

## **“Do You Know Who’s Caring For Your Parents?”**

One of the biggest challenges in providing long distance care for an older loved one is finding and maintaining quality in-home caregivers. There are many agencies from whom you can choose companion services or certified home health aides to provide care. If you don’t live close enough to oversee the care that is being provided, it is hard to know if your loved one is getting the best care possible. If Mom or Dad has become forgetful, getting a clear picture of this care is even more difficult. I’ve spoken to family members who worry about the cash that Mom leaves lying around, or the checks and silver that have gone missing from the house. Worrying that your loved one may be financially exploited adds to the stress of managing care from a distance. It can be helpful to take the time to develop a personal relationship with the individual(s) who will be providing consistent care for your loved one so that you can check in regularly. Upon request, the agency can provide you with a treatment plan that includes individualized goals and daily activities to be completed for your loved one. Typically, this treatment plan is created with the client’s input. Requesting regular updates or reports on the treatment plan activities and goals may help ensure that the care providers maintain consistent care even if providers change. Another way to rest assured that your loved one is getting the best care possible is to hire a local geriatric care manager who oversees all of the service providers and provides regular updates to family members. This individual can be responsible for managing the myriad of services your loved one may receive and keeping everything on track when you can’t be there. To locate a local geriatric care manager, and to learn more about what these professionals can provide, go to [www.caremanager.org](http://www.caremanager.org).