



Our Top 10 Achievements of 2014



Every December at Home Care Assistance, we like to take time to reflect on our achievements over the past twelve months and how they served our clients, caregivers and communities. Read on for our Top 10 Achievements of 2014.

1. Home Care Assistance has not only surpassed 100 locations, opening 23 new sites throughout North America, but we also established our first cross-ocean expansion into Australia!
2. We have served 5,000 clients and have helped more than 20,000 families navigate their care needs.
3. In keeping with our reputation as a fast-growing employer, we added more than 1,000 new positions and now have more than 5,000 employees across North America.
4. We furthered our commitment to changing the way the world ages with two parallel, community-centric campaigns: **Senior Wish** and **Honor Your Living Legend**. Both programs celebrate older adults and give voices and faces to an undervalued population.
5. We expanded our award-winning book series with **The Brain Boost**, a book that offers practical, everyday tips to support brain health and longevity.



Letter from the Editor:

As we enter the third week of January, I am sure that most of you have set at least one New Year's resolution—for many people this means working to improve physical health, whether it's losing weight, adopting healthier eating habits or improving one's workout routine. While physical fitness is important, cognitive health is also essential to overall wellbeing. Although often overlooked, boosting brain health will have long-term benefits and is something that I encourage you to add to your 2015 resolutions. For those of you who are unaware, Home Care Assistance developed a patent-pending, home-based cognitive stimulation program, the **Cognitive Therapeutics Method™**. Focused on overall brain health, the program is designed for everyone—from those who are cognitively healthy and want to maintain their mental acuity to those who have a neurodegenerative disease and want to slow the progression of symptoms. If you are interested in learning more about our Cognitive Therapeutics program, **contact us**.

In this issue of our CareNotes Newsletter, we share our top 10 achievements from 2014 and how they influenced our clients, caregivers and communities throughout North America. We also provide tips to promote optimal brain health in the New Year and beyond as well as ways to ensure you stick to your resolutions. We also feature an article from one of our favorite websites, ChangingtheWaytheWorldAges.com, which talks about the "The Passions Project", a photography series that depicts older adults doing the things they love. This project is designed to honor seniors and inspire people of all ages to live their lives to the fullest—similar to our **Honor Your Living Legend** initiative. Last but not least, I would like to congratulate our Caregiver of the Month, Jina, from Home Care Assistance of South Florida! Jina's compassion, positive attitude and genuine love for the caregiving profession sets her apart, and makes her a favorite among her clients, their families and her peers. We are lucky to have her as a member of the Home Care Assistance team!



6. **The Cognitive Therapeutics Method** continues to build momentum across our communities, with clients expressing gratitude for the positive changes they are seeing. From helping a client go from a sedentary state to rediscovering her love for jigsaw puzzles, to motivating a client with Parkinson's disease and Lewy Body Dementia to start writing again, Cognitive Therapeutics is successfully contributing to sharp minds while simultaneously improving quality of life.
7. We have continued to provide a superior level of service to each and every client with a 97% client satisfaction rate. Read what **our clients and trusted partners have to say** and learn more about what makes us the premier provider of in-home care.
8. We expanded our educational, **public webinar series** with new presentations featuring Dr. Suzanne Steinbaum, author, attending cardiologist and Director of Women's Heart Health at Lenox Hill Hospital in New York City, the National Spokesperson for the American Heart Association's Go Red Campaign, and other leading researchers and experts in the health and wellness fields.
9. We continue to promote healthy longevity through **ChangingtheWaytheWorldAges.com**, featuring industry experts such as acclaimed journalist and Time Magazine's Boomer Expert, Francine Russo, and award-winning author, Virginia Morris, who regularly makes national headlines with appearances on Oprah, TODAY, NPR and Good Morning America, among others.
10. We added 95 new courses to our Home Care Assistance University (HCAU), a unique online learning platform that gives our caregivers access to the training and expertise they need to provide the gold standard of care. New courses include Kosher Care, Managing Pain, and Recognizing, Reporting and Preventing Elder Abuse. Our University helps us attract and retain the highest caliber caregivers, and is another reason why thousands of families and health professionals choose Home Care Assistance.

We expect 2015 to be another milestone year for Home Care Assistance and look forward to sharing it with you. As we continue in our mission to change the way the world ages, we encourage you to provide us with feedback and to ask questions about our services, caregivers and new programs.

On behalf of everyone at Home Care Assistance, we hope you have a safe, healthy and happy new year!



Taking Charge of Your Brain Health in the New Year and Beyond



The start of January marks the opportunity to create a list of resolutions to help you start the New Year with your best foot forward. Improving physical health, particularly losing weight, is consistently among the top five resolutions every year. Why not invest in your overall wellbeing by setting a resolution to also boost your cognitive health?

