



Long Distance Caregiving

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Senior Management Services

If you live at some distance of an hour or longer from your elderly loved one, you are considered a Long-Distance Caregiver. Long distance caregiving provides its own unique challenges. In times of crisis, the initial reaction is to pack up and travel to your loved one's side as soon as possible. However, there are some things you can do to prioritize the need and get them help from your own home. The tasks of finding care, locating resources, and dealing with finances can all be frustrating and time consuming, especially when you must do it long distance. The following items are suggestions of information to have on hand so that you can manage some of these issues.

- First, identify close friends, neighbors, and medical caregivers of your loved one. Have a list of their names and numbers and complete all documentation needed (Privacy/Information release forms, copies of Powers of Attorney) so that you can converse with them when questions arise.
- Collect phone numbers for the local Area Agency on Aging, geriatric care managers, home care agencies and their pharmacy. Your Elder Care Information and Referral Specialist can assist with this task (see contact information below).
- Have copies of your loved one's Living Will, Power of Attorney, and Advance Directive in your possession. These documents can then be distributed as needed to those providing direct medical care.
- If your parent lives in a nursing home or assisted living community, have phone numbers for their assigned social worker or care manager at that facility. This individual can update you on care plan meetings and be a contact for most concerns about their care needs.

Being able to anticipate a need can be the difference between an emergency and an event. Remember that it is normal to feel guilty about not being at your loved one's side each time they need support. As you find the balance between work, life and caregiving, these tasks will assist you in keeping that balance intact and will also allow you to make meaningful visits at times when you are able to focus fully on your loved one.

For additional information about Eldercare, please contact Quest at 1-800-364-6352.