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A GUIDE FOR FAMILY CAREGIVERS

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PRESBYTERIAN
COMMUNITIES AND SERVICES



A Guide for Family Caregivers

Your role as a caregiver is important to the well-being of your loved one, and we understand there's a lot to manage. We're here to help equip and support you in your caregiving journey.

Inside *A Guide for Family Caregivers* is a wealth of information designed to help you provide the best care you can. You'll find:

- » Tips for keeping your loved one active and well nourished
- » Ideas for helping them maintain brain health
- » Ways to make your home safer for them
- » Worksheets on the costs of family caregiving
- » Signs your loved one may need additional help
- » A checklist for how to choose memory care, if needed

We've also included information on how you can best take care of yourself. Caregiving is rewarding – but it can also be physically, emotionally and mentally demanding. That's why we've included:

- » The warning signs of caregiver burnout and how you can combat it
- » Ways you can practice self-care, so you can be healthy and happy
- » Support group information, so you can connect with other caregivers
- » The Caregiver Bill of Rights, to remind yourself that your needs matter, too

Finally, we've included a wallet card that outlines what information hospitals in Texas are now legally required to provide caregivers when their loved ones are admitted.

We hope you find this information helpful. If you have any questions or would like to contact us about other ways we might support you and your loved one, you can call us at 214.413.1523.

Thank you for everything you're doing to ensure your loved one receives the best care possible.

Sincerely,

Your friends at Presbyterian Communities and Services



4 Tips for Keeping Your Loved One Active

While many older adults say they want to maintain their overall health as they age, fewer than half of those age 75 or older are physically active. Yet the World Health Organization reports that physically active older adults have lower mortality rates, higher levels of cognitive and functional health, and are less likely to have heart disease or Type 2 diabetes.

If your loved one isn't as active as they should be, here are some ideas to get them moving. (**NOTE:** Before starting a new form of exercise, consult with their doctor.)

KEEP IT FUN.

It's a lot easier to create a healthy habit when you enjoy what you're doing. Talk with your loved one to find out what interests them and what they'd like to do. Is there an activity they used to do that they'd like to take up again? Encourage them to try things like dancing, bowling, bocce ball, golf, tennis or pickleball. Experiment until you find something they think is fun.

GET OUTSIDE.

Working out doesn't always have to look like working out. Look for ways to get them outdoors for fresh air, sunshine and movement. If they like working in the garden or yard, but it's a bit too much these days, set up a container garden or raised garden bed that's easier to reach and has a smaller footprint. Look for walking and biking trails in your area. Walking tours and window-shopping are good ways to explore your town too.

BUILD STRENGTH.

Strength exercises make it easier to climb stairs, lift groceries and even open jars. Simple ways to build strength include lifting small hand weights or even soup cans. You can buy inexpensive resistance bands they can use at home for arm and leg exercises. Doing leg raises with small ankle weights is an option too.



TAKE IT EASY.

Physical activity doesn't have to be a high-intensity workout. Yoga for seniors, and chair yoga for those less mobile, works the whole body in a low-impact way. Tai Chi is about slow, smooth movements that engage the body and the mind. It also helps with balance. You can also suggest slow laps in the pool, or a stroll around the neighborhood or indoor shopping mall.

Everyone has different levels of ability and mobility, but with some patience and experimentation, you and your loved one can find simple ways for them to keep moving toward a healthier lifestyle.



Eating Well to Live Well

Maintaining a healthy, well-balanced diet is important for everyone – but what a healthy diet looks like changes as the body ages. (**NOTE:** Before making any dietary changes for your loved one, consult their doctor so you can understand their specific needs.)

SENIOR NUTRITIONAL NEEDS

According to the Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics, certain nutrients are important for seniors to maintain good health.

- » **Calcium and Vitamin D.** To help maintain bone health, seniors need more of these nutrients. It's recommended they have three servings of vitamin D-fortified low-fat or fat-free milk or yogurt each day. Other calcium-rich foods include dark green leafy vegetables, canned fish with soft bones, and fortified cereals and fruit juices. If they take calcium supplements or multivitamins, choose one that also has vitamin D.
- » **Vitamin B-12.** This vitamin helps keep metabolism, blood cells, bones and nerves healthy. Good sources of B-12 include meat, fish, shellfish, eggs and milk. Some cereals are also fortified with B-12.
- » **Potassium.** Eating potassium-rich foods can help reduce the risk of high blood pressure. Incorporate fruits, vegetables, and low-fat or fat-free milk and yogurt into daily meals.
- » **Fiber.** Dietary fiber helps control weight gain and lowers the risk of heart disease and Type 2 diabetes. Whole grain breads, beans, fruit and vegetables are good sources of fiber.



