



# HOW WE HELP

*in the words of our consumers*

Being a full-time caregiver is exhausting, lonely, and incredibly stressful, but it's much better than the alternative, which is my mom living alone. The other alternative is her living in a nursing home, which I really don't want. Having her at home gives me a sense of peace, knowing she is safe all the time. Even before we got home health aides or meals, WMEC helped with information.



Once I had you guys on my team, it was just great to have a place to call when I had a question, and I feel more confident and a little more prepared. The aides have helped me get the chores of life done, like going to the grocery store, mowing my lawn, and going to the doctor for myself. I'm really grateful for that.

~ Vance Chatel, Family Caregiver



My husband recently had surgery and was sent to rehab. When we left, we were accidentally given the wrong patient's meds. He took the meds, thinking they were his, and he aspirated and ended up in the ICU, not expected to live the night. Thankfully things went well once we figured everything out, and he is now doing well, but it took quite a bit out of him.

Through everything, Elba Pires (WMEC Ombudsman Director) has held my hand, both professionally and psychologically, and has gotten me through it. I knew we were heard, which made all the difference, and she was going to do everything in her power to make sure it never happens to anyone else. She went above and beyond to make sure we were ok and I knew she had my back. She was professional, courteous, kind and just a good human being, and that's saying a lot in these days.

~ Judy Nadler, Family Caregiver

# MAKE A DIFFERENCE

This holiday season, join us in the spirit of giving by contributing your time or financial support. Our Nursing Home Ombudsman, Money Management, and Meals on Wheels programs rely on volunteers to bring comfort to the older adults and vulnerable individuals in our community, and your time can make a difference. If you prefer to give financially, your generous donations enable us to provide essential services to those in need. Your support brightens lives, so visit [wmeldercare.org](http://wmeldercare.org), use the enclosed envelope, or call us at 413-538-9020 to make your gift today. Together, we can create a more caring and compassionate community.



# GIVING BACK

WMEC was honored with the opportunity to take part in the Holyoke Community College Giving Tree initiative again this year. Thanks to the generosity of HCC students and staff, 182 WMEC consumers will experience the joy of receiving a Christmas gift during this holiday season.



Additionally, on November 13, WMEC joined in the festivities at the Chicopee River Mills Center's "Festival of Trees." This event served a dual purpose: to support senior center programming through fundraising and to craft an enchanting, luminous array of trees for the pleasure of Chicopee's older adult community. As part of the "Festival of Trees" initiative, River Mills Center visitors have the opportunity to purchase tickets for a chance to win one of these beautifully decorated trees, with the winners set to be drawn on December 1st.

✔ Sign-up to receive our bi-monthly email newsletters and be entered to win a \$100 gift card, just in time for the holidays! Sign-up now at [www.wmeldercare.org/signup](http://www.wmeldercare.org/signup)

Through our services, programs, and partnerships with community organizations, we have continued the work we firmly believe in, rooted in the principles of self-determination, independence, dignity, and choice for older adults and people with disabilities. We've provided vital, life-saving community resources, such as home-delivered meals, senior care options, personal care management, and outreach to thousands of individuals in need.

With the help and support of our incredible staff, devoted community partners, and generous donors, we made an indelible impact this year, including:



1,721 consumers hired and managed their own Personal Care Assistants to help them maintain their independence with activities of daily living.



Our Community Resource Specialists took 13,844 calls and provided support and information to 6,787 consumers.



Our Care Alliance of Western Massachusetts team provided compassionate case management to over 2,017 persons with disabilities from ages 3 to 64.



3,012 consumers received knowledgeable and caring case management from our Senior Care Options and One Care Team.



Our 43 Meals on Wheels Drivers delivered over 359,500 nutritious meals and vital daily wellness checks to consumers in their homes.



968 consumers were kept safe by personal alert systems provided through our Home Care Program.

# CELEBRATING 2023

Thanks to two grants from the Executive Office of Health and Human Services, we were able to launch two new programs in 2023: the Hospital to Home Program, in partnership with Holyoke Medical Center, in which our Hospital Liaisons work with the discharge team to procure services for individuals transitioning from hospital care back to home, and the CARE (Caregiver Assistance, Respite and Enrichment) Program that provides caregivers much needed time off with paid respite care. Those who want to review WMEC's year-to-date accomplishments can access the 2023 Annual Report at [wmeldercare.org/report](http://wmeldercare.org/report).



Hospital to Home Liaisons Olga (Lydia) Yanginski and Rosa Ramos



Family Caregiver Specialist Monica Crespo with a caregiver respite recipient