

# Catholic Charities Caregiver Support Services



2007 Annual Report

## Thank You

The work we do was made possible by the generous support of individuals, families and the following agencies, foundations and businesses.

**Rensselaer County Unified Family Services - Aging**

**Albany County Department for Aging**

**Albany County Youth Bureau**

**Brookdale Foundation**

**Catholic Charities of the Diocese of Albany**

**NYS Department of Health**

**NYS Office for the Aging**

**New York State Legislature**

**NYS Office of Children & Family Services**

**Stewarts Shops**

**United Way of the Capital Region**

## Table of Contents

Mission Statements.....	4
2007 Board of Director listing .....	5
Board President & Executive Director Letter .....	6-7
Program Achievements	
Elder Caregiving .....	8-10
Kinship Caregiving .....	11
Information and Assistance .....	12
Volunteers and Interns .....	12
Publications .....	13
Collaborative Participation .....	13
Fiscal Overview Charts .....	14

## **Catholic Charities Mission**

Catholic Charities, a ministry of the Catholic Diocese of Albany, is committed to active witness on behalf of the Scriptural values of mercy and justice.

Catholic Charities, recognizing human need at all stages of life, responds to all persons regardless of race, creed, or lifestyle, with special emphasis on the economically poor and the vulnerable.

Catholic Charities serves and empowers persons in need, advocates for a just society, calls forth and collaborates with women and men of good will in fulfillment of its mission.

## **Caregivers Support Services Mission**

Follows the mission of Catholic Charities by working with this one aim: To make life better for those who care for friends and relatives in need.

## **2007 Board of Directors**

Kathleen Pingelski, President

Ginny O'Brien, Vice President

Nancy T. Daggett, Secretary

James J. Conroy III, Treasurer

Carol Ciscione

Mark McCarthy

Pamela Rehak

## **Letter from the Board President & Executive Director**

Catholic Charities Caregivers Support Services is an organization that focuses on responding to local caregiving needs. Over the last 21 years, it has become the leading organization in responding to those needs successfully, and, as a result, is being called on more and more to deal with an increasing need as baby boomers and their parents begin to call for these services as well.

In stepping up to those demands, the agency has undergone a number of changes over the last year. The complexity of providing Elder Caregiving services in 14 counties has made it necessary for the agency to hire its first fiscal director, Patricia Christensen. At the same time, the increasing demand for Kinship Caregiving services has made it imperative to expand the agency's role in working with the children of relative caregivers. Accordingly, we have spent time implanting a thoughtful youth component to our Kinship services. These infrastructure changes have prepared it to successfully meet the growing demands.

There were changes as well in the makeup of the board. The agency welcomed new board member Carol Crisone and offered its appreciation for their time and leadership to retiring board members Richard Cirincione, Michael Costello, and Daniel Plummer. The board also thanked Kathleen Pingelski for assuming the role of Board President, Ginny O'Brien for taking on the role of Vice President, and Nancy Daggett for becoming Secretary. The agency and board are grateful as well to Ann Marie Franke for her past work as President and to James Conroy for his continuing work as the board treasurer. All of these members have worked hard to position the agency for continuing success.

The board made much progress in fund development for a second year in a row. Its fund development committee, lead by Virginia "Ginny" O'Brien, achieved its goal in 2007 through methods established in 2006, including an initiative called "Give Green – Wear Green," an annual appeal, and this year's anniversary celebration event.

Just under 50% of the agency's funding in 2007 was primarily through two state contracts: one with the NYS Office for the Aging and one with the NYS Office of Children and Family Services. Nearly 40% of the budget was funded by public funds through county contracts and legislative grants. Private funding from various foundation grants, United Way, and donations made up the balance of its funding.

The agency continues to use a structured continuous-quality-improvement system. This system is in its second year and appears to be working well and aiding the agency in meeting its quality goals. Evaluative surveys were designed and initiated, with support from volunteers and student interns so that no additional expenses in overhead were incurred. These surveys identified ways the agency could improve, and program changes were made in responding to them.