TIPS FOR MAKING DIETARY CHANGES

The sense of taste gets weaker with age, which can impact the desire to eat.

- » To boost flavor without adding salt, add lemon juice, herbs and spices.
- » Make meals more visually appealing with brightly colored foods.
- » Offer a variety of tastes and textures so a meal doesn't seem bland.
- » Consider offering 5-6 smaller meals instead of 3 larger ones.

Age impacts the sense of thirst as well. Many seniors don't realize they're thirsty until they're already dehydrated.

- » Put water out to sip throughout the day.
- » Offer other hydrating options such as milk, low-sodium broth, or fruits and veggies like watermelon, cucumbers, strawberries, celery or lettuce.
- » Low-fat, low-sugar smoothies are another way to keep them hydrated, with the added benefit of healthy vitamins and minerals.

Change is hard – take it slowly.

- » Start with small changes. If they normally eat white bread, serve a wheat bread sandwich once or twice a week. As they get used to it, gradually increase it until white bread is cut from their diet.
- » Don't isolate them with changes. Eating is a social activity, and singling them out for dietary changes can make them more resistant. As much as possible, eat with them, and eat the same things.



Being Mindful About Brain Health

Maintaining cognitive health does more than help a person think clearly or remember. A healthy brain helps with motor control, how well emotions are interpreted and responded to, and how well the body's senses function. Here are some simple ways to help your loved one maintain brain health.

KEEP CONNECTED

Older adults with strong social connections and activity are less likely to experience a decline in their cognitive functioning.

- » Encourage your loved one to participate in some group activities, such as book clubs, religious gatherings or choral groups.
- » Help them find ways they can volunteer. Using their skills while helping others not only helps them make meaningful social connections, but gives them a sense of purpose as well.
- » If they have trouble getting around or out of the house, you can help their social life by arranging visits from friends and neighbors, and setting up phone calls or video chats with family and friends.

KEEP MOVING

Older adults who are physically active tend to have higher levels of functional and cognitive health. Physical activity influences brain metabolism, and studies show that people perform better on memory tests when they're taken after a period of physical exertion.

- » Cardio exercise such as dancing or brisk walking has been linked to growth in the part of the brain that creates new memories. Encourage a 30-minute walk several times a week, or turn up the music for a dance party in the living room.
- » Tai Chi engages the body and the mind and is often recommended for seniors because it's a slow-moving and low-impact way to exercise.
- » Less rigorous activity still has benefits. Gardening and light housework are options, as are chair yoga and seated strength exercises.



KEEP LEARNING

Crossword puzzles and Sudoku are fine, but seniors get more brain benefits by doing tasks that are challenging and involve active engagement. Learning something new helps build the connections between brain cells. Encourage them with activities like:

- » Learning a new skill such as digital photography, quilting or chess
- » Learning a new language
- » Trying something creative like writing or sketching
- » Taking an interesting class through a local community college or lifelong learning center



Making Your Home Safer

According to the Centers for Disease Control, an older adult falls every second of every day. And falls are the number one cause of hip fractures. Fortunately, there are things you can do to help prevent falls and make your home safer overall for the senior in your care.

START WITH THE FLOOR

- » **Do you have throw rugs, which can be a tripping hazard?** Remove them or use double-sided tape to make sure they don't slip or curl up on the ends.
- » **Is there clutter, like books, papers, magazines, clothing, boxes or blankets?** Always keep objects off the floor. It may be a good time to clean out unnecessary items or invest in simple storage devices to keep floors clear.
- » **Are there wires or cords that must be walked over?** Coil or tape cords so they'll be next to the wall and out of the way.
- » **Does furniture placement make it difficult to navigate through a room?** Make sure there are open pathways throughout each room. You may need to do some rearranging or remove a few pieces to make it easier to walk.

CHECK STAIRS, INSIDE AND OUTDOORS

- » **Are stairs and landings clear?** Always keep stairs clear of objects, and make sure landings are clutter-free.
- » **Are there loose or broken steps or loose carpeting on the stairs?** Repair or replace right away. Consider attaching nonslip treads to the stairs.
- » **Are there secure handrails on both sides of the stairs?** Fix loose handrails or put in new ones. Make sure handrails are as long as the stairs.
- » **Are all stairways well lit?** Make sure there's adequate lighting along the entire stairway. Replace burned-out bulbs right away. Increase bulb wattage to allowable limits. Consider adding a light switch that glows at both the top and bottom of stairways.



