

Long-term care

FROM PAGE ONE

mother home would have taken far longer without the agency's help, she said.

The Morrisettes said their pizza restaurant and Mr. Morrisette became a personal care assistant about two years ago.

Now he makes a living from the paid shared living arrangement they have taking care of Mrs. Morrisette's mother, who has later-stage Parkinson's disease, a 74-year-old woman with physical ailments and mental disabilities, and a 57-year-old Vietnamese woman with severe physical and cognitive problems.

Mrs. Cole and her two housemates are benefiting from the home atmosphere and family-style care that the Morrisettes provide, but so are taxpayers.

Albert Norman, executive director of Mass Home Care, an association of 30 nonprofit agencies serving the elderly, said that "someplace around 15 percent of people in nursing homes today could come out." If there were proper support, that would be about 5,000 of the 30,000 nursing home residents on Medicaid, he said.

Many nursing homes charge \$60,000 a year, Mr. Norman noted. The annual cost of serving disabled elderly people in the community averages \$28,000, less than half the cost, he said.

Already support programs are available to 10,000 Massachusetts nursing-home-eligible people to live in homes in the community, Mr. Norman said. That saves the state and federal governments \$50 million a year.

Massachusetts Senior Care Association, whose members include nursing homes, guest homes whether 6,000 nursing home residents could live in the community, according to Scott Plumb, senior vice president.

The state, with its "flexible budget" is not adding services but cutting back adult day health and other programs, creating waiting lists to get community services, he said.

"I somebody can be cared for safely and effectively at home, that's where they should be cared for. Nursing homes are not in the business of taking care of people who don't need to be there," Mr. Plumb said.

"There are some people in nursing homes, particularly with mental illness, who if the state were to make a strong, funded commitment to community care, that they could be cared for in the community."

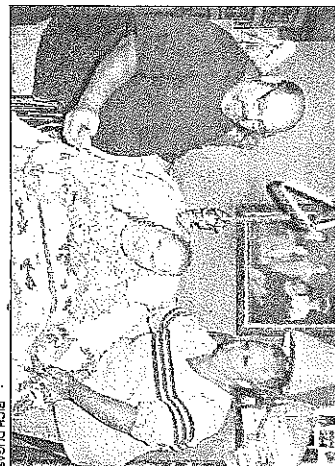
Since February or March, five agencies in the Worcester area have resumed the Aging and Disabilities Resource Consortium, according to Ellen M. Messer, director of programs for the Center for Living & Working in Worcester, a Senior Center for Living & Working, and a Central Massachusetts Agency on Aging Under Services of Worcester Area, Worcester Home Care and Tri-Valley Inc.

"The point is to have no wrong door," Ms. Messer said. "The agencies are collaborating, so they know each other's services. If an elderly person or someone with disabilities who needs help living on their own calls the 'wrong agency,' that agency will contact the right agency to the caller, she said.

Mr. Norman said the 11 consortiums across the state will fight the "silo" concept of service provision that separates services for elderly people from those for people with disabilities, when some people may need both. "Individuals don't age in silos," he said. "The same person may need services to transition from middle age into old age."

Ginger Willis Howe, Tri-Valley program director for home and adult family care, said that long-term options counselors under the consortium will be an important addition to the outreach work the agencies already do. With a \$2.5 million infusion from the state Legislature, the options program will go to people, usually when they are in a hospital to counsel them on how they can return to the community rather than enter a nursing home, Mr. Norman said.

There has been a 20 percent drop in nursing home patient days in Massachusetts over the past nine years, he said. He'd like to see that trend continue, believing the state can reverse its ratio of 61 percent of Medicaid nursing home 2 1/2 years longer than she thinks she's needed to be



Rich DuRois
Alan and Jackie Morrisette care for Mrs. Morrisette's mother, Anita Cole, in the couple's home in Blackstone.

Finding a way to live at home

Agencies collaborate to keep people out of nursing homes

By Lee Hammel
TELEGRAM & GAZETTE STAFF

Anita Cole knows that her life of 75 years is coming to an end.

Still, she says from the hospital bed near the DVD player she uses to watch "The King and I" in one of six bedrooms in the Blackstone home of her daughter and son-in-law, "I'm lucky" because there are so many people who are worse off.

She did not feel so lucky during the year she spent in a nursing home just over the state line in Worcester. By the time she left it and arrived nearly two years ago in the six-bedroom home of Alan and Alan Morrisette, with the help of Tri-Valley elder services in Dudley, she had bedsores you could put your hand in, said Jackie Morrisette, Mrs. Cole's daughter.

Mrs. Cole, who used to fix linting machines in the mills, said that some aides and nurses

were kind and attentive, but Mrs. Morrisette said that some of them abused her mother.

Tri-Valley is a godsend, Mrs. Morrisette said. Even though Mrs. Morrisette used to work as a certified nursing assistant in nursing homes and as a certified medical technician, clearing the trail through paperwork by herself and coming up with a proper plan to bring her

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New labs

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economic activity and 1,493 jobs in the state. The majority of that economic activity and accompanying jobs are in Worcester.

Construction of a second research center, the \$405 million Albert Sherman Center, would generate \$74 million and 5,667 jobs, the medical school estimated. Once open, the school estimated the Sherman Center will support 926 million in economic activity and 1,600 jobs in the state every year.

