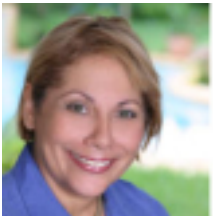


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Learning More About a Geriatric Care Manager

December 5, 2008 | Posted by: carol | Posted in: [Interviews](#) | Tagged: [boca raton](#), [care services](#), [florida](#), [geriatrics](#) —



A career associated with health care, Olga Brunner of [A Good Daughter](#) Elder Care Management, is a perfect example of what it takes to actively and positively provide excellent senior care service. By taking a *holistic approach* to elder care, Ms. Brunner maintains a niche boutique service that other companies are not able to channel. Carebuzz is extremely happy to sit down with Ms. Brunner and get some more insight on her business concepts and thoughts.

What is a Geriatric Care Manager (GCM)?

We are a consulting team of practitioners from disciplines such as nursing, social work, and gerontology, familiar with the resources and issues regarding senior care providing comprehensive services to elderly clients such as: Crisis intervention, geriatric assessment and care planning, medical care coordination, medication management, coordination of elder care services, home care information and referral, companion services, elder support and advocacy, household management, facility relocation assistance, ALF and nursing home monitoring, entitlement services, review of legal documents, disaster management preparation, and professional and community referrals to name a few.

When would a family member hire you, a Geriatric Care Manager?

Usually when a long distance family member visits a parent and finds prolonged illness, disability, or simply the challenges of aging which have started altering the lifestyle of their parents, making daily responsibilities difficult, we will usually get a telephone call from that adult child asking for efficient coordination of medical, personal and social service resources to improve the quality of life for that elder parent.

In what cases do elders living at home or independently - do not need professional caregivers?

I have a client right now that lives independently, still drives, cooks, visits friends, shops, pays bills, dresses herself, does laundry, plays cards, etc. As a high functioning 82 year old, she had a major MVA last year, suffering loss of consciousness and amnesia. She still does not remember how the accident occurred. Although her driver's test of last year warned that she should limit driving to her immediate vicinity, it did not restrict her license. Her two sons (one a doctor; the other an attorney) who both live out of town were concerned that she should have an emergency "go to" individual whom she could call in the event of an emergency, and contracted with A Good Daughter to conduct a comprehensive assessment and provide a plan of care going forward for her continued safety and to advocate for her with specific medical issues which concern them. They are very glad they called when they did. Last week she had her second MVA!

Elder care can be confusing to families because there are so many issues to deal with; what do you suggest families do to better prepare for caring for an aging relative - before a senior event occurs?

In most cases, we are called when a crisis has occurred necessitating hiring a seasoned professional with access to high-quality local services to help navigate them through a crisis. I suggest instead that long distance family members, who have a senior parent living alone, contact a professional and certified geriatric care manager long before the crisis occurs so a comprehensive assessment and care plan may be prepared long ahead and thus help prevent a future crisis. Our industry is a "people" service. Not everyone needing service connects with the first care manager that is interviewed. Families can go online to CareManager.org (our national association), do a search by zip code, and find several professional and certified care managers to choose from. As my client's son did with his mother — by setting up interviews he ultimately hired the care manager that best connected with his mother's personality before this most recent event occurred and they are so pleased that they found someone the mother trusts enough to call in an emergency. As our tag line says, *"When the Best matters, A Good Daughter knows. Professionals who care enough to do their very Best!"*

In what direction do you see elder care going in the next 5-10 years, especially in Florida and the Southeast United States?

Future trends for the industry may involve care managers working for elder law attorneys, employee assistance programs of large corporations, and banking and financial institutions providing care management to their depositors. Long term care insurers now hire GCMs for their assessment needs. According to Business and Health Magazine, each year 12% of full time employees switch to part time employment or drop out of the workforce to become family caregivers. In the near future, eldercare will replace child care as the number one dependent care issue. Employers lose the service of employees due to caregiving needs which are rising. Caregiving costs are estimated to be in the range of 29 to 33 billion dollars currently and costs to employers are expected to increase dramatically in the next five years.

Elder care is an employee/depositor benefit that banks can take a leadership role in providing. Banks already have a role in financial abuse of elders preventing their exploitation. It would therefore make sense for banks to provide toll free assessments of elders and caregivers needs; provide analysis of service options; provide information and referrals for caregivers; and develop strategies for care coordination, and management of care and services provided using geriatric care managers. Some banks have already developed elder care programs for their depositors. Presently there is a pilot program in Minneapolis using elder care professionals to help banks help their older depositors to live independently as long as possible. It is a very natural win-win for everybody. As the baby boomer population ages, the future is wide open with possibilities for our industry.

In closing, let me just say that when I joined the National Association of Professional Geriatric Care Managers (NAPGCM) in 2003, it was still a small, fledgling association with little national recognition. As my mother's personal caregiver, I learned about the profession from an AARP article sent to me by one of her neighbors. I read it and thought, "What a perfect fit". I am very proud to be a member of our association and the work they are doing to provide national media attention to our industry. I am proud that they have made us jump through hoops to weed out unethical persons who do not honor our standards of practice and proud that they set the bar high enough to make us pass boards and get nationally certified. As a member of the Florida Chapter of GCMs and because of the overwhelming amount of seniors living here, I see Florida as the first state to require licensure as a geriatric care manager within the next five years. I surely welcome it.

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1.



Thank you Trevor and Carol,
I am in your debt. Awesome job....Olga

Comment by [Olga Brunner](#) — December 5, 2008 @ [3:45 pm](#)



2.

You are welcome, Olga! I am thrilled to read your trends for elder care. Since there are so many of us (boomers) who are aging.. I too am sure more avenues of health and care will open to us.

Blessings,

Carol

Comment by carol — December 7, 2008 @ [10:16 am](#)

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