



# Fact Sheet:

## Caregiver Screening, Assessment, and Planning Through the Family Caregiver Support Program

August 2009

### Background

In 2007, the legislature revised RCW 74.41.050 mandating development of an evidence-based caregiver assessment and referral tool that could be used to better tailor the support and services unpaid caregivers receive to their unique needs. There was also legislative intent to have greater consistency in the policies and services offered through the statewide Family Caregiver Support Program offices.

The Tailored Caregiver Assessment and Referral (TCARE<sup>®</sup>) model was found to best match the legislative mandate and intent. Beginning in July 2009, Washington began using TCARE<sup>®</sup> in some Family Caregiver Support Program offices (see implementation schedule on page 2).

### Why Screen and Assess Caregivers

Stress is the number one challenge facing the more than 600,000 family caregivers who provide care to loved ones in Washington State. National studies show that caregivers are twice as likely to have physical and emotional health problems as adults not in a caregiving role.

A consistent, objective, and reliable screening and assessment process offers caregivers:

- A clearer understanding of the impact of caregiving on their physical and emotional health and relationships.
- A method to identify if they are at high risk for stress and depression.
- Support and guidance in developing personal goals to address unresolved problems, stressors, and potential risks.
- An individualized plan to meet their unique goals and needs and receive appropriate and timely referrals for services before they are in crisis.

*“Finally someone is asking  
ME the right questions.”*

– a Washington State Family  
Caregiver after answering screening  
questions

A consistent, objective, and reliable screening and assessment process can be used on a state-wide policy level to:

- Identify high risk caregivers and ensure limited resources are available to those most in need.
- Test which support and services are most essential.
- Collect better state-wide data to inform policy and budget decisions.

### TCARE<sup>®</sup> Defined

TCARE<sup>®</sup> combines a screening and assessment tool that identifies the sources and level of a caregiver’s stress with one-on-one consultation and support with a specially trained TCARE<sup>®</sup> caregiver specialist. Using the screening and assessment’s results, caregiver specialists help caregivers:

- Develop goals to reduce stress and concrete strategies to achieve them.
- Navigate through the local service system and identify available resources that best meet the caregiver's unique needs.

The principal designers behind TCARE® are nationally renowned researcher Rhonda Montgomery PhD, Karl Kosloski and colleagues at the University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee. To learn more about the caregiver identity change theory behind Montgomery's development of TCARE®, visit [www.adsa.dshs.wa.gov/professional/TCARE](http://www.adsa.dshs.wa.gov/professional/TCARE) or the national TCARE website at [www.tcure.uwm.edu](http://www.tcure.uwm.edu).

## How Caregivers Access TCARE®

TCARE screening and assessments are completed through the local Family Caregiver Support Program office (see implementation schedule below). *Not every caregiver goes through a TCARE® screening and assessment.* It depends on his or her situation, service eligibility, and what type of support is needed.

The first step for any family caregiver in need of Family Caregiver Support Program services is to make the call to their local office. The important message is that there is help available at every step of a caregiver's journey. Staff will guide them through the screening and assessment process.

## TCARE® Implementation Schedule

TCARE® is now available through the Washington State [Family Caregiver Support Program](#) in Clallam, Grays Harbor, Island, Jefferson, King, Kitsap, Pacific, Pierce, Skagit, Snohomish, and Whatcom counties.

TCARE® will be available in all other counties in January 2010.

## Additional TCARE® and Caregiving Information

Visit [www.adsa.dshs.wa.gov/professional/TCARE](http://www.adsa.dshs.wa.gov/professional/TCARE) for current updates and information on TCARE implementation.

Visit [www.adsa.dshs.wa.gov/caregiving](http://www.adsa.dshs.wa.gov/caregiving) to find contact information for the local Family Caregiver Support Program and a wealth of information and resources on a variety of caregiving topics.

## Contact Information

Statewide level:

Contact:

Hilari Hauptman, [Haupthp@dshs.wa.gov](mailto:Haupthp@dshs.wa.gov) or 360-725-2556

Leigh Wellcome, [Wellcla@dshs.wa.gov](mailto:Wellcla@dshs.wa.gov) or 360-725-2547

Local level:

Contact the local Family Caregiver Support Program office. Contact information can be found at [www.adsa.dshs.wa.gov/Resources/clickmap.htm](http://www.adsa.dshs.wa.gov/Resources/clickmap.htm)