

# Caregiver Central

October 2019

Los Angeles Caregiver Resource Center @ USC

## ABOUT US

**USC Leonard Davis**  
*Family Caregiver Support Center*

The Los Angeles Caregiver Resource Center @ USC provides services for family caregivers in Los Angeles County to aid in the caregiving process. We are committed to supporting caregivers through information and referral, education and training events, support groups, family consultations, online services, and respite.

LACRC@USC has been empowering family caregivers in the Los Angeles area since 1989. It is part of a statewide system of 11 Caregiver Resource Centers throughout California.

**LACRC**

LOS ANGELES CAREGIVER RESOURCE CENTER  
A program of the USC Family Caregiver Support Center

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Los Angeles, CA 90089-0191

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**1-855-872-6060**

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## Updates & Announcements

October is upon us again! It may be hard to believe with our current hot Southern California weather, but soon the days will cool down, and our nights will get longer. As we move closer to the holidays, we may begin to wonder how we can handle the load of caregiving with holiday hoopla and festivities. The short answer is, **KEEP IT SIMPLE**. Our tendency during the holiday season is often to go full speed into everything, resulting in stress and anxiety from being overwhelmed. Give yourself and the person you are caring for a break from all the social obligations. Be mindful that focusing on the **QUALITY** of social interactions rather than the **QUANTITY** of them will relieve the feeling of needing to attend everything. Additionally, keep in mind that the person you are caring for may also be feeling overwhelmed by all the people and festivities that you are taking them to, which can lead to resistance, anxiety, or other behavioral challenges.

In July, our staff had the distinguished pleasure of being trained by the Rosalynn Carter Institute of Caregiving (RCI) to deliver a new evidence-based class for caregivers called "Dealing With Dementia." This workshop goes over the Dealing With Dementia Guide produced by RCI; it covers what is in



*Sophia Chan (speaker) explains eligibility requirements for Medi-Cal and Medicare benefits to a captive audience.*

the guide and where to find the information when you need it. The guide contains detailed information about caring for someone with dementia, suggestions for problem solving, stress management, and caring for yourself while you care for your loved one. If you are caring for someone who has dementia, this workshop is for you! Please be on the lookout for upcoming dates and times when our staff will be teaching this new workshop at a location near you!

For the first time in our history as a center, USC FCSC hosted an all-Chinese (Mandarin) language event at the Arcadia Community Center on Friday, September 13th, 9:00 AM - 1:00 PM. This event was called "Caregiving: What You Need To Know," and included presentations about community resources, long term care planning, and how to navigate Medicare, Medi-Cal, and health insurance benefits.

# Spanish Support Group Affects Self-Care

**T**hough there is a large Spanish-speaking community in Los Angeles County, there remains a shortage of telephone support groups conducted in Spanish for caregivers. We, at the USC Family Caregiver Support Center, responded to this community need by creating a monthly Spanish Telephone Support Group to better serve our Latino caregivers.

Family Care Navigator (FCN), Alejandra Rojas, facilitates the Spanish Telephone Support Group and remembers, "It took a while for [the support group] to gain traction." Alejandra explains there can still be a stigma in the Latino community regarding mental health and participating in support groups. Additionally, Latinos tend to value their privacy, so it has been a journey for her participants to feel comfortable enough to open up.

Despite the initial slow start, the increased awareness as well as the cultural accommodation of the support group is what has gained its popularity. Participants appreciate the group and resources being in Spanish and identify with the other members as family, rather than strangers.

Lucia Sotelo is one of the many caregivers who benefits from the Spanish Telephone Support Group. With the help of her sister, she has been caring for her widowed mother for the past four years. She says her overall wellness improved after joining the group. She used to be overwhelmed with stress from balancing her home, work and caregiving duties; this stress was leading to her being depressed. Once she began calling in for the



*Lucia Sotelo (left) with her mother (right).*

support group, she improved her self-care, practiced new coping methods such as breathing and mediation techniques, and learned how to communicate more effectively with doctors. Lucia was even willing to take a quick trip to Mexico with one of her sisters after not visiting for ten years. To this day, she believes that particular trip was the ultimate self-care activity for her and is something she is eternally thankful for.

