

FAMILY AND FRIENDS

caregivers

OF THE NORTHWEST



# Caregiver Corner

## The Cost of Caregiving

by Diana Wood

Caregiving is something we do as a friend, family member, or community member. With so many Baby Boomers coming of age it is common that they are often afflicted with a life-limiting disease and in need of care. Some will go into long-term care, some will be hospitalized, but most prefer to die at home. And this is where the unpaid caregiver comes in. Sometimes it is a grown child looking after a parent, often a husband or wife looking after their spouse or even a friend caring for a friend when they have no family close by.

According to the BC Hospice Palliative Care end of life caregivers face a financial strain because home care costs in the last 6 months of life are roughly double what is required for all other home care recipients. In 2009, replacement costs for unpaid caregiving in Canada was estimated at \$25 to 26 billion dollars (yes, that is billion with a B) showing the huge contribution that caregivers provide to our healthcare system.

When you are looking after someone you care deeply for, it can be a heartbreaking experience because you get to see their struggles up close

and personal in a way that others don't. This can be quite an emotional upheaval to bear. And that is why Terrace Hospice started the Family and Friend Caregivers of the Northwest. If you are caring for someone over 55 give us a call and see how we can help. 250-635-4811.

Here is a quote that I think is fitting.

"Caring for our seniors is perhaps the greatest responsibility we have. Those who walked before us have given so much and made possible the life we all enjoy."

— Senator John Hoeven

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Terrace Hospice Society <http://caregiversofthenorthwest.org>

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