



“An ounce of prevention is worth a pound of cure”

Choosing the In-Home Care Model

You have made the decision to remain in the home versus transitioning into a senior living community. We support your efforts to manage your care and will provide you with this outline of how to structure the most supportive living environment possible.

Your new role is that of Administrator or Care Manager. Every senior living community must have one person who is ultimately in charge of managing all the aspects of the home. This role can be shared, and duties delegated amongst family members and outside support services, but there should be one person who oversees the operations and ideally that individual should have a 2nd in command – backup. Giving 100% control to the caregiver or agency can often lead to power struggles, favoritism, entitlement issues and worst-case scenario criminal acts of injustice (identity theft, home theft, extortion, elder abuse).

Hiring a caregiver, be it from an agency or independently, is oftentimes like shooting in the dark. You are not sure of this person’s bedside manner, experience, inter/intrapersonal communication skills, level of knowledge working with certain types of disease/ disability, personality...or their general demeanor.

- Know that as quickly as you can hire someone, you can also fire someone.
- All permanent hires should be based on compatibility and competency.
 - a. Does the caregiver get along compatibly with my loved one?
 - b. Are they proving to be competent with the required job duties/tasks?

1. Identify Your Loved One’s Needs - your primary goal is to **get specific!**

- c. Custodial Care - just take care of them/do everything for them
 - i. Cooking, house cleaning, bathing-dressing-grooming, ...
- d. Companion Care - Maintain their ability to remain safely independent
 - i. Light house cleaning

2. Create a Job Description

- a. List all the duties that you expect them to accomplish
 - i. Provides accountability
- b. State you want an individual who creates a consistent schedule

3. Create Job Expectations

- a. Never go into this room...
- b. Please completed this time tracking log of your hours
- c. Notify family only when... otherwise we trust your judgement to handle most situations



4. Safe Proof their Home

- a. Identity - remove items from house or store in safe/locked room
- b. Valuables - remove items from house or store in safe/locked room
- c. Wallet/license (ICE Binder copies/online note taking app)
- d. Credit card w/limit – separate card for caregivers or PrePaid Credit Card/Debit card w/a cash value limit
- e. DO NOT ALLOW THE SENIOR TO PAY or TIP the caregivers with CASH!

5. How to Retain Good Caregivers = Benefit Package – In order to properly hire and retain the right caregiver it is best that you make it so that your loved one's/home is one where they want to work. NEVER provide cash tips; ALWAYS instruct your loved ones to not provide cash tips.

- a. Show Appreciation for the work that they provide with both word and deed
 - i. Give them flowers, a plant, a thank you note, a gift card...
- b. Paid Time-off: If possible, let them know that you are willing to cover for them in the event of emergency
- c. Purchase an insurance policy for caregivers (seek out insurance for a home health aide (non-medical – only nurses provide medical care)

6. Home Owners Insurance - Check your loved one's home owner's insurance to verify what the coverage is for a live-in or hourly caregiver

7. Background Check – pay for a Dept of Justice/FBI clearance test (apprx. \$100)

8. General Snapshot - We recommend that you provide the newly hired individual with some insights into your loved one's life to help them know what to look for when working w/the client. Review with the caregiver information about your loved one's

- ✓ physical and mental health
- ✓ medication use
- ✓ daily routine
- ✓ home and community safety
- ✓ support system
- ✓ appearance and hygiene
- ✓ personal interests
- ✓ privacy

Physical health

- Diagnosis of any chronic diseases such as diabetes, high blood pressure, arthritis, emphysema, or stroke.
- Unusual weight loss or gain in a short amount of time.
- Incontinence.
- Balance problems: How steady is the person while walking?



- Persistent fatigue or sleeplessness.
- Swollen feet or legs, or limping.
- Vision problems such as cataracts or use of vision aids.
- Hearing problems: Is there a need for a hearing aid? If there is one, is it being worn?
- Dental problems including gum disease, halitosis and ill-fitting dentures.
- Complaints of pain.
- List of health professionals being seen.

Mental health

- Make note of these factors; a primary care doctor can help, but a geriatric psychiatrist or neurologist might be more helpful.
- Diagnosis of any psychiatric disorders such as depression, anxiety disorder or psychosis.
- Diagnosis of Alzheimer's or other form of dementia.
- Recent hospitalizations for any of these problems.
- Mood swings, including rage or hostility.
- Forgetfulness or wandering off.
- Sadness or loneliness.
- Decreased interest in reading, writing and communicating.
- Difficulty in maintaining friends.
- Decreased interest in life.

Medication Use

- Are there any barriers to proper medicine use, such as forgetfulness, expense, poor understanding of purpose and results of use?
- List all medicines taken, prescription or over the counter, with frequency and dosage.
- List all herbal remedies, supplements, traditional home remedies or vitamins being used.
- Is the person able to take medications as directed and avoid interactions?

Maintain a Smooth-Running and Happy Home

Keeping the lines of communication open is one of the most important things that you can do. It involves more than simply making your expectations clear. The following are a few hints on how to create a smooth-running and happy home.

