Chronic Care -- Value of Preventive Care Said Key Component of Achieving Health Reforms**

Citing the general push for health care reform legislation, a speaker at a July 8 conference said preventive care is a necessary component that should not be ignored. Steven H. Woolf, professor of family medicine at Virginia Commonwealth University, said that with $2.2 trillion spent annually on health care in the United States, the argument about whether preventive health care reduces costs is not the core issue that needs to be debated. Rather, the focus should be on how to get the most value for the money invested in preventing chronic disease, he said.

Woolf was keynote speaker for a conference held by the Center for Studying Health System Change (HSC) on “The Dollars and Sense of Prevention.” According to Woolf, 38 percent of all U.S. deaths are attributable to four behaviors: tobacco use, diet, physical inactivity, and alcohol misuse. Without preventive health care, not only is there more illness and morbidity, but also there is a drain on resources due to excess medical care for chronic diseases. For example, a recent HSC study in 2007 found that 39 percent of the working age population, almost 72 million people, is affected by chronic disease, up from 35 percent in 2003. According to figures provided by the Partnership for Prevention and cited by Woolf, some of the most cost-effective preventive services involve colorectal cancer screening, influenza immunization, cervical cancer screening, hypertension screening, and smoking cessation programs.

**Study Says Expanding Home Health Access Could Reduce Hospitalizations, Save Billions**

Early use of home health care services following a hospital stay by patients with at least one chronic disease saved Medicare $1.71 billion in a two-year period, according to a study released May 11 by a health care research company.

The study, which was conducted by Avalere Health, found that Medicare beneficiaries with diabetes, chronic obstructive pulmonary disease, or congestive heart failure that used home health care within three months of being discharged from a hospital cost the program $1.71 billion less than similar patients who used other forms of post-acute care over a two-year period. The study began in October 2008 and analyzed data from the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services from 2005 and 2006—the most current data available.

The study was sponsored by the Alliance for Home Health Quality and Innovation (AHHQI), a national consortium of leading home health groups. However, Avalere said it maintained sole discretion with regard to methods and interpretations of findings, and the authors were solely responsible for the content. The study concluded that just fewer than 13 percent of the Medicare cost savings was attributable to reductions in hospital readmissions. The rest of the savings were a result of home health acting as a substitute for more costly care settings. According to AHHQI, “the unrealized savings identified in this study could allow Medicare to save $31.1 billion over the next ten years by expanding access to home health for chronic disease patients.” The full report can be found at [http://www.avalerehealth.net/research/docs/20090508_AHHQI_Project_Results.pdf](http://www.avalerehealth.net/research/docs/20090508_AHHQI_Project_Results.pdf).
Resources, Events, and Opportunities

American Society on Aging Regional Conferences

The American Society on Aging (ASA) 2009 Regional Conferences on Aging, September 8-11 and September 21-24. The American Society on Aging is convening two regional conferences in September, a West Coast Conference on Aging in Oakland, California, from September 8-11 and an East Coast Conference on Aging in Philadelphia from September 21-24.

The conferences will host workshops focusing on topics such as: (for more information visit www.ASA.org)

- Aging In Place At Home
- Technologies that Support Aging In Place
- Working with Difficult, Angry, Older Clients
- Recognizing and Responding to Late Life Depression & Suicide
- Critical Legal Issues for an Aging Workforce
- Older Driver Safety and Transitions
- Best Practices in E-Mail Marketing for Nonprofits
- Finding Non-governmental Funding for Aging Programs

National Summit on Disability Policy, 2010

The National Council on Disability (NCD) will host a “Comprehensive Summit on Disability Policy, the ADA 1990-2010 Retrospective and Future Policy Directions” on July 25-July 27 at the Renaissance Hotel in Washington, D.C. For more information on the agenda and speakers, please visit: www.neweditions.net/ncd2010/index.html

Help in Understanding Medicare Part D Drug Benefits:

To help family caregivers and seniors navigate the Medicare Part D drug benefit program, KQED-TV (San Francisco) has produced for California Public Television “Medicare Forum – Making Sense of Medicare Part D.” The show is available online to all anyone. To view, visit, www.KQED.org.

Be Careful of Investment Scams Aimed At Seniors:

The North American Securities Administrators’ Association (NASSA) has launched a nationwide program to work with local regulators to combat what it sees as a rising tide of fraudulent investment scams being pitched to older Americans. In recent years, more and more investment seminars (known as “free lunch” seminars) are targeting older Americans; many of these seminars are using high-pressured sales techniques and promises of secure investments. As a first line of defense against investment fraud, visit NASSA’s website and look at the Senior Investor Resource Center. Here you will find tips on

[The Caregiving Exchange August 2009]
helping seniors and caregivers become informed and educated investors. Seniors remain scam artists top
targets, preying on their fears of outliving their savings, and offering unique and private investment
opportunities that are “too good to be true.” Visit
www.nassa.org/investor_education/senior_investor_resource_center
To find the top 10 tips to help older people and caregivers protect their nest eggs. You can also find
investor podcast seminars that allow you to learn about the newest scam schemes.

**American Society of Clinical Oncology Sponsors New Resource Site for Cancer Patients:**

The American Society of Clinical Oncology (ASCO) sponsors www.cancer.net, a helpful resource for
malignant mesothelioma patients and others battling cancer. Its offerings include on-line guides to over
120 types of cancer—including mesothelioma—as well as related syndromes, with information about the
disease, symptoms, diagnosis and treatment.

The website also features a series of helpful articles for cancer patients and their families, including tips
on the first steps to take when newly diagnosed with cancer; how to find an oncologist; managing the
potential side effects of treatment; information on clinical trials; coping with the physical and emotional
aspects of cancer; surviving cancer and caregiving issues. ASCO offers a free monthly news bulletin; you
can sign up to receive it by email on the website. For more information, go to www.cancer.net.

**Florida, Conference on Aging**

The 2009 Florida Conference on Aging (www.fcoa.org) will host a two day conference, August 24-26
that will offer workshops for nonprofit organizations and geriatric specialists. Workshops will include
breakout sessions on the:
- the Future of Adult Day Services;
- Assessments, Interventions, Referrals, and Treatment of Substance Abuse in Older Adults and Baby Boomers;
- Winning Strategies for Social Message Marketing for Non-Profits, and Senior Housing Developers;
- Influencing State and National Long-Term Care Policy
- Naturally Occurring Retirement Communities, A Model for Aging in Place

**CMS & NAC Coalition Conference Call**

The next quarterly CMS/NAC Coalition Network conference call will take place on
Wednesday, September 16 from 1-2PM EST.

**Call-in Information**

Date: Wednesday, September 16, 2009

Time: 1 to 2 p.m. (Eastern Time)

Toll-free phone number: 1-877-267-1577

Passcode: 746823
If you would like to share information about the creation of your caregiving coalition or other information about your coalition’s activities, please email Jordan Green: Jordan@caregiving.org