

# Caregiver's Corner Column (October 2011)

## **Staying At Home: Resources for Homebound Care**

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### Case Study

Let me introduce you to Judy and Bob, daughter and father, respectively. Bob has begun slipping into the clutches of Alzheimer's dementia, incontinence, and prostate cancer. Since Judy's mother passed away a few years ago, Judy has been helping Bob on a weekly basis. However, his needs are increasing, and Judy lives 45 minutes away. Judy's brothers live out of state. On a recent visit, Judy's twin brother, Bill, dismantled Bob's car to prevent him from driving. In fact, many changes have taken place. A few weeks ago, Bob placed a small metal cooking pot in the microwave oven causing it to explode! To Judy's immense relief, Bob was not injured.

However, he was confused and embarrassed to tell anyone what had happened. Judy had arrived and found the mess. Bob was nervous but confided in his dear daughter. She assured him his safety was what was important. Additionally, Judy arrived to take Bob to his physician appointments, along with banking and the post office, to find Bob has had incontinent episodes which left a messy situation. He would need his daughter's help in cleaning up the mess before they could leave home.

Furthermore, Bob has a condition called "Sundowners" which causes him to confuse night with daytime. He has begun to phone Judy frequently throughout the night, also not realizing he called 15 minutes prior.

Bob is always so happy to see her with his bright smiles and big bear hugs. He loves to tell stories of his youth and Golden Gloves boxing days. He tells her how grateful he is that she is his daughter and what a big help she is to him. He says he doesn't know what he would do without her. Yet, he feels he is a burden. Bob has expressed many times, "**No nursing homes!**" Her dad needs her help and has **always been there for her**, so she knows that she must do the same for him. At the same time, she feels utterly alone, uncertain, and afraid.

Must she leave her own home, and life, to live with her dad full time? Judy thinks of the numerous tasks she assists her dad with such as cleaning, laundry, grocery shopping, and picking up his medications. Bob can still cook microwave meals, shower, dress himself, and perform simple tasks. Although, Judy would like for her dad to have home cooked meals. He gets lonely when she is not there.

Judy knows there is help out there, but it seems so daunting to find it, especially the kind of help needed to keep him at home. Judy doesn't have to tackle this situation alone, and neither do you! There are many options. Did you know that you have over 100 organizations available and ready to help you?

There are many resources available such as in home care provided by agencies that can help with meals, light housekeeping, laundry, companionship, transportation assistance, medication assistance, self care, and more. Moreover, there are home health care agencies that can provide excellent service and quality care with medical needs such as wound care, infusions, post operative care, PT/OT, hospice, as well as

other services. Some agencies provide both private duty and skilled medical care. Additionally, there are available legal and financial, respite, and ambulance services, medical device companies, as well as educational and informational web links, classes, and handouts.

Connecting with these resources is as easy as contacting the **Caregiver Resource Network (CRN)**. Access this valuable information via the CRN website at [www.caregiverresource.net](http://www.caregiverresource.net). On the toolbar at the top of the home page choose "ABOUT" and then "MEMBER ORGANIZATIONS." Or, contact **Area Agency on Aging of Western Michigan at 616-456-5664 or toll free 1-888-456-5664.**

**You are not alone...**

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