Consider these 6 tips to promote optimal brain health over the long-term:

- 1. Stimulate your mind.** Mentally engaging activities such as card games, Sudoku or reading help strengthen communication pathways in the brain. Consider making it a goal to challenge your brain with similar activities once a week for at least 20 minutes.
- 2. Exercise your body.** Physical activity stimulates the circulatory system, which promotes the removal of toxins and increases blood flow (carrying oxygen and nutrients) to the brain. Aim for at least 30 minutes of physical activity every other day.
- 3. Eat a balanced diet.** Fish, nuts, dark chocolate, blueberries and olive oil are considered brain super foods because they also promote heart health and blood flow to the brain.
- 4. De-stress.** Stress actually shuts down systems in your body including the part of the brain that allows you to learn. Sign up for a yoga class that meets once a week, or try meditating or praying in the comfort of your home to promote inner calm.
- 5. Maintain social ties.** Rich, meaningful relationships help reduce stress and depression, and sharpen cognitive abilities. Stay connected with friends and family, and consider joining a community group or club. Set aside one evening a week for a phone call or visit with loved ones.
- 6. The Cognitive Therapeutics Method™.** The Method, which is an in-home activities program that promotes brain health, is another great brain-engaging option.



New Year's resolutions can be difficult to keep, so we have put together 5 additional tips to help you stay on track!

- 1. Make your goals both realistic and attainable.** The above behaviors may not currently be a part of your regimen, so start off with smaller goals such as 10-15 minutes of light exercise once a week and meditating once a week. By making easy-to-manage goals, you'll be more likely to commit to your plans and maintain a healthier way of living!
- 2. Make a solid plan.** Write down your weekly and monthly goals using a calendar, and how you plan to achieve. The calendar will serve as a reminder and help you visualize what you hope to accomplish.
- 3. Remember that it's okay to have off-days.** Indulging in a few sweets or missing one day of exercise doesn't mean that you can't get right back on track.
- 4. Be committed and reward your success.** Try creating a reward system – if you meet a weekly goal, reward yourself with something as simple as watching your favorite movie or more extravagant by purchasing that fun workout top you have been eyeing. By linking rewards with completing your goals, you'll be more motivated to keep up the good work!
- 5. Talk about it!** Spread the word and share your goals with family and friends –they may even want to join you and now you have someone that will hold you accountable (this goes both ways). Remember, making choices that promote brain health and optimal wellbeing is important for people of all ages!

For more information on brain healthy behaviors, check out Home Care Assistance's book, *The Brain Boost: A Practical Guide to Brain Health*, which addresses the latest research on enhancing cognitive functioning. For more information on the **Cognitive Therapeutics Method**, visit www.CognitiveTherapeutics.com, or sign up for our Cognitive Therapeutics Newsletter which will provide a monthly update on the latest research in brain health and overall cognition.



The Passions Project: Inspirational Images of Older Adults Living with Purpose



At Changing the Way the World Ages, we embrace a positive view of aging – one focused on independence, purpose and continued passion. Photographer Heidi Wagner aims to promote this same view through “**The Passions Project**”.

“The Passions Project” is a series of portraits depicting older adults doing the things they enjoy, whether it be acting, volunteering or spending time with feline friends. This project is designed to honor seniors and inspire people of all ages to live their lives to the fullest.

Heidi’s vision for the project was the result of her time spent with the residents of Frasier Meadows Retirement Community in Boulder, Colorado. She saw these older adults leading active, full lives and wanted to share this positive view of aging, filled with vitality and passion, with the rest of the world. Soon enough, “The Passions Project” was born and the hallway of Frasier Meadows was adorned with portraits of 41 residents engaging in the hobbies and activities they enjoy most. When Heidi conversed with individuals featured in “The Passions Project,” she did not focus on any potential physical or cognitive deficits, but rather on what made these seniors feel most alive. As participants revealed their passions, they often became enlivened and were eager to share more about themselves. As interest in “The Passions Project” grew, the collection of portraits was moved to the Leading Age National Meeting, an annual conference dedicated to improving the way the world ages. Individuals of all ages who happened upon the collection took interest in it and could connect with seniors who had passions similar to their own, knocking down boundaries of age.

“It’s inspiring to see people living their life to the fullest, to find their passion, and live a full life,” says Heidi.

“The Passions Project” also includes images of seniors from Northern Colorado and Iowa. Heidi plans to continue her mission to change views on aging and bring meaning to people of all ages by taking “The Passions Project” to more locations, such as Texas and California. To view some of the portraits from The Passions Project, visit <http://passionsproject.smugmug.com/>.

Maintaining a sense of purpose as we age is one of the many lifestyle factors that contribute to healthy longevity. What are your passions?



Caregiver of the Month Spotlight:

Jina



January's Caregiver of the Month is Jina from **Home Care Assistance of South Florida** located in Boca Raton!

Jina is an extraordinary caregiver. Kind and calming, she can sooth clients in moments of distress. Her natural charm and well-honed caregiving skills enable her to create meaningful, lasting bonds with clients from their first meeting.

Often when someone is described as “going the extra mile” you may expect to hear about a life-saving effort or a specific event that required great personal sacrifice. At the Boca Raton office, they have come to realize that “going the extra mile” also means waking up every day with a can-do, positive attitude regardless of what challenges you meet in your job or personal life. Jina is a shining example of this type of person. In addition to working as a caregiver for over four years, she is a single mom to 3-year-old twins. Regardless of the demands at home and at work, Jina maintains her genuine and infectious smile. When there is a client care need, the Boca office knows that Jina will be there to assist without hesitation. Her documentation on the clients she cares for is always exemplary, her performance is impeccable and her desire to excel in the caregiving profession is unsurpassed in that she constantly seeks out continuing education opportunities.

Jina goes the extra mile every day by providing exceptional, high caliber care to her clients and we are fortunate to have her helping us in our mission to change the way the world ages!