

## CARING FOR OUR KUPUNA

April 3, 2009

Hawaii has long been recognized across the country as one of the best, places to live for senior citizens. Our Pacific-Asian culture venerates our elderly. We let grandma or grandpa live with us when they can't or shouldn't live on their own anymore, we visit often, we call daily to check on them, we push for programs to take care of them, and we have an abundance of care homes if we can't render the services they need. Recently at the Legislature, many organizations that provide services for senior citizens came to educate lawmakers, staff, and the public about the resources available for our kupuna. I'd like to share some of these with you in the event you or your family or friends may have a need they can fill.

The **Elderly Affairs Division** of the City and County of Honolulu has a resources pamphlet on an array of services for our seniors. Service categories include: Education; Respite; Support Groups; Case Management; Home Delivered and Group Dining Meals; Individual Assistance; Health Promotion; Housing; Legal Assistance: Senior Centers; and Transportation. For a copy, call the Senior Helpline at 768-7700 or see [www.elderlyaffairs.com](http://www.elderlyaffairs.com).

**Hawaii Association of Case Managers (HACM)** Website: [www.EldercareHawaii.com](http://www.EldercareHawaii.com)

Want to know what housing options seniors have? The HACM's guidebook, "Residential Options for Hawaii's Seniors" is informative. Topics include What to Consider, Making the Decision, Helpful Resources, and Residential Options (retirement communities, care homes, assisted living, nursing homes, and hospice).

**Hawaii Family Caregiver Coalition (HFCC)** Contact: Hawaii Family Caregiver Coalition, [wes.lum@doh.hawaii.gov](mailto:wes.lum@doh.hawaii.gov), 586-0100

The HFCC provides training and education, counseling, and respite services to help caregivers become well-informed and better able to care for their loved ones and themselves. Their advocacy, education, and outreach efforts promote awareness and best practices for caregivers and their families. Their Speakers' Bureau provides public education to improve the quality of life for seniors and their caregivers. Topics include Financial Issues (social security, Medicare, Medicaid, long-term care insurance); legal issues (advance health care directives, power of attorney, guardianships); community resources (support groups, geriatricians, adult day care, case management, respite services); housing options (nursing homes, assisted living facilities, residential care homes); end of life issues (hospice, bereavement); and general aging information (Alzheimer's disease, fall prevention, healthy aging).

**Child & Family Services (CFS)** Contact: 681-3500

Child and Family Services offers a wide range of services for the elderly: Ohana Care (assisting families caring for their elderly); Reach (outreach to prevent or intervene in elderly abuse and neglect); Share (services for senior housing residents in Honolulu); Case Management

(supportive counseling and education, links to community resources); Caregiver Respite (clearinghouse for respite aides to assist family caregivers); Health Maintenance (senior fitness and fall prevention classes); and Adult Chore Services (in-home chore services to disabled seniors).

CFS's handbook, "In the Comfort of Your Home" discusses home health care. The book explains the different type of services an elderly person may need, such as homemaker services, therapists, home medical equipment, and hospice care; how to arrange for home health care; options for paying for services needed; adapting the home for safety; preventing home fires and preparing for emergencies; self care including diet, exercise, and preventing infections; and health.

**Catholic Charities** Contact: 595-0077; Website: [www.CatholicCharitiesHawaii.org](http://www.CatholicCharitiesHawaii.org)

Catholic Charities provides many services to the elderly:

Housing Assistance: counseling on affordable housing options; assistance with information, referrals, and applications to permanent affordable housing units; referrals for social and financial services; group homes and shared housing projects for seniors

Transportation Services: door-to-door transportation for seniors

Respite Care: information and referral to respite and other services

Services: in-home and community-based services including housekeeping, shopping, escort, letter writing and reading, interpreting and translating, advocacy, and para-professional counseling

**Caring for an Older Adult** Contact: [www.journeyworks.com](http://www.journeyworks.com)

This comprehensive guidebook is quick and easy to read, and covers many of the issues that caregivers face. Topics include: Are You a Caregiver?; Getting Started; Creating a Care Plan; Daily Care; Home Safety; Managing Medications; Doctor Visits; Long Distance Caregiving and Support; When Care is Refused or Resisted; If the Person You Care for is Depressed; Memory Loss and Confusion; When Independent Living is no Longer an Option; Planning for the Future; Balancing Caregiving and the rest of Your Life; Respite Care; the Rewards of Caring; and Resources.

These are just some of the resources available to the public. If you need assistance or more information, feel free to contact my office.

*Senator Espero is Chair of the Senate Public Safety and Military Affairs Committee, and member of the Health Committee; Transportation, International and Intergovernmental Affairs Committee; and Commerce and Consumer Protection Committee. He can be reached by phone at 586-6360, fax at 586-6360, or e-mail at [senespero@capitol.hawaii.gov](mailto:senespero@capitol.hawaii.gov).*