

Elder Care



Objectives

- What is Elder Care?
- Assessing the Needs of Your Older Loved Ones
- Professional Geriatric Care Managers
- Care Options for Older Adults
- Community Resources
- Family Dynamics in Caregiving
- Creating a Family Approach
- Home Care Services
- Housing Options
- Technology in Elder Care
- Advance Directives and Legal Issues
- How to Pay for Care
- Encouraging Older Relatives to Use Services

What is Elder Care

Care given by an individual (the “caregiver”) to an adult

May include a broad array of services:

- Housing
- Transportation
- Financial
- Home maintenance
- Health care
- Counseling
- Legal services

Assessing the Needs of Your Older Loved Ones

Is your loved one able to:

- Dress and undress without assistance?
- Drive or use public transportation independently?
- Shop and do other errands without help?
- Prepare their meals?
- Bathe and do other personal care without assistance?
- Get in and out of bed?
- Be left alone safely?
- Pay bills and manage finances independently?
- Clean their home?
- Remember to take prescribed medications?
- Use the telephone?
- Communicate their needs?
- Walk and climb stairs?
- Make appropriate decisions?

Professional Geriatric Case Managers

- Perform assessments
- Formulate care plans
- Advocate for your loved one
- Offer short-term or long-term assistance
- Screen, arrange for and monitor care services
- Review financial and legal issues
- Ensure compliance with benefit requirements
- Seek out cost saving options
- Assess in-home medical needs and contact providers
- Coordinate a move
- Arrange respite care
- Provide counseling, support and education
- Conduct and/or find support groups

Care Options for Older Adults

- Community resources
- Home care services
- Alternative housing options



Community Resources

- Senior Centers
- Transportation services
- Meal delivery programs
- Friendly visitor / companion programs
- Grocery delivery
- Cleaning services
- Errand services
- Adult day care
- Personal Emergency Response System (PERS)

Family Dynamics

Families facing new elder care roles need to learn to:

- Focus on what's important
- Take breaks together
- Find comfort in one another's company
- Enjoy quality time together
- Remember conflict can help bring a family closer
- Expect conflict
- Plan Family Meetings (immediate vs. extended)
- Using Counselors/Social Workers/EAPs
- No recement

Problem Solving within the Family

- Responding versus reacting
- Understanding history, personality and communication style
- Expect it to be difficult and for fights to happen
- When arguments happen, work together to solve them with clear communication:
 - State the issue, challenge or problem
 - Describe the impact of the issue, problem or challenge and how you are feeling
 - Provide opportunities for the other person to respond
 - Discuss or state the desired outcome or required change and be open to compromise
- Be understanding, everyone's lives are changing to accommodate new needs in the family

Problem Solving within the Family Cont'd

- Do your best to set aside any pre-existing family issues and try to focus on the needs of the individual(s) that need care
 - Focus on the common ground of wanting the best for your family member
 - Have family meetings to try to resolve any former issues

Open Family Communication

- These may be difficult discussions
- Listen to what is being said; observe what is not being talked about
- Have these discussions sooner rather than later
- Allow time to think, process and plan
- Give examples of your own plans and ask for their input
- Timing is everything, be ready to listen
- Speak to the right person



Creating a Family Approach

- Break up the new responsibilities into groups:
 - Financial – bill paying, etc..
 - Medical – appointment scheduling/doctors visits, etc..
 - Home Care – cooking cleaning around the home, etc..
- Let each family member decide based on their own strengths, how they can best contribute
 - Don't assume anyone should take on any roles
 - Don't make rigid rules about groups, help each other when needed
- Understand the needs and limitations of everyone in the family that is offering to help

Home Care Services

- **Custodial care:** Assistance with activities of daily living (ADL): bathing, dressing, eating, etc.
- **Companion care:** No ADL care, but companionship, errands, light housekeeping, meal preparation, etc.
- **Skilled care:** Medical care that requires the services of a skilled professional: Nurse, Physical, Occupational or Speech therapists, etc.

Alternative Housing Options

Retirement Communities

- Independent living, assisted living, skilled care

Assisted living facilities: communities or residential

- Varied levels of care

Long-term Care Facilities

- 24-hour supervision
- Levels of care: custodial, intermediate, skilled, sub-acute

Technology in Elder Care: Tools to Support Caregivers and Loved Ones

Telemedicine

- Access to Healthcare
- Routine Check-Ups
- Emergency Consultations

Medication Reminder Apps

- Timely Reminders
- Track Compliance
- Medication Management

Online Platforms for Coordinating Care

- Family Coordination
- Task Management
- Centralized Information



Technology in Elder Care: Tools to Support Caregivers and Loved Ones Cont'd

Emergency Alert Systems

- Personal Safety
- Peace of Mind

Social Connection

- Video Calls
- Online Communities

Advance Directives and Legal Issues



Living Will



Durable Power of Attorney



Health Care Proxy

Always seek the advice of an Elder Law attorney when drawing up these types of documents

How to Pay for Care

- Self-pay
- Long Term Care insurance
- Medicaid and Medicaid waivers
- Medicare
- Medicare HMO
- Medigap
- Veteran's benefits

Encouraging Older Relatives to Use Services

- Be sensitive
- Ask about their feelings
- Ask what they want
- Be supportive
- Never be pushy or forceful
- Be creative

Closing Remarks

Elder care is one of the most challenging journeys many of us will face, filled with difficult decisions and emotional complexities. It's natural to feel overwhelmed, but remember, you are not alone. Every step you take to plan and seek support makes a profound difference—not just for your loved one, but for yourself as well. With thoughtful preparation and the right resources, you can navigate this journey with strength and compassion, ensuring that your loved one receives the care they deserve while preserving your own well-being. Your dedication and love are the greatest gifts you can give, and together, we can find the best path forward.

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Helpful Resources

- [eldercare.acl.gov](https://www.eldercare.acl.gov)
- [aarp.org](https://www.aarp.org)
- [medicare.gov](https://www.medicare.gov)
- [va.gov](https://www.va.gov)
- [aafp.org](https://www.aafp.org)
- [ageinplace.org](https://www.ageinplace.org)
- [alz.org](https://www.alz.org)
- [ssa.gov](https://www.ssa.gov)

Evaluation Survey QR Code



A woman with long dark hair, wearing a light-colored long-sleeved shirt and brown overalls, stands in a workshop or factory setting. The background is blurred, showing industrial equipment and bright lighting.

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