



Industry Leaders Join Forces to Launch National Caregiver Council

Council will identify issues and strengthen resources for growing family caregiver population

SAN DIEGO - October 27, 2015 – GreatCall Inc., the leading provider of easy-to-use technology for active aging, has brought together leaders of national family caregiver organizations and other experts to form the Caregiver Council. The Council will identify emerging issues that demand attention and support, as well as develop concepts, tools and services that address the needs of family caregivers. Quickly identifying leading resources is a necessity for time-starved caregivers.

“The sheer number of family caregivers in the U.S. – 44 million, more than 18 percent of the population – has changed the landscape of family life in this country,” says David Inns, CEO of GreatCall. “The issues are not only care-related, but impact physical and emotional health, finances and workplace productivity. As the Baby Boomers age, there will be a huge care gap and a critical need for caregiver support. The Caregiver Council was born from a desire to look at these issues in a collaborative, meaningful way. Our announcement is timed with National Family Caregivers Month to bring attention to these issues.”

Need for a common language

The language around caregiving is the first area targeted, as many caregivers do not self-identify. They see themselves as daughters, wives, sons, friends and neighbors, not necessarily as caregivers. The term “family caregivers” was adopted as the term of choice by the Council to better define this rapidly growing role.

“We need to have a shared understanding of who family caregivers are and where they can turn for resources,” says Gail Gibson Hunt, President and CEO of the National Alliance for Caregiving. “I’m encouraged by the work of the Council to identify a common language for caregivers.”

One of those terms is “respite” care – or taking a break from the day-to-day caregiving grind. This concept is so important that respite is the theme of the 2015 National Family Caregivers Month. According to John Schall, CEO of Caregiver Action Network, “respite is the key to the caregiver’s own well being. It gives them the opportunity to reenergize and stay strong so they can continue to care for their loved one and enable him or her to stay at home longer – up to three times as long, according to recent studies.”

Collaborative initiatives

The Council has developed a list of initial priorities, both short and long-term, it will address. These are urgent issues: the number of older adults requiring care is increasing exponentially while the number who can care for them is decreasing.

Initiatives under development include:

- Curated resources in the categories most critical to caregiving: caregiver support (physical, emotional and social), health/diseases, driving/transportation, finances, housing, legal issues and fraud.
- A caregiving resource tool to organize the thousands of options and identify those most beneficial at each stage of the caregiver journey.
- Research on issues related to caregiver needs to better inform and direct potential solutions.

“In bringing this Council together, we looked at the growing number of family caregivers, the personal and economic stress they are under, the lack of attention they receive and their scant knowledge of resources,” says Inns. “We pulled together the leaders in this space – the experts and innovators – and as a group are combining our resources to support family caregivers more effectively than any of us can do alone.”

Caregiver Council members include: Ian Brady, CEO, Lindy Care; Andy Cohen, CEO, caring.com; Scott Collins, CEO, Link-age; Danielle Glorioso, Executive Director, UCSD Center for Healthy Aging; Gail Hunt, President & CEO, National Alliance for Caregiving; David Inns, CEO, GreatCall; Brooks Kenny, Strategic Advisor, Lotsahelpinghands; Sona Mehring, CEO, CaringBridge; Susan Reinhard, SVP Public Policy, AARP; John Schall, CEO, Caregiver Action Network; Kai Stinchcombe, Co-Founder & CEO, True Link; Sherwin Sheik, President & CEO, Care Linx; Louis Tenenbaum, Founder, Aging in Place Institute. The Council’s advisors include Laurie Orlov, Founder, Aging in Place Technology Watch; Sally Abrahms, writer on aging and caregiving; and Mary Furlong, CEO, MFA.

About GreatCall

GreatCall is the leading provider of easy-to-use technology for active aging. With health and safety solutions for older adults and their family caregivers, GreatCall’s innovative suite of mobile products and award-winning approach to customer care helps aging consumers live more independent lives. Products and services include: GreatCall Splash, Jitterbug, Jitterbug Touch and health, safety and medical apps Urgent Care, GreatCall Link, MedCoach and 5Star. GreatCall’s products and services are sold nationwide at leading retailers as well as direct to consumers at 1-800-296-4993 and online at www.GreatCall.com. Follow our news on Twitter @GreatCallinc and on Facebook at Facebook.com/greatcall or caregiver discussion at: <https://www.facebook.com/groups/CaregiversConnect/>

For information on the National Alliance for Caregiving, go to www.caregiving.org and for the Caregiver Action Network, to www.caregiveraction.org. Other member organizations include:

www.aarp.org, www.carelinx.com, www.caring.com, www.caringbridge.org, www.lindycare.com, www.linkageconnect.com, www.lotsahelpinghands.com, www.louistenenbaum.com, www.sira.ucsd.edu and www.truelinkfinancial.com.