CONSIDER THE COMMON AREAS

- » **Are there tripping hazards in the kitchen or living room?** Remove or secure area rugs, and make sure cords are stored close to the wall. Keep clutter off the floor, and make sure traffic areas are clear of furniture.
- » **What's out of reach?** Make sure commonly used items such as remote controls or kitchen utensils are within easy reach. Secure dangerous chemicals and cleaning materials on higher shelves or in locked cabinets.
- » **Is the lighting adequate?** Adding task lighting in the kitchen or extra lighting in the living room or den helps them see what they're doing.
- » **Are smoke and carbon monoxide detectors in place and functioning?** Install these devices in each bedroom, hallways and in common areas. Change smoke detector batteries once a year. Pick a date such as a birthday or the change to daylight saving time to help you remember.

REEXAMINE ALL YOUR BATHROOMS

- » **Is the floor free from tripping hazards?** Remove or secure throw rugs. Make sure electrical cords are coiled or taped out of the way.
- » **Is the flooring slip-resistant?** Ceramic and tile flooring get slippery when wet. Place a low-profile, nonslip kitchen mat by the tub or shower, toilet, and sink.
- » **Are your bathrooms equipped for people with mobility issues?** Grab bars in the tub or shower and next to the toilet help them transition more safely. A transfer bench in the shower, as well as a detachable, handheld showerhead, will also make bathing easier.
- » **Is the path to the bathroom clear and well lit?** Remove clutter or decorative items in that pathway. Place automatic night lighting near their bed, along the way and in the bathroom. A light switch that glows is helpful at night.
- » **Is the tub or shower floor slippery?** Permanent nonslip strips can be applied easily. Suction mats tend to develop mildew and get slippery over time.
- » **Are the faucets user-friendly for those with problems gripping?** Consider installing a lever-handled or hands-free faucet for ease of use.



UPDATE THEIR BEDROOM

- » **Is their bedroom easily accessible?** If stairs are a problem, you may need to relocate their bedroom to the main floor. If redesigning a bedroom to accommodate a wheelchair, make sure it's ADA-compliant.
- » **Can they easily access items in the closet and drawers?** Consider removing closet doors and replacing small drawer knobs with larger ones that are easier to use. Make sure frequently used items are within easy reach and not stored too high or too low.
- » **Is it adequately lit?** Automatic night lights and lamps on either side of the bed will make it easier to see at night.
- » **Are pathways clear?** Remove clutter and obstacles such as extra furniture so they can move easily around the room.
- » **Is communication from the bedroom simple?** If the bedroom doesn't already have a phone, consider installing one, and keep emergency numbers in large print right next to it. An intercom system is another way to make sure it's easy to reach out if they need help.



The Costs of Family Caregiving

As a family caregiver, it's important for you to take stock of what it takes to make sure your loved one is receiving the best care possible. Use these worksheets to gather concrete information about how you're spending your time and resources.

Understanding what it costs, both in terms of money and time, will help you and your family make smart decisions that benefit everyone involved.

YOUR CAREGIVING TIME

Family caregivers average 24.4 hours per week providing care. And nearly 1 in 4 caregivers spends 41+ hours per week providing care.

How many hours do you spend each week on caregiving activities?

Driving	_____
Medical/therapy appointments	_____
Shopping	_____
Cooking	_____
Cleaning or laundry	_____
Bathing/grooming/toileting	_____
Medication management	_____
Companionship	_____
Managing their finances	_____
Assisting with exercise	_____
Engaging them in brain health activities	_____
Other	_____
TOTAL	_____



YOUR FINANCIAL COSTS

Monthly Expenses

Seventy-eight percent of family caregivers incur out-of-pocket expenses as a result of caring for a loved one. These costs average around \$7,000 per year.

How much are you spending each month?

Transportation (doctor's office, bank, salon, post office, grocery store, etc.)	\$_____
Groceries	\$_____
Medical (prescriptions, in-home care, copays, assistive devices, etc.)	\$_____
Rent/mortgage payments	\$_____
Food and medical care for your loved one's pet	\$_____
Other	\$_____
TOTAL	\$_____

Additional Expenses

Have you had to make age-related modifications to your home, such as installing grab bars in the bathroom, adding a wheelchair ramp, widening doorways or refurbishing a room to accommodate your loved one?

