

10 Places to Find Caregiving Help

by **Rebecca Sharp Colmer**

The information in this article will tell you where to search for caregiving assistance for your loved one.

It is not easy being a caregiver. Often in the beginning stage it is natural to think that you can do it all by yourself. As time goes on your caregiving duties will increase. The sooner you get extra help, the better.

Keep in mind it may take some time to find the right combination of services and support for your loved one.

1. Family. The best starting place is with immediate family members. Use family helpers as much as possible. If they do not volunteer to help do not hesitate to ask them how they would like to contribute to the care of their loved one. One family member may be better suited for running errands while another is good at paying bills. Not everyone is willing or able to contribute the same level of care.

2. Friends. If friends, neighbors, distant relatives ask if there is anything they can do to help, say yes. Assign them a specific task. For example, it might be helpful if they brought over dinner once a week, or maybe they could mow the lawn, or drive your loved one to see the doctor. Ask them to be a respite caregiver for a couple of hours so that you get a break.

3. Area Agency on Aging. This should be one of the first resources you should contact. Almost every state has one or more AAAs, which serve local communities. You can find your local agency listed in the phone book or on the Internet.

4. Local senior center. Most senior centers offer some services or can connect you with local community services. Also, senior centers are a good place to network with other caregivers.

5. Churches and synagogues. Even if you are not affiliated with a church or synagogue, many offer caregiving help to people of all faiths. Even if they do not offer caregiving help they may be able to point you in the right direction.

6. Local organizations. Contact your local United Way, Jewish Family Services, Lions Club.



7. National organizations. For almost every ailment or illness there is an organization that can provide referrals or services. You can find listings on the Internet, yellow pages, and at your local public library.

8. Government agencies. Contact your local health department, and departments of housing and social service. Look in the yellow pages.

9. Adult Day Care. Adult day care agencies offer programs with varying services. To find adult day care services, check your local phone book.

10. Home Health Care Agencies. Most home health care agencies offer both skilled and custodial care. Home health care can be expensive. Medicare may pay for some skilled care.

It is a good idea to keep a notebook of all the people you contact. The more organized you are, the easier your job will be.

About the Author

Rebecca Sharp Colmer is an Eldercare Advocate, Author, Speaker, Publisher, Certified Senior Advisor and Caregiver Expert. You can find more caregiving tools and resources at her website: www.MeAndMyCaregivers.com.

