

“Economic Downturn & Needs of Aging Parents”

by Linda Fodrini-Johnson, MA, MFT, CMC
Founder and Executive Director of Eldercare Services

The reality of the economy and the loss of investment value can cause great stress to adult children who are not only worried about their own retirement nest egg, but also how their parents will receive necessary care. Linda Fodrini-Johnson, MA, MFT, CMC, Founder and Executive Director of Eldercare Services, Vice President and a Fellow of the National Association of Professional Geriatric Care Managers (NAPGCM) offers advice to seniors and their families.

Consider the situation of Jane Rivers of San Francisco. Jane is 86 years old, has been living alone with visual impairments and some mild memory loss. As a result, she and her family decided that it was time for her to sell her house and move to an assisted living facility. With the current state of the economy and the resulting drop in housing prices, she would be taking a big hit to her most valuable asset by selling now. As Jane’s son said, “If mom sells in the current market, she may eventually run out of money and I am not sure that I would be in a position to help.”

Jane’s family consulted with Eldercare Services in San Francisco regarding housing options. A professional Geriatric Care Manager came up with several benefits, such as purchasing lower cost medications direct from the drug company, that the family was unaware of and found a local Early Stage Dementia Support program mom could take advantage of while waiting for her house to sell. The home care plan was half the cost of assisted living. The end result was a care plan patched together with entitlements, community programs and in-home care.

Currently 6 Million people over 65 need some type of long-term care. Those over 85 are the fastest growing segment and about half of them need help with daily living activities. Linda Fodrini-Johnson, Family Therapist, Geriatric Care Manager and Executive Director of [Eldercare Services](#) recommends that families consult with a

professional Geriatric Care Manager with knowledge of entitlements, benefits and local support systems.

According to Fodrini-Johnson, “One or two hours spent with a professional Care Manager can save families thousands of dollars, hours of time and result in solutions that both cost less and add to the quality of life.”

Finding solutions, other than selling at a loss, can reduce the feeling of being “powerless” for the family and the elder. A professional who is certified as a Care Manager and a member of the NAPGCM can often help families at a cross road and reduce the stress that tight economic times present.

Since 1989, the professional staff of Eldercare Services has been assisting families through their unique delivery of services providing counseling, Geriatric Care Management, family support groups, classes and direct caregiving. They have offices in San Francisco, Walnut Creek and Larkspur, California. Contact information: (415) 469-8300, www.EldercareAnswers.com