Home modifications \$_____

You may have run into unexpected costs when your loved one made the move into your home. Consider moving expenses, repairs to make their house marketable, etc.

Moving expenses \$_____

GRAND TOTAL \$_____



YOUR PERSONAL TIME

Sixty percent of family caregivers have made workplace accommodations such as cutting back on work hours or even taking a leave of absence. It's also common for family caregivers to sacrifice personal time to be there for their loved one. Things like hobbies, time with friends or travel take a back seat while they focus on the ones in their care.

What kinds of time adjustments have you been making?
(Check all that apply.)

	Yes	No
Reduced number of work hours	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Changed work schedule	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Taken paid time off	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Taken unpaid leave	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Worked from home	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Changed jobs	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Stopped working	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Cut back on hobbies	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Reduced time with friends	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Reduced time with spouse, partner or children	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Changed your exercise schedule	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Cut back or stopped exercise	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Reduced or quit artistic expression	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Changed or canceled vacations	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Reduced or stopped travel	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Other: _____

Sources:

- *Family Caregiving and Out-of-Pocket Costs: 2016 Report* (AARP)
- *Caregiving in the U.S., 2015* (National Alliance for Caregiving, AARP)
- *National Health Interview Survey, 2014* (CDC/NCHS)
- *Understanding the Impact of Family Caregiving and Work, 2012* (AARP Policy Institute)



5 Signs Your Loved One May Need Extra Help

Every day, unpaid family caregivers all over the country do their best to provide the care their parent or other family member needs. But there are some situations where professional assistance is needed, either temporarily or permanently. How do you know if your loved one would benefit from professional help such as in-home health services or by moving into an assisted living community? Here are five signs to look for:

- » **Escalating health care needs.** Multiple health conditions, complications from illness or injury, or increasing frailty can become too much to handle on your own. You may be tasked with complicated procedures, or their needs may simply be beyond your physical capabilities – which could put your loved one at risk.
- » **Home safety.** Is their home – or yours – equipped for their physical safety? Consider their ability to navigate stairs, move safely around the furniture, or get in and out of the tub or shower. Making home modifications may not be financially possible, since they can cost thousands of dollars.
- » **Dementia.** Caring for someone with Alzheimer’s or other forms of dementia can be demanding. If they are becoming physically aggressive, wandering or sundowning (becoming very agitated later in the day), it adds to the difficulty and can burden the whole family, as well as endanger your loved one.
- » **Financial strain.** The average family caregiver spends around \$7,000 per year on out-of-pocket caregiving expenses.* In addition to added costs, many family caregivers have to cut back on work hours, which reduces their income. It may become financially unfeasible to continue caring for your loved one at home.



- » **Emotional stress.** Juggling caregiving with work and family life is difficult and can be stressful. And sometimes that emotional cost can be too high. Family caregivers are at risk of depression, anxiety and poor health themselves. Caregiver burnout can leave you physically and emotionally unable to provide good care. Family dynamics come into play, as well. If you don't have a healthy relationship with the person you're caring for, that only adds to the emotional difficulty.

Choosing outside help is not a sign of failure. It's a sign you want the best for your loved one – and sometimes that means finding other resources. If you need help to start researching your options, feel free to call us at 214.413.1523.

*Source: *Family Caregiving and Out-of-Pocket Costs: 2016 Report* (AARP)



How to Choose Memory Care

Memory care is specialized long-term care for adults with Alzheimer's disease or other forms of age-related dementia. Memory care programs today help maintain quality of life and provide meaningful activities and interactions in an environment that's safe, structured and comfortable.

If it's time to consider memory care, you'll need to do some research to find what works best for your loved one. Here are some questions that will help you narrow your search.

- » Is the community accredited and licensed to handle the special needs of memory care residents?
- » What memory care training has the staff received?
- » What is the resident-to-staff ratio?
- » Do the programs keep residents alert, stimulated and entertained? Do they provide meaningful activities?
- » Do doctors visit regularly? Can residents visit their own doctors and dentists? What hospital is the community associated with?
- » What is the visiting schedule? Will you have privacy during your visits? Will you be able to take your loved one off campus?
- » What is covered in the basic fee, and what is extra?
- » Can you talk to residents' family members to get their perspective on the care and community?

Schedule visits and take the Memory Care Visit Checklist with you. It will help you evaluate options objectively. Consider bringing a trusted family member or friend with you to help observe the community and complete the checklist.



