The vision of the Florida Geriatric Care Managers Association is to be recognized as the dynamic organization promoting excellence in the practice of professional care management. FGCMA sponsored a booth at the Annual Florida Bar Trust Officer Liaison Conference held in Naples June 24-26, 2010. Together we can accomplish our vision!

Many thanks to all the participants, the conference committee chairs, committee members, the vendors and the fabulous speakers of the 2010 FGCMA Annual Conference. It was an overwhelming success thanks to everyone. What a great way to start 2010!

Our goal is to involve our membership 100% in FGCMA. I encourage you to participate in your unit, be on a committee, and help shape the direction of our Chapter. The Florida Chapter has always been a leader in our profession and with your involvement; we will continue to be in the forefront.

Linda Cramer, President, FGCMA

Do you have a question about certification?

According to NAPGCM there are currently 1026 certified members who have provided documentation to the national association. There are many additional member benefits for certified members, such as attending free webinars on clinical issues and free pre-session and conference intensive of the NAPGCM Conferences.

Each chapter has a Certification Point Person, therefore if you have any questions about certification, please don’t keep the questions to yourself—ask your chapter point person. Vicki Alkire is the contact information for the Florida Chapter.

Vicki Alkire  vicki.alkire@verizon.net

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The Public Policy Committee of your Florida Chapter of NAPGCM has made a commitment to work on getting the Florida Legislature to pass a law requiring Geriatric Care Managers (GCM’s) to be licensed. This is an enormous undertaking and it is expected to take years to become a reality. You may wonder why such an undertaking makes sense now that all GCM’s belong to NAPGCM must be certified to practice in order to become a voting member.

Linda Cramer, President, FGCMA
Why Do We Need License of Geriatric Care Managers in Florida?

and may even call themselves eldercare consultants, Advisors, geriatric consultant, senior advisor, etc. To further complicate the understanding of credentials the consumer must sort out is the fact that many GCM’s need a license in another profession such as nursing, social work, counseling, and other related fields of health care. Then, there is the fact that the owner of a GCM business may indeed hold all the desirable credentials and have the experience, but may hire other care managers to handle their growing case loads and use individuals that have not been certified and are not members of NAPGCM, as membership is of individuals, not companies or corporations. This leaves the door open for non-certified, non-NAPGCM members to provide GCM services and use the title GCM.

In summary, as the field of practice of GCM has evolved. The entrepreneurial nature of GCM has resulted in a self-managed approach to regulation that substitutes for formal, legal regulation. Voluntary regulation has inherent limits, and there is certainly room for abuse in this situation where the population GCM’s work with are often vulnerable elderly that have varying degrees of frailty. Unregulated practice of the profession leaves the door open for exploitation, fraud, and defaults against the elderly. The State of Florida has no standards or disciplinary boards to monitor Geriatric Care Managers. Consumers have little information to make informed choices when hiring a Geriatric Care Manager. Professional Guardians are overseen by the court; GCM’s have no oversight. Licensing will not completely block abuse, but there would be clear standards that would have sanctions to punish those violating them.

The issues will continue to be the need for consumer protection, universal standards of care, scope of practice, and legislative and regulatory measures that will have the potential to impact who can and will provide these services in the future.

Maryann Higgins, MA, LMHC, CMC

Effective advocacy with other highly trained and respected professionals (in most cases licensed), fostering the client’s right to self-determination and adhering to other ethical standards, deals with chronic disease(s) over a span of time—often years, and through it all devises Plans of Care that offer quality of life as things change, usually for the worse.

All the above intimately affect the client’s health, well-being, and financial security, and the “Age Wave” is coming: the Baby Boomers are growing old. The numbers in our profession are growing and will continue to have to in order to accommodate the Baby Boomers. All this supports FGCMA being proactive and laying the groundwork for licensure to follow.

Meet New Board of Director Linda Dover

Linda Dover has over 30 years of diverse experience in geriatrics, special needs and long term care, having worked in both staff and management roles. Currently, she is Regional Consultant for Crawford Care Management, a national provider with global affiliates as a division of Crawford and Company. In her Consultant position, Linda mentors Crawford Care Managers and the services they provide to the elderly and special needs populations in her 22 state region. She began her career as nurse’s aide in a county long term care facility before obtaining her Bachelor’s Degree in Nursing from the University of Pittsburgh. She then went on to hold various positions within skilled nursing facilities in Pennsylvania and Florida which led her to the position of Nursing Director for eight years at a 196 bed assisted living facility on Florida’s gulf coast. For the past 12 years Linda has dedicated her career to the care management of the elderly and special needs population. Linda is a Certified Care Manager and member of the National Association of Professional Geriatric Care Managers as well as member of the Southern Gerontological Society. Her accomplishments have included the Virginia Crawford Award, the highest recognition within Crawford and Company as well as listing in the International Who’s Who of Professionals.

Some people, no matter how old they get, never lose their beauty—they merely move it from their faces into their hearts.”

~Martin Buxbaum

Linda Dover

CONGRATULATIONS TO LIZ BARLOWE
Outstanding Member Award 2009 "Florida Chapter"
Delma has been a registered nurse for over 15 years. She has 7 years experience working in care management in both non-profit and private settings. When asked what led her to the profession of CM, she states, “My desire to advocate for the respect and dignity of the older adult and assist their families with maintaining independence for their loved ones is what led me to this field.”

