

# But Whose Gonna Take Care of Grandma?

*By Paula Burke*

Let's see, do you stay home with Grandma because she isn't feeling good or do you go to your daughter's or granddaughter's soccer game? I've noticed more and more of these kinds of issues popping up. The problem is compounded if Grandma (or Grandpa) live out of the area with no immediate family members close by. Until recently, there weren't too many solutions to this dilemma...until now!

Did you know there are certified experts who specialize in providing assistance to the elderly and their families. There goal is to maximize everyone's independence keeping everyone at home as long as possible.

The local expert I refer all my clients to is Paula Burke, BSN, RN, RG! Paula tells me it's typically the daughter or daughter-in-law, who usually ends up calling her. They're usually the primary care giver and need to understand all their options.

It starts with a telephone interview (**FREE!**) at which time she'll determine if a comprehensive assessment is needed.

If so, she'll meet with everyone separately. This may come as a surprise to some of you, but once in a while parents will say something they never would say in the presence of their child.

She evaluates the social network, support system, living arrangements, interests, activities, and hobbies.

She finds out about health status, medications, existing conditions, doctors, specialists, and nutritional habits. All of this is done at home so she can do a safety evaluation. Rugs that could be tripped over, things like that.

One interesting observation Paula shared with me is situations where help might be needed and desirable, but dog-gone-it who wants their daughter or daughter-in-law to be the one doing it? Let's face it, there are some parts of our body, that if help was needed, we'd probably prefer a complete stranger and not one of our kids.

Paula puts everything together in a summary with recommendations. At that point, you can say "thanks very much, we can handle things from here,"

or she can become as involved as you like. Such as, making and attending doctor's appointments. Since she's a nurse, she can communicate with the doctor on a different level, reporting back directly to the family.

## **You're Not Alone**

So, if you know of someone dealing with these types of issues, let them know they don't have to go it alone. There are professionals in the community that can be called upon to make life easier for everyone in the family.

You can reach Paula at (407) 331-1455, her e-mail is [healthcareresources@cfl.rr.com](mailto:healthcareresources@cfl.rr.com) or you can check out her website at [www.hcresources.com](http://www.hcresources.com)

Tell her I recommended you and she'll take extra special care of you and your family!