MEMORY CARE VISIT CHECKLIST

Community Name: _____

Date of Visit: _____

Location

- Convenient for you to visit
- Near hospital or medical facilities
- Safe neighborhood

Physical Environment

- Specifically designed for memory care
- Clean, well maintained and odor-free
- Doors and rooms clearly labeled with words and pictures
- Private areas to interact with family
- Good lighting
- Secure memory care area with alert system in place
- Secure outdoor area for residents
- Private rooms or suites
- Hallway handrails
- Grab bars in bathrooms
- 24-hour emergency response system

Dining Services

- Dedicated memory care dining room with dedicated staff
- Meals adapted to residents' assessed needs
- Resident nutrition is tracked and weight monitored
- Assigned resident seating so they eat each meal in the same place
- Dining room peaceful with minimal distractions
- Staff members assist at mealtimes
- Finger foods served for residents with difficulty using utensils



Care

- Staff trained to work with older adults with Alzheimer's or other forms of age-related dementia
- Individualized, written care plans that are updated regularly
- Family support and education
- Staff assists with and participates in activities
- Consistent daily schedule of enrichment activities
- Memory care activities that make residents feel productive
- Nurse on site or on call 24/7
- Staff background checks
- Behaviors accommodated without use of restraints
- Caregivers interact with residents calmly and with respect



Caregiver Burnout

WHAT IT IS – AND WHAT YOU CAN DO ABOUT IT.

Most family caregivers find their responsibilities rewarding. But caregiving isn't easy, and it can take a serious toll on your physical and emotional well-being. In fact, according to the Family Caregiver Alliance, caregivers are at risk for high levels of stress, anxiety, depression and exhaustion, as well as poor physical health. In other words, caregiver burnout.

RECOGNIZING THE SIGNS OF CAREGIVER BURNOUT

- » Is it hard to keep your mind on what you're doing?
- » Do you have difficulty making decisions?
- » Have you stopped staying in touch with friends?
- » Do you have a hard time getting to sleep or staying asleep?
- » Are you feeling overwhelmed?
- » Do you feel lonely?
- » Are you frustrated by loss of privacy and/or personal time?
- » Have you become edgy or irritable?
- » Are you having crying spells?
- » Do you feel a strain between work, family and caregiver responsibilities?
- » Have you felt ill or had appetite changes?
- » Do you feel numb and like you must force yourself to do routine tasks?
- » Do you feel guilty about not doing enough? Or resentment for doing too much?
- » Are you constantly tired?

If you said yes to two or three of these questions, you're at risk of caregiver burnout. If you have more yes answers than no answers, you're probably experiencing it right now.



WHAT TO DO ABOUT CAREGIVER BURNOUT

Caring for a loved one can be time-consuming and leave you feeling like there's no more room in your day for anything else. But for you to give your loved one the best care possible, you must take care of yourself first. If you suffer, they will too.

Here are some simple things you can do to take care of yourself and combat burnout.

- » Stay hydrated to maintain energy, mood and to help you think clearly.
- » Eat nourishing food to give you energy and keep your blood sugar and mood stable.
- » Start some relaxing rituals to help you fall sleep so you can be well rested.
- » Consider journaling as a way to process your emotions in a safe space.
- » Make it a priority to do something fun, relaxing or interesting, just for yourself.
- » Stay connected to your friends. Social connections are critical for your health, so make a coffee date or go to the movies with a friend.
- » Give yourself permission to step away from caregiving now and then. You and your loved one will be better for it if you take some time for yourself.



Taking Care of Yourself

As a family caregiver, the natural inclination is to take care of your loved one's needs first. You may feel like you have no time to take care of yourself, or you may feel guilty about taking breaks from caregiving. But if you don't take care of yourself, you won't be able to take the best care of your loved one.

Tending to your own physical, mental and emotional needs lets you approach caregiving from a place of wellness and strength. Here are some things you can do to nurture your body, mind and spirit.

BODY

- » Dehydration leaves you feeling exhausted and impacts your thinking. Keep a water bottle handy so you can sip throughout the day. You can also find smartphone apps that will prompt you to take a drink.
- » Food is fuel. Stock your kitchen with healthy snacks like nuts, fruits, vegetables and whole grains. (You can buy many of these presliced and preportioned.) Search online for simple, nutritious recipes, then enlist help to put meals together. Save some time by shopping online – some stores even deliver.
- » Make time to get your body moving. You may not be able to go to the gym, but what about walking the dog or walking around the block? Dance while you vacuum; stretch while you fold laundry.
- » If you're sick, go to the doctor. You may feel you don't have time, but by not going, you're putting yourself and your care recipient at risk.

