

# Area Agencies on Aging

## In Action

January 2009



Virginia Conley's daughter lives an hour's drive away. Widowed, 87 years old, and living alone, Virginia has also been living with diabetes for 20 years. Diabetes is the seventh leading cause of death in the U.S. But, Virginia doesn't worry since she has assistance from her care manager, Joy Polley, RN, (pictured above with Ms. Conley) and services through the PASSPORT program of Area Agency on Aging, District 7, Inc.

Because of renal failure in recent years, Virginia requires dialysis three times a week and needs transportation to dialysis and other medical appointments. Her PASSPORT care manager works with the dialysis center's social worker to ensure that Virginia has a ride to every appointment. Virginia receives personal care assistance every morning and evening. When there was no home health care agency available to staff this schedule, Virginia's care manager was able to coordinate the services through a combination of two different agencies. Virginia needs assistance to manage her many medications. Her daughter visits on her day off and sets up Virginia's medications in pill dispensers. She calls Virginia daily to remind her to take her medications.

Virginia is able to stay in her own home and do the things she likes to do—grow flowers on her front porch, eat out with her daughter when she visits, and attend church—through her daughter's support and the efforts of her PASSPORT care manager. With a smile, Virginia remarks, "PASSPORT has really helped me stay in my home. I couldn't make it without my wonderful aides. I would recommend the PASSPORT program to anyone who needs this kind of help in their home." The smile says it all.

Virginia receives the help she needs to stay safely in her own home at an annual cost of \$21,100. This is a savings of \$34,651 in Medicaid costs when compared to the cost of nursing facility placement at \$55,751.

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