For Kinship Caregiving, changes at the program level included adding a new support group, meeting monthly in Rensselaer County, and a therapeutic youth program, meeting concurrently with the support groups in Albany County. Additionally, a case worker, Chris Schaffner, was hired to handle the intensive case management that this program generates.

For Elder Caregiving, the program resulted in 266 caregivers contacting the agency office and receiving support services. This is an increase of 11% from 2006. When clients called, they typically spoke with an RN, who identified their needs, discussed the level of care needed, and pointed them to community programs for which they might qualify. An estimated three to four hours is spent with each of these callers in determining the best services and fit for each family. 57 individuals received support in support groups hosted by the agency, and 23 individuals received telephone support or face-to-face counseling from the program's social worker. (Those people who received multiple services are counted only once in these totals.)

Most important, of course, are the programs themselves, which change people's lives in profound ways. This past year, because of the Kinship Caregiving program, more than 150 children, within 80 families, are with their relatives instead of in the Foster Care system. This was achieved because these relatives found the support and respite they needed to continue to care for their relatives' children. Because of this support, they may very well have been inspired to confront difficulties in their own lives and relationships, to find new activities to enjoy, and to make new friends.

82 percent of the families responding to the survey reported that the Elder Caregiving program was helpful in allowing the families to continue to care for their loved ones at home. 86 percent of the families responding to the Kinship Caregiving Survey reported that as a result of this program they felt their family was stronger, and 91 percent of the relatives raising these children reported that because of the program they felt more able to raise the children in their care.

In this annual report, you will find many examples of the way this agency is helping change things for the sake of the community. We hope that they will inspire you to support its work, just as our work with families caring for their loved ones continues to inspire us.

*Kathleen Pingelski*

Kathleen Pingelski  
Board President

*Renée G. Benson*

Renée G. Benson  
Executive Director

## **2007 Program Achievements Elder Caregiving**

The Elder Caregiving program supports caregivers as they care for their frail and elderly spouses, parents and friends. It assists caregivers in maintaining their loved ones at home rather than having to place them in nursing homes. Respite services include annual grants to fund home care, adult day care, and facility-based services that help caregivers cope with the physical, emotional, and financial strains of their responsibility. Social work services include individual support provided by a social worker to assist caregivers in adjusting to their caregiving role. Support groups are facilitated by a social worker or registered nurse and provide encouragement, educational information, and emotional support for caregivers.

This past year, 266 caregivers contacted the agency and received support services. This is an increase of 11% from last year (2006). When clients called, they typically spoke with an RN, who identified their needs, discussed the level of care needed, and pointed them to other community programs for which they may qualify. An estimated 3-4 hours is spent with each of these callers in determining the best services and fit for each family. Individuals received home health aide, adult day care, or adult home respite services during 2007. 57 individuals received support by attending support groups hosted by the agency, and 23 individuals received telephone support from its program's social worker or face-to-face counseling. (Some people received multiple services but are only counted once in our aggregate number of 266.)

A recent study found that if respite care delays institutionalization of a person with Alzheimer's disease by as little as a month, \$1.12 billion is saved annually. A similar study in 1995 found that as respite use increased, the probability of nursing home placement decreased significantly. The agency used the services of SUNY Albany School of Social Welfare students to conduct a survey of its clients. They telephoned or mailed surveys to 165 clients in 2007. With a 43% return rate, 82% of the people served believe that the services helped them to continue to care for their loved ones at home. Also, 78% of the people served believe that the services helped delay placing their loved one in a nursing home.

Services were provided to caregivers regardless of race, creed, or lifestyle. Very-low-income caregivers who were eligible for Medicaid were not served by our program because they were eligible for respite services directly through Medicaid. Medicaid recipients were referred to their case worker for respite services but were told they were eligible to attend the agency support groups. All of the service recipients were frail and elderly individuals over the age of sixty.

## **Emergency Respite program**

In 2007, eight emergency calls were received. These were calls that came in either during hours that the office was closed or were calls that required immediate attention. The office was successful in finding emergency support for 100% of the calls. In half the cases the family was able to find family members and other resources to meet the emergency, and the agency provided emergency care for the other clients. The total funding provided for the emergency respite was \$2,120. Two of those assisted were from Albany County, one was from Schenectady County, and the other was from Rensselaer County.

