

News Currents

Foundation To Address Aging, Long Term Care Issues

Putting a human face on the long term care industry is one motivator behind Jim Dwyer's desire to launch the newly formed Foundation for the Future of Aging. Dwyer and his brother, Jack Dwyer, played a pivotal role in the formation of the soon-to-be-launched Washington, D.C.-based foundation that will focus on education and outreach efforts related to long term care.

It was the Dwyers' connections to the American Health Care Association, as associate business members, as well as their own personal experiences, that spurred their interest in building the foundation.

Together, the Dwyers have nearly six decades of long term care experience under their belts, and they plan on putting that experience to good use in furthering the foundation's mission.

The foundation will collaborate with other entities—foundations, universities, corporations, providers—on projects that seek to improve long term care quality, help consumers make informed decisions, bolster the geriatric workforce, improve services for older adults, and provide resources to family

caregivers, according to the foundation's mission.

"There's a lot of research out there on the problems of long term care—and there are a lot of solutions as well," Jim Dwyer says. "The Foundation on the Future of Aging will hone in some



of those solutions and educate the public and the industry about them."

The foundation will focus initially on workforce issues and consumer information, says Jan Thayer, president of the foundation's board of directors. It is currently partnering with the Heinz Family Philanthropies to produce information cards for consumers seeking long term care services for a loved one. One card is titled: "10 Questions to Ask Before Choosing a Nursing Home or Assisted Living Facility." Each card

in the series will be available in print and online. "Further down the road, we'd like to educate families about what they can do if they are dissatisfied with the care in a loved one's facility," says Dwyer. For example, he says, families should know what resources are available to help them through that type of situation.

"With the pending age wave of 77 million baby boomers, our country must grapple with how best to provide health care and long term care to older Americans," Thayer says. "The Foundation for the Future of Aging hopes to address some of these important issues."

The six-member board is a cross-section of aging and long term care experts, including: Jack Svahn, vice president; Michael Burchell, secretary/treasurer; Jim Dwyer; David Jackson, MD; Keith Weikel; and Thayer.

Funding for the first three years of operation has been provided by both Jack and Jim Dwyer of the Capitol Funding Corp. and the Capitol Purchasing Group, respectively.

—Lynn Wagner and Meg LaPorte