"The lights went on," Dr. Collins said. "The demonstration of the amount of economic activity that goes through there, not to mention the science. That sealed the deal."

The state of Massachusetts, as part of its \$1 billion Life Sciences Bill, granted \$80 million toward the project's construction costs. The National Institutes of Health is poised to grant the Sherman Center \$50 million per year for its research project. The medical school is finding the remaining cost of the project through borrowing.

The center is named for Albert "Albie" Sherman, the school's longtime vice chancellor for university relations.

This week, the medical school will break ground on the Sherman Center, a facility that will double the school's research space and provide a home for three separate research centers already found at the medical school's Worcester campus. The nine-story, 500,000-square-foot center is scheduled to be completed by early 2012. Steel will begin going up after the New Year, Dr. Collins said. Located between the medical school building and the Lazare Research Building, the new research center's location on campus is now a parking lot.

The Sherman Center will include research space for more than 100 investigators and 1,000 scientific and support staff, enclosed connections to the medical school and the Lazare building, auditorium seating for 500 and a fitness center.

The new research center will contain the RNAI Therapeutics Institute, the area of research for which UMass Medical School researcher Craig Mello

won a Nobel Prize. The institute studies using the RNAi, or RNA interference, mechanism to turn off the action of individual genes. In practice the research could lead to advances in turning off proteins that cause cancer, diabetes, Alzheimer's disease, Huntington's disease, amyotrophic lateral sclerosis, and a variety of acute and chronic viral infections.

The UMass Gene Therapy Center will be moved into the new research center. In gene therapy research, malfunctioning genes are replaced by working genes delivered into the body through nonpathogenic viruses developed in only a few places in the country, including UMass Medical School. Once the working gene is inside the body, the body "opens" it and the gene replaces the malfunctioning gene. The research is being applied to diseases such as cystic fibrosis, a genetic lung and liver disorder called alpha 1-antitrypsin deficiency, inherited metabolic disorders such as lysosomal storage disease, and fatal progressive nerve disease called Charcot-Marie-Tooth, as well as eye disorders such as retinal and hearing degeneration.

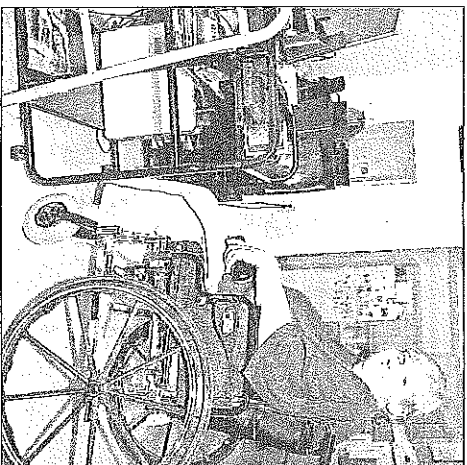
UMass Center for Stem Cell Biology and Regenerative Medicine uses human stem cells for regenerative purposes. The stem cell center is developing research programs for cancer, juvenile diabetes, Alzheimer's disease, Parkinson's disease and other diseases.

Despite the telegram, Dr. Collins told the Telegram & Gazette editorial board yesterday, UMass Medical School is moving ahead with its plans to build a second research center.

"It's not a time to sit back and be contemplative and conservative," he said. "Not one of our scientists approaches the problem they face by saying 'Let's wait until another day.'"

All of the research that will be done in the new research center already is being done in the medical school, but in three different places.

"There's such a spark that occurs among scientists when they interact with each other," he said. "The spark that could occur scientifically could be rather significant."



Rich DuRois
Karen Monroe inside her apartment on Pleasant Street in Worcester last week after 3 1/2 years at the Old Fellows home.

MassHealth spending on long-term care

Percentage Share of MassHealth (Medicaid) spending on long-term care

Year	Community	Institutional	Total	Percentage of MassHealth
FY 05	\$972,298,346	\$1,748,185,952	\$2,420,395,298	27.7%
FY 06	\$773,205,255	\$1,755,514,583	\$2,528,720,208	30.10%
FY 07	\$946,516,530	\$1,750,712,649	\$2,705,629,160	35.00%
FY 08	\$1,131,027,326	\$1,748,038,747	\$2,880,066,073	39.28%

Source: State Health Policy, Office of Disability, Executive Office of Health and Human Services, 2009.

Karen S. Monroe, 60, spent three months in UMass Memorial Medical Center—Memorial Campus after a motor vehicle accident that left her in a wheelchair, and then 3 1/2 years in the Old Fellows Home. She said that her daughter's home in Dudley where she lived before the accident, was not accessible, and that she languished in the Old Fellows home 2 1/2 years longer than she thinks she's needed to be

there. Phrally on June 1 with the help of the Center for Living & Working, she got an apartment on Pleasant Street from the Worcester Housing Authority.

While Ms. Monroe said she was well taken care of at Old Fellows, "I have more freedom here," she said. She can cook for herself or sit outside or go to the nearby CVS, she said.

Ms. Messier of Center for Living & Working said the lengthy accreditation process for the new research center, which she said is not a time to sit back and be contemplative and conservative, he said. "Not one of our scientists approaches the problem they face by saying 'Let's wait until another day.'"

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