Lucia Sotelo is not the only person who has seen a change in her life since joining the Spanish support group. Her mother and sister both thank Alejandra, the USC Family Caregiver Support Center, and the entire support group for helping with her caregiving journey. Lucia's sister even called in to one of the support groups to personally thank the group for helping her sister. Lucia is thankful to be part of such a positive support group and truly looks forward to talking with her friends each month and sharing her experiences with them.



**PROJECT REVEAL:**  
Identifying the Caregiver in You

**19<sup>TH</sup> ANNUAL C.A.L.M. CONFERENCE**  
Saturday, November 9, 2019 | 9:00 AM-2:00 PM

USC Leonard Davis School of Gerontology  
3715 McClintock Ave., Los Angeles, CA 90089

REGISTER ONLINE AT [WWW.FCSC.USC.EDU](http://WWW.FCSC.USC.EDU) OR TOLL FREE 1-855-872-6060 **LACRC**

# Family Meetings Improve Family Understanding

**F**amily meetings are sometimes helpful when the primary caregiver desperately needs a break but doesn't know how to ask for help. Other family members or friends may believe that the caregiver is handling things well because they appear fine on the surface. However, the emotional burden of being the main person doing the caregiving can quickly become too overwhelming for one person to handle.

Sandra Padilla is one of our many caregivers who have worked with a Family Care Navigator (FCN) to organize a family meeting. She felt if her brother and sister heard from a professional what she was experiencing, they might understand how their assistance would help immensely.

FCN Amy Blackburn facilitated Sandra's family meeting. The date and agenda for the meeting were set for a Saturday afternoon. FCN Amy started with a brief introduction and discussed the meaning of activities of daily living (ADLs) and instrumental activities of daily living (IADLs). Sandra was able to discuss her own daily role in providing direct care for their mother, and how she felt about other family members' roles in direct or indirect care, real or perceived. After Sandra spoke, FCN Amy drew attention to how Sandra described each direct care task and the emotional turmoil Sandra felt in trying to get her mother to complete each one. She also talked about

research on caregiver stress and burden, how dementia gets worse and the way it can progress, symptoms of the disease, and what to expect for care needs. FCN Amy finished by answering any final questions and focusing on how the family would solve issues that were discussed. The family meeting was a success as shown in Sandra's email:

“ Hello Amy,

Thank you so much for taking this Saturday to inform my family and myself on this disease [vascular dementia]. You were very informative, it really helped so much. The way you presented it to them by having me explain what I go through really helped. I didn't really know how you were going to do it without making them feel obligated or upset that I was having this meeting to force them to help me. It was so subtle yet so wise how you were able to get them to understand. Thanks again! We are working on a schedule.

With so much gratefulness,  
Sandra

”



## THE LAST WORD:

# Free Events Around Town

### **Central LA Region:**

#### **DODGER STADIUM COMMUNITY DOG WALK & FESTIVAL**

A party for your dog and you can come too!

**DATE:** Saturday, November 23, 2019

**TIME:** Community Dog Walk: 9AM - Noon; Festival & Pet Adoption: Noon - 3PM

**WHERE:** Dodger Stadium / Elysian Park

<https://www.eventbrite.com/e/dodger-stadium-community-dog-walk-festival-tickets-66485093705>

### **Gateway Cities Region:**

#### **2nd ANNUAL TASTE OF COMPTON**

The Latino Chamber of Commerce of Compton is inviting all the surrounding communities to attend the 2nd Annual Taste of Compton Festival which benefits small businesses, families, households and our employable youth. Being a family-oriented event, our main goal is to show off the city's culture & diversity through food. At the same time, we hope to provide businesses with

potential new customers and with a new insight of what Compton has to offer.

**DATE:** Saturday, October 26, 2019

**TIME:** 11:00 AM - 6:00 PM PDT

**WHERE:** 205 South Willowbrook Ave., Compton, CA 90220

<https://www.facebook.com/events/1124895644379122/>

### **San Gabriel Valley Region:**

#### **INTRO TO MEDITATION: FINDING YOUR CENTER**

Find your center at our introductory meditation classes. The classes include guided meditation and a short lecture on a mindfulness related topic that can be applied to the everyday lives of meditation practitioners. The classes are free of charge and open to the general public.

**DATES & TIMES:** Sundays 9:00 AM - 11:00 AM & Thursdays 7:00 PM - 8:30 PM

**WHERE:** Dhammakaya International Meditation Center, 865 E. Monrovia Pl., Azusa, CA 91702

<https://www.peacepointmeditation.org/classes>