Prelude

“Let us take care of the children, for they have a long way to go. Let us take care of the elders, for they have come a long way. Let us take care of those in between, for they are doing the work.”

~ African Proverb

This book is addressed to all concerned caregivers – daughters, sons, spouses, grandchildren, siblings, best friends, and neighbors. The majority of the caregivers in this country are women, and we are grateful for initial funding from the Women’s Fund of the Community Foundation of Middle Tennessee, Gannett Foundation, West End Home Foundation, and Tennessee State University Center for Aging Social Work Program. Production of the second edition was begun with donations made to the Council on Aging of Greater Nashville in memory of Elizabeth Gwinn, the mother of one of our committee members.

This book is written with our state in mind, but the issues addressed and services available are provided in different ways nationwide. Local senior centers, Area Agency on Aging and Disability offices, the Eldercare Locator (800-677-1116), and a variety of websites can identify what is available elsewhere.
Council on Aging thanks the following professionals, seniors and caregivers (sometimes all three in the same person) who worked to compile this resource book:

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Ted Griffith
Dear Caregiver,

UnitedHealthcare Community Plan of Tennessee values your role as a caregiver. We understand that you, as caregivers, hold many responsibilities as you care for your loved one and assist them during their aging process. Your compassion is evident, in all that you do while providing care for your family member in need. We are committed to collaborating with you as we help you on your journey. Please accept this book as a symbol of our desire to honor that commitment.

Caring for another person requires a great deal of dedication, effort, and time. Moreover, you may be juggling full-time jobs or parenting while you are caring for an aging loved one. In the process, you often set your own needs aside. You can count on us to be here to help you through the process.

This book has a multitude of resources to assist you in caring for your special someone. Inside you will find information from how to prepare for a medical appointment to understanding the signs of caregiver stress or even fall prevention. Additionally, we hope this book adds to your planning and organizing caregiving needs. Resources such as the Council on Aging, Area Agency on Aging and Disability offices, Adult Protective Services, and local senior centers can be found within this book as well.

In addition to this book, our experienced care coordinators, through our CHOICES program, visit your family member. They provide a plan of care and discuss recommendations. In addition, they can also help with decision making around alternate living arrangements like assisted living or nursing home care. Alternatively, for those dealing with advanced illnesses and end-of-life situations, we can provide recommendations for palliative and hospice care. We can help you and your loved one, so you can enjoy your time together. Through the CHOICES program, you also