Because this was a new program in 2007, outreach to the community was accomplished by contacting 36 professionals by mail. Of those 36, 34 were licensed Home Health agencies, Adult Day Care agencies, and Assisted Living and Adult Homes. One hospital emergency room and one Local Office for the Aging were telephoned and mailed information. The agency's Executive Director (who has a master's in social work) and the Associate Executive Director (who is a Registered Nurse) visited the Office for the Aging and Adult Protective Services in Otsego County, as well as St. Peter's Hospital Emergency Room and St. Mary's Emergency Hospital in Troy, to explain the program to the emergency-room social workers and RN's.

## **Elder Caregiving evaluation findings Elder Caregiving 2007 final evaluation report**

Total Client Number Contacted: 165

Total Client Number Responded: 70

Response Rate: 43%

*Percentage is out of the 70 contacted*

1. Which of the following services did you or your loved one receive?

Respite - 70 \* note, some clients received multiple respite services

- Home health aide – 25
- Day care – 36
- Adult Home – 1
- Assisted Living – 8

Counseling - 15

- Face-to- face – 7
- Telephone – 8

Support Group attendance – 13

- Once – 4
- Twice – 3
- More than twice – 6

2. If you received Respite services, did that help relieve the stress you were feeling?

- Yes – 52 (74%)
- No – 5 (6%)
- N/A – 13 (20%)
- Total – 70

3. Did the services you received help maintain your own physical or emotional health?

- Yes – 60 (86%)
- No – 5 (7%)
- N/A – 5 (7%)
- Total – 70

4. Did this service enable you to continue to care for your loved one at home?

- Yes – 57 (82%)
- No – 3 (4%)
- N/A – 10 (14%)
- Total – 70

5. Do you believe that the services you received helped delay nursing home placement of your loved one?

- Yes – 54 (78%)
- No – 6 (8%)
- N/A – 10 (14%)
- Total – 70

## **2007 Program Achievements Kinship Caregiving**

The Kinship Caregiving program offers support to those who take on the responsibility of raising relative's children whose parents are unable to care for them. The program actively operates in Albany and Rensselaer Counties and provides consultation and support in surrounding counties. Programming includes the following services: bi-monthly support groups; a youth program; social, recreational and educational activities for adults and children; respite services for caregivers and children; non-recurring material support for special needs; social-work services; and technical assistance and resources. Families are welcomed regardless of religion, race or sexual orientation. During 2007, the program welcomed 22 additional caregivers and 24 additional children into its program, for a total of 104 caregivers and 151 children.

Throughout the year, the program families participated in a variety of social and recreational activities. They were given tickets to and attended local college basketball games, a performance by the Harlem Globetrotters, and a ballet performance at SPAC; went on an overnight camping trip to Camp Chingachook, in Lake George; and saw a Christmas show at the Palace Theatre. Respite activities for the children included a trip to the Electric City Rock Gym, the PAWS for Reading Program at the Schenectady Library, a visit from the Bear Bus, and 44 weeks of summer camp. Respite activities for the caregivers included Cabaret Tunes and Tea at the Albany Country Club; a weekend retreat to Wiawaka Holiday House, in Lake George; and, in November, in celebration of National Caregivers Month, a luncheon for several caregivers at The Polish Community Center, where they were treated to a delicious buffet lunch and raffle prizes for all.

Support groups for adults were held twice monthly in Albany and once a month in Rensselaer County. During support group meetings, adult caregivers were provided with presentations on depression, financial management, the role of faith, and educational issues. A highlight presentation was that provided by Anne Pope, Director of African American Studies at SUNY. In honor of Black History Month, Ms. Pope gave a talk on "The Legacy of Martin Luther King: Creating a Beloved Community."

The youth program meets concurrently with the adult program in Albany. This was the first year that the program had a designated Youth Coordinator. Programs were designed to provide positive messages about self-esteem and to help in decision making. Family and friends were the foundation of every meeting. The children were provided with a six-week program, "Expressing Emotions Through Art," which was conducted by a local artist who was also pursuing her master's in art therapy. The program was aimed at helping children explore their emotions in safe and appropriate ways through a variety of artistic mediums.

