

Increased independence

There are many older adults living in the Jacksonville area who have every intention of remaining independent, even though they face challenges in certain areas of their lives that would threaten that independence.



Helsel

Jewish Family & Community Services has recently introduced a new service, the Medical Advocate Program, which promises to assist in one key area: doctor visits.

The last few years of my mother's life, it was common for me to go with her to a doctor's appointment. My mom wanted me with her when the doctor asked questions, because some-

times she would not quite understand what he was asking. She was also relieved that I would ask the questions that she had, but was reluctant to ask.

There were other benefits. On several occasions, Mom would ask me a couple days later, "now why am I taking this medicine?" She hated taking any more pills than she had to, and wanted to make sure she was doing the right thing. I know that he welcomed my presence and even encouraged me to come with her.

The Medical Advocate Program is designed to be an asset to older adults and their loved ones who live out of town or who live in town but are not always available during the weekday.

SENIOR SCENE

Herb Helsel

To head up this program, Jewish Family & Community Services employs an experienced geriatric care manager who ensures good communication between doctors, nurses, seniors and their families. When needed, the care manager will arrange transportation to the doctor's office and will meet the patient there.

After the appointment, the care manager will stay with the client until transportation arrives. The care manager then will complete a written report of the visit, including the plan of treatment prescribed by the doctor. This report will be shared with the client and the client's family.

This service is not exclusive to the Jewish community. It is available without regard to religious affiliation. The Medical Advocate Program is a fee-based service, but a sliding fee scale is available based on income and ability to pay. For further information, please contact Jewish Family & Community Services at (904) 394-5777. Jewish Family & Community Services is committed to the mission of "helping people help themselves" and serves all persons in a non-discriminatory way.

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