

Independence Ahead

Stages of Senior Care

by Dan Burke

As the average life expectancy continues to rise, seeking out options that help seniors maintain their independence has become an increasingly popular endeavor.

As a result, the In-Home Healthcare Franchise industry has experienced tremendous growth. We would like to highlight the bestselling book *Stages of Senior Care; Your Step-by-Step Guide to Making the Best Decisions* by Paul and Lori Hogan, founders of Home Instead Senior Care. As a global leader in elderly care, Home Instead Senior Care has over 850 offices in 15 countries. I recently had the opportunity to interview Paul and Lori on behalf of SilverStone Group, the preferred provider for Home Instead Senior Care, and I'm pleased to share my correspondence with the creators of this inspiring franchise.

How did you develop the concept for Home Instead?

My wife Lori and I started Home Instead as a result of my family's experience in caring for my grandmother, who was 88 years old and living alone. Her health was rapidly declining and she became quite frail. My mom and her siblings held a family meeting to determine what they could do to help. My mother said she didn't want to see her mom go to a nursing home – so my grandmother moved in with my mom for what we assumed would be the last year or so of her life.

Our family kept Grandma active; she began eating better and there was always activity around the house (Grandma had 12 children, 50 grandchildren and 51 great-grandchildren). My grandmother regained her strength and her will to live.

What we thought would be the final year of her life turned out to be nearly 13 years of relative independence. After watching what happened with my grandmother, Lori and I realized that a person doesn't have to be a doctor or nurse to have a positive impact on a senior's life. We started Home Instead Senior Care to do for others what our family had done for my grandmother.

How do you recruit potential franchisees with the same philosophy regarding care for the elderly?

Franchise Business Review, a national franchise market research firm, recently named Home Instead Senior Care the "Best-in-Category" award winner in elderly care. We pride ourselves on the responsiveness and openness with our franchise owners and they respond accordingly; more than 40% of our leads come from referrals by current franchise owners. Furthermore, we make certain that potential franchise owners understand the core values of this company during our interview process. The guiding principles behind every decision made within this company are:

- To honor God in all we do
- To treat each other with dignity and respect
- To encourage growth in ourselves and others
- To build value in our service to others

What challenges do you see for your industry over the next decade?

The regulatory landscape is changing and we need to make certain to stay ahead of the curve. Our Industry Affairs department is proactive in working with legislators at the national, state and local levels, and we make certain to maintain working relationships with our franchise owners.

What are your core services?

Home Instead CAREGiversSM provides a variety of services, including companionship, light housekeeping and laundry, medication reminders, errands and incidental transportation, meal planning and preparation and personal care. Our services help seniors maintain their independence.

Are you planning to add services to further enhance senior care at home?

We are currently investigating ways to expand our menu of services for clients. Last year, we began a relationship with J.D. Power and Associates and are excited about the early results. We want to provide our franchise owners with the tools that will enable them to grow their businesses and advance the quality of care for their clients. Also in the works are additional service offerings for clients and training initiatives for franchise owners, their staff members and CAREGivers.

You have recently authored a best-selling book, *Stages of Senior Care*, McGraw-Hill, 2010. How did you develop the idea or inspiration to create this step-by-step guide for potential caregivers?

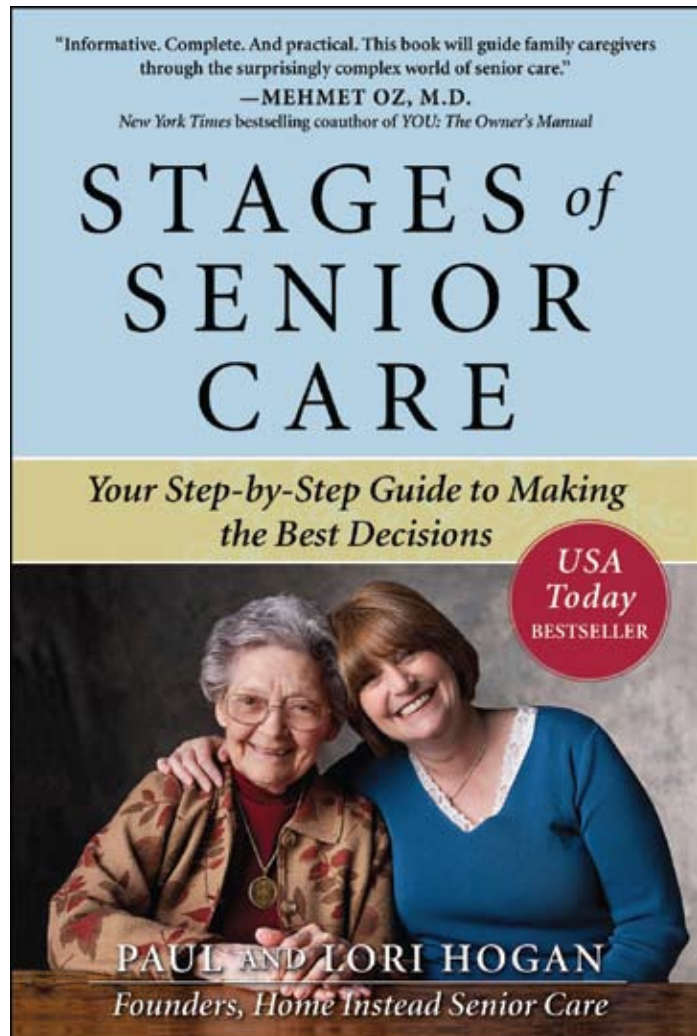
Initially, Lori and I wanted to write a book that would serve as a resource to help seniors and their families make informed decisions. Prior to writing *Stages of Senior Care*, we commissioned research so we could gain a deeper understanding of what seniors and their family members did and did not know about the senior care continuum. The results were alarming:

- Both seniors and adult children are generally unfamiliar with and uninformed about their senior care choices.
- Nearly three quarters of 35 to 64-year-olds, when unaided in the survey, could identify no more than 2 of 8 options available to seniors who can no longer live independently.
- Both seniors and adult children fail to understand the cost of care. They tend to overestimate the costs for the least expensive options and underestimate the most expensive ones.
- The majority of seniors and adult children believe that either Social Security or Medicare will pay for senior care. However, Medicare doesn't pay for long-term care and Social Security typically provides only basic living expenses.

Stages of Senior Care provides seniors and their families with the information needed to make better decisions about care. It also helps adult children plan for their own future care.

What challenges do adult children face when dealing with an aging parent?

We work with thousands of families every day at Home Instead. We know they face 3 primary challenges: they are unaware of care options, they don't understand costs or



financing and they haven't planned for care. The best thing an adult child can do is become informed. That's why we wrote *Stages of Senior Care*. This understanding will enable the adult child to make the best care decisions for his or her parents. Secondly, adult children need to have conversations with their parents about their preferences for care. We encourage families to be proactive by making care decisions in advance and not as an emotionally charged reaction to a stressful situation.

We owe a special thanks to Dan Wieberg, Public Relations Manager for Home Instead Senior Care, for coordinating and making this interview a success.