In addition to care management she enjoys spending time with my husband, 2 middle school aged children and my parents who are in their mid-70’s. She is a prolific reader and enjoys being outdoors.

She also finds time to volunteer with Community activism such as The Alzheimer’s Association, and networking with other elder care professionals to advocate for the older adult population is a high priority.

Areas of Interest in FGCMA: Community education regarding the role of geriatric care management and the benefits of a geriatric care manager, networking with other geriatric care managers for support and friendship.

UNIT LEADERS COMMITTEE REPORT

The unit leaders continue to meet quarterly. We discuss the activities in their individual units and I share with them pertinent information from the chapter board. They are very enthusiastic and responsive. Some of the units have been promoting FGCMA at conferences and workshops. At the request of the board, many unit members have agreed to serve on chapter committees. Happily, Vicki Alkire has agreed to be the secretary of this committee and take minutes.

Respectfully, Maxine Welsh Commission Chair

Conference Committee

The 2011 Conference Committee has made a lot of progress toward our annual conference. The Hilton Hotel was selected as the site with the costs/expenses reviewed by the committee. Currently, there are seven speakers being reviewed and confirmed for the conference. We may be in a position for the first time in our recollection to turn down a speaker.

The Conference theme is “Soar into the Future” capturing the NASA/Space Coast theme from Cocoa Beach and Cape Canaveral, site of the 2011 conference.

Attendance at the committee meetings has been fair; we have had from 3-15 members attending which is not enough help to accomplish the many duties of the conference committee. Recruitment of help will be needed; a few committee members offered to make individual calls to secure assistance.

Submitted by: Cathy Durting Amy O’Rourke Committee Chairs

THE SOUTH EASTERN UNIT

The Southeast Unit meets at a different retirement community each month and offers its members the opportunity to gather for breakfast and informal sharing before our scheduled presentation. Our membership at these meetings is consistently between 10-15 members. Our topics have included: Working with Holocaust Survivors, Veterans Benefits, Life Planning for Elderly Parents of Mentally Challenged Adult Children, Home Smart- Environmental Modifications to Promote Independent Lifestyles, and What is Life Care? We look forward to the second half of the year for the remainder of our topics and speakers.

Unit Leader
Chris Kantrowitz, MSW, C-ASWCM

VIRTUAL UNIT—SUMMER 2010

The Virtual Unit meetings use conference calling to meet the needs of members who are either too remotely located or busy to attend regular Unit meetings in person. Membership is open to any FGCMA member regardless of affiliation with another Unit. We meet every third Wednesday at 9:00 A.M. and meetings last for about 45 minutes – 1 hour. We try to have speakers every month who introduce new information to Care Managers to use in their practices. Recently we had Elisa Levy who spoke on conflict resolution with patients and families, Dale Smrekar discussed his services to clients when trying to divest themselves of a lifetime of “things” when moving to another location. Upcoming is

• Regina Curran who will discuss how the new health care legislation can impact our clients.
• Amy O’Rourke will share her knowledge about VA benefits available to more of our clients than most of us are aware.
• Diane Smith will show us how to use technology to streamline our practices and to better care for our clients.
• Nancy Polites—a Virtual Unit member will help us reduce stress in our work and personal lives through various techniques she has devised and teaches—we certainly need this around the holidays!!

As an integral part of the Agenda each month we have an open discussion of problems and issues the individual members are encountering. For members in sole practices this provides a wonderful opportunity to network with other members and problem solve. Because of this continuous sharing of ideas and hurdles, members of the Virtual Unit have evolved into a close knit group of Geriatric Care Managers even though most have never met face to face.

Any FGCMA member interested in being notified of meetings should email Roberta Markow, Chairperson at caremanagement1@bellsouth.net.
June 28, 2010

Dear Governor Charlie Crist,

The Florida Geriatric Care Managers Association (FGCMA) Public Policy Committee extends a sincere thank you for passing the General Appropriations Bill.

While we recognize that budgetary cuts presented difficult choices affecting Florida residents, we were very grateful for the $8.3 million increase in funding for the Aging and Disabled Medicaid Waiver Program. Additionally, other programs spared from reduced funding included Aging Programs, especially home care programs, Local Service Programs, and Alzheimer’s Respite Care/Projects and Services.

Many elderly individuals and their families for whom we advocate on their behalf can be assured of continued services. These services are vital in maintaining a sense of autonomy and community well-being for our aging population within the state of Florida.

A Professional Geriatric Care Manager is a credentialed and experienced human services professional with core ethical values, who follows the Standards of Practice and Pledge of Ethics of the National Association of Professional Geriatric Care Managers.

Facing even greater deficits next year and the yet unforeseen impact the oil spill within our gulf waters may have on the state’s economy, the Florida Geriatric Care Managers Association Public Policy Committee continues to seek workable budgetary solutions and influence policy decision-making affecting Florida’s elders.

Please visit us at www.fgcma.org

Sincerely,
Emily J. Reese, M.A., C.M.C.
FGCMA Public Policy Chair

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