

Nursing home fear is wrong

In March, I had the honor of speaking to the Saline Community Hospital Women's Group. My topic was "Aging in the 80s."

The women in attendance live busy, giving lives. I think they can best be described as active members of the "sandwich generation." These are special people who are right in the middle of raising teenage children and caring for their aging parents.

In the time allowed for questions, they asked many pertinent ones that I would like to share with you.

Q. How can I cope with parents who want me to promise them that I will never put them in a nursing home?

A. What's really wrong with nursing homes? They provide quality nursing care at a time in life when it is needed most.

gerontology

A. Jolayne Farrell

In order to cope with the responsibility that is being put on you, I suggest that you speak candidly to your parents and ask them exactly what they expect from you by extracting this promise.

Do they really want you to be their total caregiver and provide them with 24-hour nursing care?

They may have other ideas regarding their care which could include a variety of home professional services. They may simply want your support in maintaining their independence.

Your parents should be making their own plans for their future rather than attempting to elicit an unrealistic promise from you, their daughter.

Q. How would you advise an 88-year-old diabetic woman about her diet? She wants to eat sweets — I say go for it! At 88, what has she got to lose?

A. I would advise her to see a nutritionist. The diabetic diet has been changed and improved. It now includes a variety of sweets.

At 88, she has a lot to lose — she could lose her health. The complications associated with diabetes are many and unpleasant.

Q. How can we help an older relative who has depression?

A. Depression is the most prevalent mental disorder in older persons. There are many causes and a variety of treatments.

The best way to start to help a depressed person recover is to encourage him or her to seek professional help. A complete medical and psychological evaluation should reveal the cause of the depression and treatment should begin at once.

Readers can write to Jolayne Farrell at 11 Cynthia Cres., Richmond Hill, Ontario L4E 1J3.

Peace march to reach area

AP — A group of anti-nuclear activists has announced plans for a 700-mile disarmament march that will crisscross Michigan to attract attention to the state's peace movement.

The march is scheduled to begin May 31 in Sault Ste. Marie and go through Charlevoix, Traverse City, Muskegon, Grand Rapids, Holland, Kalamazoo, Battle Creek, Lansing, Jackson, Ann Arbor and Walled Lake.

It is scheduled to end in Detroit on Aug. 9, the 42nd anniversary of the atomic bombing of Nagasaki.

One of the organizers, Doug Lent, said surveys have found most Americans want nuclear disarmament, but the message hasn't gotten through to the nation's leaders. "It's as if we're talking through a plate glass window in a soundproof room," he said.

Another organizer, Mary Diskin, said the positions advocated by the Michigan Peace March were a halt to nuclear testing, a freeze on nuclear weapons, stopping "Star Wars" research and development, and global disarmament.

Ad agencies bid on AIDS promos

AP — The state of Michigan plans to launch an extensive anti-AIDS advertising campaign late this summer.

More than two dozen ad agencies have already expressed interest in landing the contract.

Representatives of the agencies crowded into a Department of Health conference room last week to hear state officials describe what would be involved in submitting proposals for the campaign.

A STATE document issued to the competing agencies said acquired immune deficiency syndrome is taking a disproportionately high toll on minorities, especially blacks. The document said cases have been reported in 30 of Michigan's 83 counties.

"In addition to the problem of AIDS, there is a problem of 'afralids' or fear of AIDS," the document said. "Despite all the information available on AIDS, Michigan citizens have many misconceptions about how AIDS is transmitted and how it is prevented."

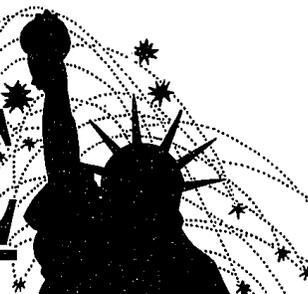
Proposals will be due from the agencies by June 17. The state hopes to choose an agency by early July.

THE STATE wants an advertising campaign that includes commercials on radio and television and ads in the print media aimed at intravenous drug users, adolescents and the general population.

Jan Ruff of the health department said the campaign wouldn't target homosexuals because they would be included in the general population appeals.

The highest percentage of AIDS cases are among homosexuals and bisexual men.

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