



Care Partner Information

Tips for Providing Older Adult Care

Understanding Long-Term Care

Many people need help to care for an older adult. For example, they may need someone to come into the home to help. Or, it may be best for the older adult to move to a facility that provides care. These are both “long-term care.” There are many types of long-term care. Medicare pays for some types of care. Long-term care insurance and Medicaid pay for some types of care. And the individual or family must pay for some types of care. Call the person’s insurances to learn what types of care each will pay.

Care for older adults who live at home

Care options for older adults who live at home		
Type	Care provided	What it is
In Home	Companion Services	Someone visits to spend time with the older adult.
	Personal Care Services	Someone visits to help with bathing, dressing, eating, or other personal care.
	Homemaker Services	Someone helps with housekeeping, shopping, or preparing meals.
	Home Health Care (Also called Skilled Care)	A nurse or other care provider helps with medical needs.
	Hospice Care	Special care for patients near the end-of-life. Care focuses on reducing pain or discomfort, and provides support for family and caregivers. Hospice care can be in the home or at a care facility.
Community Center	Adult Day Center	A daytime program at a community center with activities. Some programs also offer personal care or health care.

This Care Partner Information page is part of a series on older adult caregiving tips. They are written to help family and community caregivers, direct care workers and community health representatives care for older adults. Available in English and Spanish at www.aging.arizona.edu

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Care for older adults outside the home

Another type of long-term care is when the older adult moves out of their home and lives somewhere else. This is called “residential care.”

The table below describes the types of care outside the home.

Type of residential care	What it is
Independent Living Also called “Retirement Housing”	Older adults live on their own, but with support for meals, activities, and transportation.
Assisted Living	Older adults live in their own room in a facility with many other older adults. Care can include meals, group activities, transportation, help with medications, and personal care. Some assisted living centers have areas called “memory care.” These areas provide care for people with dementia.
Group Home Also called “Adult Care Home”	Older adults live in a regular house with a private or shared bedroom. Paid caregivers are there 24 hours a day. The type of care can be small things like help with meals. Or, care can be things like help with dressing, toileting, and other personal care.
Skilled Nursing Also called “Nursing Home”	Rooms may be private or shared. Nurses work 24 hours a day to help care for older adults with many medical needs.
Continuing Care Community Also called “Life Care”	These can provide independent living, assisted living, and skilled nursing (see above). A person can start in independent living and change to have more care when they need it.
Hospice Care	Special care for patients near the end-of-life. Care focuses on reducing pain or discomfort, and provides support to family and caregivers. Hospice care can be in the home, or at a care facility.

Useful Websites

US Department of Health and Human Services have information on long-term care:

<https://longtermcare.acl.gov/>

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