



# Carolina Select Home Care

..... *Setting the Standard*

## Does Companionship Reduce Cardiovascular Disease?

“Many studies have found that social isolation and lack of social support (that is, help that a person can count on from others) raise the risk of ill health and mortality, especially from heart disease. Some research suggests that loneliness, even in youth, may be another risk factor.” (Harvard Mental Health Letter, June 2004) For instance, a 1992 investigation by researchers at Duke University Medical Center found a 50% five-year mortality rate among atherosclerosis patients who were isolated (unmarried without a close friend or confidant), compared with only 17% of heart patients with a spouse, confidant, or both. In his book, “Love & Survival,” Dean Ornish, MD, professor of medicine at the University of California, describes a Yale study wherein men and women who felt the most loved and supported showed significantly less blockage in their coronary arteries.



Some hypothesize that the relationship between cardiovascular health and social isolation can be explained away by the unhealthy behaviors that poor emotional status promulgates (i.e. noncompliance with physician instructions, smoking, alcohol consumption, and stress eating). **While behaviors secondary to isolation do create compounding factors, when study results are risk adjusted for such variables, psychosocial factors such as isolation and loneliness still emerge as strong predictors in cardiovascular disease and morbidity.** (Circulation 1999, Apr 27)

Research suggests that isolation, loneliness, and other psychosocial factors directly stimulate pathophysiological mechanisms such as elevated neuroendocrine activity leading to increased blood pressure.

**Seniors challenged by functional limitations present particular risk for loneliness and isolation as well as cardiovascular disease.** The in-home aide services of Carolina Select can be part of a positive response in these situations. While companionship is not a listed benefit of Medicaid’s Personal Care Services (PCS), those who otherwise qualify for PCS certainly benefit from the

regularly scheduled human interaction with a caring professional. Patients frequently comment on how they look forward to visits from their Carolina Select nurse aides. Alternatively, when families pay for nurse-aide visits privately, companionship can form a large component of the written services plan.

When geriatric patients become emotionally invested in their nurse-aide visits, reliability and familiarity becomes even more important. The American Psychiatric Association states that a sudden change in caregivers combined with pre-existing medical conditions can cause enough stress to result in a range of behavioral disturbances including aggression and hyperactivity. Caring consideration for these issues serves as one of the main reasons doctors and nurses confidently recommend *Carolina*

**Select Home Care.** Evidence for CSHC’s concern for dependability and familiarity include:

1. For years, Carolina Select has successfully met its internal goal of working 97% of scheduled hours.
2. Competitive compensation and benefits allows Carolina Select to attract and retain the best aides in homecare. In 2006, many Carolina Select employees are logging in six years of consistent employment.
3. Most importantly, Carolina Select far exceeds North Carolina requirements by scheduling weekly supervisory visits. This allows your patient to form relationships with both the assigned aide and the supervisor. When aide reassignments take place, a familiar Carolina Select supervisor is still available to introduce the new aide and facilitate a non-stressful transition.

***Please tell your patients about Carolina Select Home Care***

**(800) 970-2742**

**Service Area**  
Surry, Yadkin, Wilkes, Ashe, Alleghany,  
Alexander, Iredell, Davie, Stokes, Forsyth

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**Providing**  
Personal Care Services &  
Aide Services for CAP Recipients