



Ruth Force, certified geriatric care manager, with her client, Robert, in his home during a routine visit.

“IF ONLY I’D KNOWN ABOUT YOU WHEN...”

Dorian Maples & Associates is there to help families when an aging parent needs assistance.

article provided • photography by Steve Vorderman

“It’s the most frustrating thing I hear people say,” says Ruth Force, MS, LSW, certified geriatric care manager for Dorian Maples & Associates. “If I’d only known about you when my family was struggling with my parent.”

As a geriatric care manager, Force manages the healthcare of older adults. In most cases, her clients’ families live out of state or have full-time careers that pull them away from the day-to-day care needs of their loved ones. She supports them by coordinating these needs including accompanying her clients to their physician appointments or medical procedures and then communicating with the family members. As a licensed social worker with extensive experience with older adults, Force is a valuable advocate for seniors.

“Families are often scattered around the country and people are so busy that it is sometimes difficult for them to help their aging parents. There are endless situations where we can help. Oftentimes, I become

an extension of the family as I build a trusting relationship with them.” This relationship allows Force to offer families area resources that will be individualized to their loved ones’ needs. With the knowledge of local healthcare providers and facilities, as well as personal caregiving experience, Force works with families to find the appropriate resource with compassion.

A new relationship with a client usually begins with Force performing an assessment. It involves assessing a client’s medical, physical, emotional and cognitive well-being. She then prepares a report for the family which includes her observations and recommendations. The family may want advice on the safety of their loved ones’ living environment or whether or not they should still be driving. “If it appears to be a medical issue, I will recommend where to seek a more thorough evaluation by a physician.”

Many families hire her to be on call in case of emergency. It gives them and her client comfort knowing

a knowledgeable professional has committed in advance to help and manage the crisis until family arrives.

It’s a team effort. Family members may become concerned after a phone conversation or a visit and ask Force to investigate. “Oftentimes, it’s just a matter of making sure the client is taking their prescribed medications or complying with their doctors’ orders.”

Whatever the need, families can be proactive by consulting a professional geriatric care manager. 

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