- Equip the caregiver with tools for success. Provide the caregiver with the supplies necessary to do his or her job.
 - All supplies, medications, equipment necessary (have back up supplies on hand)
 - Insights, tips and strategies to best interact with loved one



- Topics of conversation, areas of interest that will engage your loved one
- Ideas of how to make your loved one most comfortable
- Develop relationship with your regular and substitute caregivers (Regardless of whether you work through an agency or not). Show your appreciation, complementing the caregiver's work and skills, giving them a gift card or expressing gratitude routinely (every 2 months) helps.
- Schedule informal meetings. Ask the caregiver how things are going. Has he or she noticed any recent changes in your loved one's health? Is there anything you can do to provide better support?
- Speak up. If you feel your expectations are not being met, let the caregiver know in a gentle but firm manner. Refer to your initial job description/household expectations.
- Provide them with a comfortable environment. The caregiver should have pleasant working conditions, with a comfortable place to take a break (or a comfortable room and bed for live-in help).

Daily Routine – Home & Community Safety

- Identify their daily living routine (create a general schedule)
- List special dietary needs and favorite foods.
- Describe their ability to
 - Dress – needs full assistance or... just needs help putting on a sweater/ jacket
 - Bathing – Are they stable? Do they need assistance...stand-by or hands-on? Do they use supportive devices (handheld water spout, shower chair/bench, hand rails)?
 - Get up from a chair
 - Use the toilet independently
 - Use the phone
 - Climb stairs
 - Get help in an emergency
 - Shop independently
 - Prepare meals
 - Do housework and yard work
 - Drives safely
- Describe their general hygiene
 - Toileting habits
 - Bathing – How often do they bathe each week?
 - Dress – How do they generally like to present themselves (dressed up, casual, where the same thing...)?



9. Support Systems/ Preventive Protection -

In this day and age it is to your benefit to establish measures of protection with crimes such as identity theft, and elder scams on the rise.

- Provide the caregiver(s) with emergency contact information
- Back up support in the event of an incident while they're on duty
- Develop a household emergency plan
- Establish a Back-up Plan

10. Cheat Sheets = Support and Accountability

Written instructions paired with verbal instructions are the most supportive for all. Write down important information so the caregiver will have a reference. Include details on the care recipient, the home and emergency protocols. Keep a copy in a central place in the home.

About Your Loved One:

- Likes and dislikes
- Normal diet and any restrictions to it
- Any mobility issues
- Current medical status and/or illnesses (include any signs of an emergency)
- Possible behavior problems and how to best deal with them
- Any exercises or therapies (include schedule, if applicable)
- Medication list (include a schedule, how to dispense how to reorder)

About the Home or Apartment:

- Security precautions and keys
- Location of medical supplies
- Location of food and cooking items (include explanation of any related appliances)
- Location of cleaning and washing supplies (include instructions for appliances)
- Location of fuse box, flash lights, light bulbs and candles
- Location of clothing or extra linens

About Emergencies:

- Name and phone number of first person who should be contacted after 9-1-1
- Doctors' names and phone numbers
- Other important contacts
- Emergency exit procedures
- First aid kit
- Fire extinguishers



Caregiver Services Checklist

<u>Home Services</u>	<u>Additional Services</u>
<input type="checkbox"/> Light housekeeping	<input type="checkbox"/>
<input type="checkbox"/> Laundry and ironing	<input type="checkbox"/>
<input type="checkbox"/> Daily bed-making	<input type="checkbox"/>
<input type="checkbox"/> Companionship	<input type="checkbox"/>
<input type="checkbox"/> Meal prep and clean-up	<input type="checkbox"/>
<input type="checkbox"/> Errand and appointment escort	<input type="checkbox"/>
<u>Personal Services</u>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<input type="checkbox"/> Grooming	<input type="checkbox"/>
<input type="checkbox"/> Dressing	<input type="checkbox"/>
<input type="checkbox"/> Bathing	<input type="checkbox"/>
<input type="checkbox"/> Incontinence care	<input type="checkbox"/>
<input type="checkbox"/> Cognitive impairment support	<input type="checkbox"/>
<input type="checkbox"/> Pet care/dog walking/litter clean up	<input type="checkbox"/>
<u>Skilled Services</u>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<input type="checkbox"/> Injections	<input type="checkbox"/>
<input type="checkbox"/> Changing feeding tube/IV	<input type="checkbox"/>
<input type="checkbox"/> Physical therapy	<input type="checkbox"/>
<input type="checkbox"/> Occupational therapy	<input type="checkbox"/>
<input type="checkbox"/> Speech therapy	<input type="checkbox"/>
<u>Health Services</u>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<input type="checkbox"/> Medication management	<input type="checkbox"/>
<input type="checkbox"/> Care coordination	<input type="checkbox"/>
<input type="checkbox"/> Referrals for home	<input type="checkbox"/>
<input type="checkbox"/> medical care and therapy services	<input type="checkbox"/>
<input type="checkbox"/> Home safety inspections	<input type="checkbox"/>



At Next Step we provide Care Management services where we are able to come in and provide management oversight for all these needs. This provides greater support for the family by enabling you to delegate certain responsibilities to Next Step and allowing our trusted team to act as your family surrogate. All care management packages are private pay and customized to suit the needs of each client.

Contact us today at 949-573-8504 for additional information or contact us as
<https://www.nextstepsco.com/care-management.html>