The program continues to benefit from the generosity of the community. The support provided ranged from retreats, scholarships to private schools, Christmas gifts, and camper scholarships to furniture and household items, which were collected and delivered to families in need.

## **Information and Assistance Services**

One service the agency provides is informing people in the community about services that are available to them as they care for their elderly loved ones at home. An RN and a social worker relay helpful information concerning appropriate respite care as they speak on the telephone with caregivers and at support group meetings. Additional information is provided at educational presentations in the community. The individual caregiver receives assistance in defining their needs, and appropriate referrals are made to other support services in local communities if that proves helpful. Caregivers are told about the respite services Catholic Charities Caregivers Support Services offer and, when funding is available, the agency provides them with such services. The agency responded to over 400 requests in 2007 for information about such subjects as grief counseling, Adult Protective Services, respite services across the state, access to legal advice, services for people with disabilities, transportation, and Veterans' services and benefits.

## **Volunteers and Interns**

The agency counts on the support of both volunteers and student interns. In 2007 it benefited from 1,229 hours of their work, a 10.5% increase over 2006. A volunteer's work ranges from program assistance to administrative help. Many work at the office providing administrative assistance twice a week for two hours each day. The work of administrative volunteers varies from assisting in entering data in our various data bases, helping with mailing or assembling agency packets, filing, and shredding. Program volunteers help staff the various programs. For example, volunteers who work with the Kinship Caregiving program participate in the child-care component of the support group and interact with the children. Most of the volunteers are individuals who have accessed agency services for a loved one and are giving back to the agency through volunteer work..

Interns are usually BSW or MSW students who are undergoing their field placement for the Social Work Program at the University at Albany. They are in the office twice a week and work about sixteen hours per week. In 2007 there were three student interns at the agency who worked 648 hours. In addition to their weekly hours, interns participate in programs, support groups, and health fairs. They have a direct supervisor who mentors them throughout their time with the agency. Some of an Intern's responsibilities include conducting respite surveys to evaluate the effectiveness of agency services and working with the "Give Green – Wear Green" fundraising campaign. Interns are also assigned a client or family so that they gain experience in the field.

Both volunteers and interns serve a vital role in the Catholic Charities team because they all work collaboratively towards one end: making life better for those who care for friends and relatives in need.

## **Publications**

The publications activity of the agency in 2007 continues to be exciting and varied. The newsletters have continued to offer meaningful information on a number of topics in every edition. The *Reach Out* newsletter continues to have a strong circulation of more than 1,100 copies. It is provided free to the clients of the program and others who request it. The cost of the newsletter is covered by the local advertising,

The website, now in its second year, is working out well. Regular updates keep the site fresh. The links pages on the site are very useful, and their value was recognized when they were included in the region's "Tool Kit For Caregivers." As baby boomers find themselves in the role of caregivers or receivers, they will use the internet to seek out information. Accordingly, a web presence is now more critical to the agency and the people it serves than ever before.

This agency assisted in hosting the November 2007 AARP Kincare Summit and in developing the resulting report, which will be issued by the New York State Kincare Coalition, proposing a five-year plan of action to improve the lives of relative caregivers.

**Because Catholic Charities Caregiver Support Services believes that change requires a community to work together, the agency proudly participates with the following:**

Albany County Mental Health Planning Committee, member

ARCH National Respite Coalition, State representative

Capital Region Caregiver Coalition, Member

Capital District Senior Issues Forum. Steering board member

Catholic Charities USA, member and member on aging committee

Diocesan Commission on Aging, member

Geriatric Mental Health Alliance of New York, member

Interfaith Partnership, member

New York Children's Action Network, member

New York State Coalition for the Aging, Inc., member

NYS Kinship Coalition, member

NorthEast Caregivers Consortium, Co-chair

Schenectady Long Term Care Consortium, member

SUNY Albany, School of Social Welfare, INTERNSHIPS IN AGING PROJECT, Advisory Board

United Way Speakers Bureau

# Fiscal overview

