



The Best Guide on

Elder Care Options



Dedicated to...

All the families who care deeply for each other and work so hard to ensure the best options for their loved ones.

And of course, to all the people who help them do so!

3 important points

Before you begin the process



#1

Caregiver burnout is a huge problem, and it can affect everyone, including you!



This is where the airplane analogy is key: make sure you have your oxygen mask on first, as otherwise you can't help anyone else.

Whether you are providing care directly, and or coordinating care from close or from a distance - you are not immune, and need to make sure you get the support you need - from advice to a chance to vent to practical assistance.

#2

There is no such thing as “ideal” option - every family has their own preferences!

#3

Being very clear on what you want will increase your success in finding it!

A quick guide

Understanding your options, the different words and what they mean



Services for elderly person living at home

1. Home modification resources: Making sure that the home environment is safe to protect the person from tripping and falling is key. Many organisations can offer experts (usually occupational therapists) who can come and assess the home and recommend devices and modifications.

2. Telemonitoring and alerts: Many companies now offer tools to help monitor a person's health at home and send alerts in case of falls. It's a worthwhile investment.

3. Meal services: In many places, meals can be delivered to elderly people who are not able to shop and cook for themselves through health center or community programs as well as increasingly from commercial meal delivery apps.

4. Transportation assistance: Transportation assistance is available for elders in many communities. Options may include volunteer driver programs, public or private door-to-door and curb-to-curb van services, and door-through-door assistance as well as taxi companies with specialised cabs. Home delivery services for groceries are becoming more common.

5. Informal and paid support: Family, friends, neighbors, volunteers and paid caregivers can check in on your elder at home, keep them company, deliver groceries and take care of other household chores.

Services for elderly person with health needs

1. Paid caregivers: Caregivers range from companions to people who need experience managing multiple medications and increasing mental and/or physical health issues. Many families are the caregivers and have paid help that comes when they themselves are at work.

2. Visiting aids: Sometimes your elderly relative can be eligible for home health aids or personal care assistants that can visit to help with activities of daily living (ADLs), taking medicine and monitoring health.

3. Visiting nurses: Visiting nurses and other health professionals, such as physical, occupational and speech therapists, can provide skilled medical care in your elder's home or as adjuncts in other facilities.

4. Adult day care programs: Adult day care programs are open during business hours and provide opportunities for elders with failing health to be mentally and socially stimulated to participate in activities in a safe and positive space.

5. Respite care: If family is the primary caregiver, they require respite caregivers — people who can provide you with short-term breaks and relief. Respite care can come from friends, nurses, aids and volunteers, or from adult day care programs and if no other option is available, paid help.

When an elderly person can't live at home

1. Independent Living is senior housing in which residents live in private homes or apartments and are almost entirely self-sufficient. Some services and activities may be offered, but they are optional.

2. Assisted Living is the transition between Independent Living and a Care home. They are for elders who need ongoing assistance with activities of daily living, but who can maintain independence.

3. Care or Group Homes are for seniors who need assistance with activities of daily living, but who do not require ongoing skilled nursing care.

4. Nursing Homes provide around-the-clock skilled nursing care and personal care to seniors who can no longer live independently.

5. Continuing Care Retirement Communities (CCRCs)

A combination of the four options above in one location, allowing residents to move from one to the next as needs increase, but the environment and the staff are familiar.

6. Hospice focuses on palliative care for people facing terminal illness. The best hospices emphasize pain relief and comfort, respect the wishes of the patient and provide support for the patient's family.

A few important things to know:

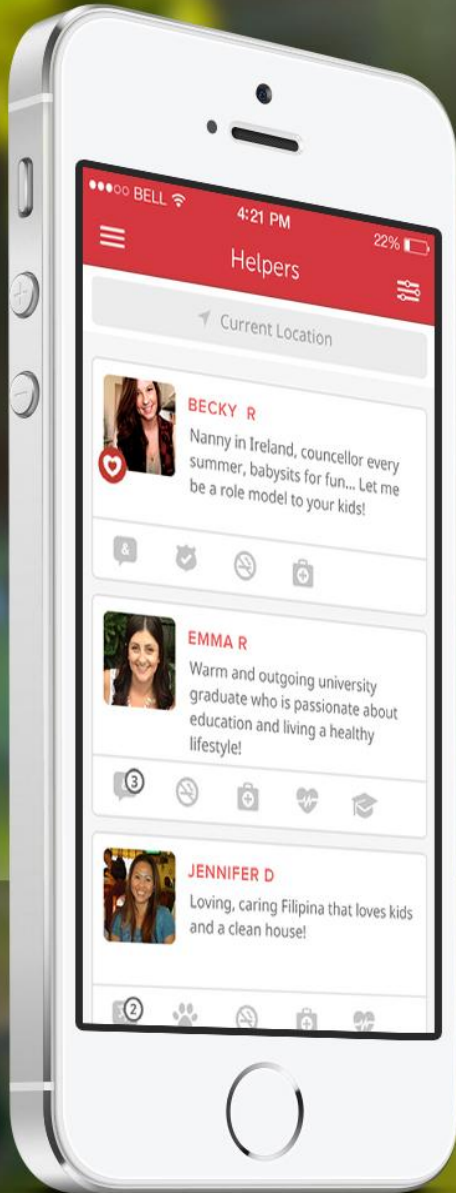
1. **It's really hard on everyone** - seeing loved ones require assistance is hard on you, and for the elderly person themselves accepting the fact that assistance is required is even harder
2. **Personalising the option is best** - some elderly thrive when moved to an independent living community while some do well with a companion at home, when they are well matched to their interests and habits
3. **"Crises" become more frequent the older the person gets** - health scares and falls as well as new diagnoses are increasingly common with age. Statistics say that fully a third of people older than 65 will experience a significant health event requiring hospital stay, convalescence and change to their lives.
4. **It's all really expensive** - so the better one organises volunteers and services the more resources as well as financial means one has to tap into when the need arrives. Elder care caregivers are usually in the \$15 to \$40/hr range and the costs add up quickly.
5. **Learning from each other and accepting help is key** - many have had to go through these experiences and develop coping skills and practical strategies. If you are feeling lonely or overwhelmed, reach out and there are many people who will no doubt help out with advice, connections, suggestions and a helping hand.

Now what?

Practical tools you can use
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About the Author



Alexandra T. Greenhill

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This guide is written based on lessons learned about what really works from first hand experience as well as the thousands of families she has helped.

Passionate about making a real difference, Alexandra has served for decades on various volunteer causes including leadership roles in health care and in the community. Her contributions have been recognized with many awards.



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We wish you the best in your search for the right care option for your family.

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