

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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INDEPENDENCE – It's priceless in more than one way!

Western Springs, IL (June 24, 2007) – Many people who have bravely fought in WWII to preserve America's freedom are now struggling with their own independence; that is, the ability to live independently. A soldier that would have been 20 years old in 1940 is now 87, and is part of America's fastest growing segment of the population.

Mary Doepke, RN, owner of Home Helpers says, "the needs of adults age 85+ tend to be complex due to multiple chronic conditions" Many older adults that benefit from care provided in their home have come to recognize their own limitations and realize their independence is priceless."

It can take sickness for people to truly appreciate good health, the same is true for our ability to live and function independently. It is the times we become more dependent on others for help with daily living activities that we recognize and truly appreciate our own independence.

As the name suggests 'activities of daily living' have to do with day-to-day activities. These activities are fundamental to caring for one's self and maintaining independence. 'Activities of daily living' are classified into two categories: independent living (IADLs) and personal care (ADLs).

- Instrumental Activities of Daily Living (IADLs) are activities related to independent living and include preparing meals, managing money (writing checks, paying bills), shopping for groceries or personal items, maintaining a residence/performing housework (e.g. laundry, cleaning), managing medications, using a telephone, handling mail, and traveling via car or public transportation.

- Activities of Daily Living (ADLs) are everyday personal care activities such as bathing – sponge, bath or shower, getting dressed, getting in or out of bed or a chair (also called transferring), using the toilet, eating, and getting around or walking.

Physical or mental limitations may restrict a person's ability to perform activities of daily living. When a person has a limitation, he or she has an inability to independently perform one or more daily living activity. A three-part scale is typically used to determine the level of dependence (limitation or deficit) for each activity.

- INDEPENDENT – performs tasks without assistance
- ASSISTANCE NEEDED - performs task with assistance from a human being or support device
- DEPENDENT – unable to perform tasks without assistance

Doepke adds, “it is important to be aware of a person’s limitations with ‘activities of daily living’ for the following reasons:

- Recognizing a person’s limitations is the first step to developing a care plan to provide the appropriate type and level of assistance.
- Determining the type of ADL care that is needed enables families to assign caregiver roles and become educated on how to perform care appropriately.
- Admission policies for Adult Day services, care communities and institutions often reflect ADLs to determine eligibility to participate in a program.
- Long-term care insurance policies/programs often rely on ADL measures (the inability to do a certain number of ADLs) to determine whether an individual qualifies for benefits.”

Doepke says, “we encourage people to proactively seek assistance with daily living activities when life becomes more challenging. The more we can do to provide the care and support people need and deserve, the better able our clients are to maintain and maximize their independence

and live life to the fullest. Making Life Easier[™] is more than a tagline for Home Helpers, it's our mission.”

Home Helpers provides compassionate caregivers to help individuals remain independent in their own homes. They can be reached at 708-783-1220.

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