MIND

- » Take mental breaks every day. Think of it as taking a refreshing breath of air. Read a book; do a crossword puzzle; draw, write, knit or even color; listen to music or a podcast. Find an activity that engages your mind in something other than caregiving.
- » Many people find meditation a good way to manage stress or anxiety. There are online videos and smartphone apps with guided meditations and breathing exercises to help you focus and think clearly.
- » If you need a positive perspective on things, try a gratitude journal. It's a helpful way to remind yourself about what's good in life.



SPIRIT

- » Feeling isolated contributes to depression and poor health, so make a point to stay connected to friends. Chat on the phone or make a regular coffee or exercise date. Keep up with your book club, small group study or other social circles.
- » You don't have to process a family caregiver's complicated feelings alone. Support groups are a good outlet for sharing your experiences with others who understand. You can also reach out to spiritual counselors or a licensed therapist.



Support for the Family Caregiver

YOU'RE NOT ALONE

In typical family caregiving scenarios, care responsibilities fall on the shoulders of a single, primary caregiver. And sometimes it feels like those shoulders are carrying the weight of the world.

But you don't have to do this alone. Family caregiver support groups are designed to be safe spaces for you to connect with other people who understand what you're going through. These groups are where you can be honest about your feelings and share your frustrations and experiences – with no judgment. And that's a critical element of taking care of yourself.

At Presbyterian Village North, we host family caregiver support groups on the fourth Tuesday of each month. Here's what you can expect:

- » **Dinner** – You don't have to cook or do dishes. Just come have a good meal.
- » **Discussion** – Sometimes we host guest speakers to share on family caregiving topics, and sometimes we just share what's going on with each other.
- » **Diversions** – You need to have fun too. It might be a movie or concert, or making something creative together. It's all designed for you to have a good time.

You're welcome to join us anytime.

Dementia and Alzheimer's Family Caregiver Support Group

Fourth Tuesday of each month

6:00 – 7:15 p.m.

In the Fun & Games Room at Presbyterian Village North

8600 Skyline Drive, Dallas, TX 75243

RSVPs are appreciated.

If you'd like to RSVP or find out what's on the calendar, email ladrian@prescs.org.



The Family Caregiver's Bill of Rights

I have the right to take care of myself. This is not an act of selfishness. It will give me the capability of taking better care of my loved one.

I have the right to seek help from others even though my loved ones may object. I recognize the limits of my own endurance and strength.

I have the right to maintain facets of my own life that do not include the person I care for, just as I would if he or she were healthy. I know that I do everything that I reasonably can for this person, and I have the right to do some things just for myself.

I have the right to get angry, be depressed and express other difficult feelings occasionally.

I have the right to reject any attempts by my loved one (either conscious or unconscious) to manipulate me through guilt and/or depression.

I have the right to receive consideration, affection, forgiveness and acceptance for what I do, from my loved ones, for as long as I offer these qualities in return.

I have the right to take pride in what I am accomplishing and to applaud the courage it has sometimes taken to meet the needs of my loved one.

I have the right to protect my individuality and my right to make a life for myself that will sustain me in the time when my loved one no longer needs my full-time help.

I have the right to expect and demand that as new strides are made in finding resources to aid physically and mentally impaired persons in our country, similar strides will be made toward aiding and supporting caregivers.

From "Caregiving: Helping an Aging Loved One" by Jo Horne.



The CARE Act and You

Many family caregivers must take on complex responsibilities that were once provided only by medical professionals. Almost half of family caregivers perform medical or nursing tasks, often with little to no training or support. But now, family caregivers like you will have help when loved ones go into the hospital and when they come home.

THE CAREGIVER ADVISE, RECORD, ENABLE (CARE) ACT WAS PASSED IN TEXAS IN 2017.

The CARE Act requires hospitals to:

- » Record the name of the family caregiver on the medical record of your loved one.
- » Inform the family caregiver when their loved one is to be discharged.
- » Provide the family caregiver with education and instruction on the medical tasks they will need to perform for the patient at home.

Cut out and keep this CARE card in your wallet, so if you have to take your loved one to the hospital, you can remind yourself – and the medical team – of what steps are now required by law.

The CARE Act requires hospitals to:

- » Provide your loved one the opportunity to designate a family caregiver & have it recorded in their medical records.
- » Notify you when your loved one is to be discharged.
- » Instruct you on the medical tasks you'll need to perform at home.

