

Matrix Home Care Offers Tips on Helping Seniors Stay Healthy in a ‘Down’ Economy

WEST PALM BEACH, Fla.--([BUSINESS WIRE](#))--Many seniors are facing difficult financial choices due to Florida’s economic downturn. But maintaining good health should still be a priority, according to Pernille Ostberg, MBA, RPh, president and CEO of Matrix Home Care, www.matrixhomecare.com, a statewide home services firm.

“Whether you are taking care of a family member at home or using the services of a professional caregiver, it’s essential to be sure that economic conditions have not jeopardized the level of care,” said Ostberg.

Because financial pressures can affect a senior’s physical, mental or emotional state, Ostberg said family members should pay close attention to the early warning signs of health problems:

- A decrease in social activities, such as going out to lunch or to the movies with friends. This could be a sign of depression, resulting from worries about money. “Try taking the older family member out to a favorite restaurant and see if there’s a change in spirits,” said Ostberg.
- A change in medication habits. A senior trying to stretch the monthly budget might reduce the dosage of an expensive prescription drug or even discontinue the medication completely – with potentially harmful results. Ostberg suggests having the caregiver check the dates on prescriptions in the home, pick up and deliver the medications, and share concerns with the pharmacist. Another option for family members is paying the pharmacy bill directly.
- A decline in eating, noticeable loss of weight or drop in overall energy level. “One of my big concerns is that many of our elderly clients will not eat properly if at all unless a caregiver encourages them,” said Catherine Peterson, LCSW, geriatric care manager, Matrix. That could mean family members arrange to spend meal times at the senior’s home or schedule a shopping trip to a nearby supermarket to stock up on healthy foods.

Family caregivers should also make it a point to talk to their aging relatives about their monthly budgets and spending decisions. “Money is on everyone’s mind these days,” Ostberg said, “so there’s bound to be an opportunity to explain why good health is a financial necessity – not a luxury.”

Based in West Palm Beach, Matrix provides a complete array of services, home health care, disability management, independent senior care and specialty nurses' services. For information: www.matrixhomecare.com.

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