

aging parents

When our parents begin showing signs of aging and age-related issues, we look to the health care “system” for answers. When our parents were our age, one of the few, if not only, care options available would have been assisted living/nursing homes. Today, their choices are remarkably greater. Our eyes were opened by the extent to which health care options have grown over the years and how the entire industry is continuing to change. What is driving the change is the imminent insurgence of baby boomers that will be requiring more extensive health care. A large portion of our after40 readers are considered baby boomers, having been born between 1946 and 1964. Starting in 2012, and continuing for the next 18 years, 78 million of us will turn 65 and join the Medicare system. The already challenged health care system will become more stretched by the enormous number of people needing care.

To further support the reality, several eye-popping statistics were presented to us by Diane Orris, Director of Marketing and Community Liaison for Mobile Doctors, a local company providing in-home physician services.

- The leading edge of baby boomers will turn 65 in 2011 and every day on average, 12,000 people will turn 65 years old for the next 18 years.
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- The over-65 population will nearly triple by 2030
- More than 6 out of 10 people over 65 will be managing multiple chronic illnesses

Carlotta Katra, Owner of Aging Avenues, a company providing personal guidance through the journey of senior care, added that more than 44 million family members are currently caring for an aging loved one. In addition, she offered:

- It is estimated that \$306 billion is spent per year on care giving to a family member
- The average age of a caregiver for a senior is from 45 to 65
- In 10 years, we will have more people retired than working

These statistics are significant to our future health care environment because the influx of baby boomers will force more and more changes in the industry, an industry that is challenged by its own Medicare funding issues, shortage of geriatricians, trained specialists and skilled care workers.



As boomers, we need to become knowledgeable and stay informed of our options. Some innovative options include In-home care, adult day care, home remodeling to accommodate aging and disability requirements and independent living facilities. Staying informed and up-to-date with your family's care preferences helps make tough decisions easier when you find yourself in crisis during a family emergency.

Our solution? Even though the system is facing challenges, we see an opportunity to explore the abundance of services available and bring you the information in upcoming issues of after40. In this issue, our education begins with some of the local, innovative businesses and services who understand the changing landscape. Watch for our next issue of after40 for more information on the variety of health care services and options available.

