

DISCOVER THE GATEWAY ... AND TRITOWN

Seniors' comfort is top priority at Care at Home

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CONTRIBUTING WRITER

Achieving a fulfilling life is best accomplished when you "age in place." That is the philosophy of Care at Home, Inc., a Mattapoisett-based business whose caregivers work with seniors that desire to remain where they feel most comfortable: their homes.

Co-owners Carolyn Greany and Amy Harrington are longtime nurses who decided to go out on their own with Care at Home in April 2011. They operate out of a small, warmly decorated office at 92 North St., just south of I-195. With long histories working at various local health care providers, the women had the contacts and referrals to establish a small, thriving business helping seniors maintain independent lives. Now they employ about 20 staff members who primarily assist local seniors in their 80s-90s.

Both women strongly believe that life expectancy and quality of living improve when a senior is able to remain in his or her home. Care at Home provides the one-on-one care that allows seniors to remain where they feel most comfortable and avoid relocating to a nursing home.

Care at Home clients receive services ranging from one-time assistance to ongoing care seven days per week, 365 days per year, Harrington said. Some clients need assistance getting to and from adult day care centers, including local Council on Aging programs, as well as help with personal care, recommended physical exercises, and light housekeeping.

The company also may step in to provide care for a senior whose family lives out-of-state during the winter.

As isolation is a very real concern among elderly living alone in their homes, Care at

Home also can simply provide company. For example, one senior receives a visit from caregivers for dinner and a game of scrabble on a daily basis.

"We try to cater to their every need," Greany said, stressing that long-term, compatible matches between caregivers and seniors are of utmost importance.

All caregivers are certified nursing assistants, who are required to renew their certification every two years. Greany said that the company values a trained and competent staff. To that end, staff receives training on dementia and Alzheimer's issues, so they can effectively work with their clients.

"My passion is really Alzheimer's and dementia. Every (caregiver) we send to clients needs to be trained" said Greany. An ability to redirect clients and take each task one at a time is especially critical for seniors with



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Care at Home is located at 92 North St. in Mattapoisett.

Alzheimer's, she said.

As part of her work at Care at Home, Greany also offers weekly groups in Dartmouth to couples facing Alzheimer's diagnoses. She said that many receive a diagnosis before the age of 65, and with her help

they prepare for what lies ahead. Greany is very involved with the National Alzheimer's Association, and trains professionals on working with seniors struggling with this disease.

Greany and Harrington both laud their employees and said they work hard to keep the

best ones.

"Most who started with us are still here," Harrington said. "When you have good employees, that is half the battle."

In the meantime, Care at Home continues to strive to fulfill its mission of empowering seniors to remain in their homes no matter the challenges.

"We strive to keep them as happy, safe and healthy as we can," said Greany.

For more information about Care at Home, call 508-758-8226.