



## Fox Valley/RCI REACH Program

Could you use some encouragement, support, and understanding in your caregiving journey? The RCI REACH Program is designed to assist caregivers experiencing stress in the care of their loved ones at home. The program offers current information on Alzheimer's disease and related dementia as well as in-depth support. A certified interventionist/coach can help you develop strategies and techniques for coping with troubling behaviors while improving your emotional and physical health. Contact Karen Aspenson at the RCI Reach Program, located at Mosaic Family Health, 229 S Morrison St. in Appleton, for more information.  
**Phone: 920-997-8407 Email: [Karen.aspenson@mosaicfamilyhealth.org](mailto:Karen.aspenson@mosaicfamilyhealth.org)**

Learn more by looking through the *"Frequently Asked Questions"* below:

### What is "RCI REACH"?

RCI is the *Rosalynn Carter Institute*, based in Americus, Georgia. REACH stands for **Resources for Enhancing Alzheimer's Caregiver Health**.

### Why is an agency from Georgia involved in the Fox Valley?

The Fox Valley Memory Project is an established dementia friendly community project with a growing reputation; so good, in fact, that the folks at RCI contacted us to see if we would be interested in becoming the first agency in Wisconsin to pilot their "best practices" model of direct caregiver support. They have provided materials, on-site training and ongoing consultation to support the Fox Valley program.

### Who does the program benefit?

*Caregivers* of individuals living with memory loss, specifically dementia and related disorders, are the target of this work.

### Why focus on caregivers?

According to RCI, we are facing a caregiving crisis in the United States. Our aging population, increased longevity and the growing burden of chronic illnesses escalate the need for caregivers. The work of caregiving is immensely stressful: the Alzheimer's Association reports that nearly 60% of Alzheimer's and dementia caregivers rate the emotional stress of caregiving as high or very high, and about 40% cope with depression. Caregivers need support and community programs to help them remain healthy and maintain their ability to care for another.

**What does the REACH program address?**

The program matches a certified Caregiver Interventionist, or Coach, with a caregiver who reports experiencing a high level of stress due to responsibilities of providing care to their loved ones. The Caregiver Coach meets 12 times with the caregiver over a six-month period of time. Each contact (9 in-home and 3 via telephone) offers opportunities for education, problem solving, stress management, accessing community resources, and support.

**What is the fee?**

The services of the Fox Valley/RCI REACH program are free of charge. All materials are also provided at no charge to the caregiver. Donations to the program are welcomed.

**What about confidentiality?**

The staff of the Fox Valley/RCI REACH program is bound by confidentiality, meaning that any information shared with the Caregiver Coach is not shared with anyone outside of the program. The exception, of course, is shared information or observations that lead the Caregiver Coach to believe that abuse or neglect is occurring, or that the caregiver or care recipient are a danger to themselves or others.

**How are referrals to the program made?**

Referrals are made from physicians, social workers, counselors, and the caregiver or family members. Contact Karen Aspenson, Caregiver Coach, at 920.997.8407. Referrals should include contact information for the *caregiver* during the day and evening hours.

**Are there eligibility restrictions?**

Yes. The primary restrictions are: (1) caregiving must take place in home; (2) the care recipient must live in Calumet, Outagamie, Northern Winnebago, or Waupaca Counties; (3) the care recipient cannot be intended to move into a care facility within the six months that REACH services are scheduled to be provided; and (4) the mental and physical health of the caregiver must be such that s/he is capable of understanding the program materials and following through with intervention plans.

**How do we know REACH works?**

RCI REACH is an evidence-based program proven in the community setting to improve the caregiver's experience by:

- Reducing caregiver burden scores by 15%
- Improving caregiver self-reported health by 10%
- Reducing caregiver depression scores by 16%
- Most of all, increasing the caregiver's confidence in their own ability to provide care

More information on the work of the Rosalynn Carter Institute for Caregiving, and, specifically, on the REACH program can be found at [www.rosalynncarter.org](http://www.rosalynncarter.org).