

"Caring people do address driving concerns"

Erie County's Older Driver Family Assistance Help Network
C/O Erie County Department of Senior Services
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Handouts:

- Help Network brochures
- Stress keys
- List of safety partners

Let us presume for this afternoon that there is a “Help Network” here in this room.

To get started, all you need is to find a coach or two (someone with some experience with this issue)—like finding that person who is ahead of you in computer skills—there’s a steep, but fast learning curve at the beginning, then you can shift to periodic consultation with your “experts”.

Key Point:

My goal was NOT to become a centralized “expert” on this issue; but rather to educate as many people as possible in our community, in as many organizations as possible, about how to assist caregivers concerned about an “at-risk” older driver.

What organizations are represented here in this room today? There are advantages to having working relationships between people in Testing & Investigation with the Department of Motor Vehicles, physicians and our Medical Society, Social Workers, Occupational Therapists & their driving evaluation programs, driving schools, judges, Case Managers, AARP, AAA, health insurers, STOP DWI, law enforcement agencies, transportation services, aging services network

Facilitates cross-organizational problem-solving
Taking advantage of our various talents and strengths
Helps when you are working in the “cracks” of systems

Stages of development of a Help Network

Learning about one another (“show and tell”); visiting each other’s organizations; collecting program and contact information

Educating ourselves about the issue (pitfalls to avoid)—this is a “caregiver” initiative with a goal of getting people where they want to go, SAFELY.

Establish a system to address concerns of caregivers

- 1) Centralized number to call (Information and Assistance in our Area Agency on Aging); training for those answering the phones; for more complex problems, case managers answering the phones can refer callers to me, anyone in our Help Network, even Phil LePore
- 2) Getting the word out: Help Network brochure, posters, stress keys, media opportunities, seed the community with lots of “experts”
- 3) Web site with slide presentation and extensive resource materials (enough to get a Help Network started where you are located), organized by the categories of calls we might receive
- 4) Use the Family Action Flow chart for problem-solving
- 5) Gather resource tools (e.g., When You are Concerned; Hartford resources, AMA Physician’s Manual, ASA Drive Well Program—especially the handouts section)
- 6) Provide information about the community’s organizations and who is knowledgeable and available to help within those organizations

Our meetings over time enabled us as a group, to apply problem-solving strategies to systems issues (obstacles). (Visit our web site for a list of accomplishments: www.erie.gov/driving .) Here are a few examples:

- Letter of Concern; years ago, we made up a local “form” with all the components required by NYS DMV for an “acceptable” letter of concern; later replaced by the current NYS DMV DS-7 form, “Request for Driver Review”
- Court programs (drivers appearing in two local town, and village traffic courts may now be referred to driving evaluation programs as a condition of the Court)

- Lack of notification of results of DMV driving review to families and physicians: now someone must accompany the individual to the evaluation so at least one other person will be informed about the results of a driving review
- Sending the NYS DS-7 “Request for Driver Review” to a local address speeds up the timeline significantly
- A poem was written by a caregiver to her father about her concerns
- Instructions for disabling a car
- AAA being asked to fix “disabled” cars
- Using 1-800-CURB DWI as one way to address law enforcement’s reluctance to act on family concerns about impaired drivers with dementia who are on the road after drinking alcohol
- Continuing development of our repertoire of strategies
- Utilizing available resources: ASA driving program (especially the handouts section), The Hartford materials, *When You Are Concerned*, AMA Physician’s manual

Demonstrate a brief problem-solving session about an “at-risk” older driver concern (“meeting”, “in-person” or “over-the-phone” consultations)

Discuss case example(s) or situation(s) raised by those in attendance.

Everyone in this room is now a resource for you—a “virtual Help Network”. You have already taken the first step: you have our contact information 😊.

Also, if you would like to join the E-list for our *Older Driver Research and News* mailings, send an E-request to Dorothy.Levitt@erie.gov

Older Driver Family Assistance Help Network - Microsoft Internet Explorer

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Address http://www.erie.gov/depts/seniorservices/older_driver/ Go Links >>

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Erie County's Older Driver Family Assistance Help Network

For families, friends, and caregivers concerned about an aging loved one who is driving "at-risk"

(716) 858-8526

What can I do now to prepare for my own mobility needs, if I become like the person that I am concerned about today?

[Click here for a brief PowerPoint presentation about the Help Network \(3 MB\)](#)

Family, friends and caregivers are usually the first to realize when aging loved ones are driving unsafely or "at risk." They want to protect the driver, but often don't know what to do about problems, or where to turn for help.

Trusted sites

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