

Planning Ahead to Deal with an Eldercare Crisis

Delaying preparation to take care of an aging parent is understandable. It is something most of us would rather not consider. However, by preparing ahead of time, you can ensure that your parent will receive the best care possible. The following guidelines can help:



- 1. Find out your parent's wishes.** How great is your parent's need for independence? What goals or dreams remain to be accomplished? What are your parent's needs and concerns about the future?
- 2. Be sure your parent's legal documents are in order.** Has your parent executed all of the important legal documents and are they up-to-date? These would include an up-to-date Will, Living Will, Durable Power of Attorney For Healthcare, and Durable Power of Attorney.
- 3. Learn your parent's desires regarding healthcare.** Does your parent have a doctor who he/she trusts? If your parent is sick presently, what is his/her prognosis and how will it affect his/her personal care, housing, medical needs or finances? If you had to make medical decisions for your parent, what would he/she want you to know? Are advance healthcare directives in place (Living Will, Durable Power of Attorney For Healthcare)?
- 4. Find out your parent's wishes regarding housing.** How important is it to your parent to remain in his or her own home? Where would your parent want to live if he/she could no longer manage at home? Is your parent familiar with other housing options available? What if it isn't possible for your parent to live with another family member?
- 5. Learn about your parent's financial resources.** What are your parent's present financial needs and potential future needs? Is he/she in a financial position to meet these needs? Is your parent's insurance - including life, health, home and auto - adequate and current?
- 6. Meet with family members to discuss various responsibilities should your parent become incapacitated.** Who will be the designated agent on the Durable Power of Attorney For Healthcare or Durable Power of Attorney? Is in-home care a possibility? Under what circumstances?
- 7. Don't offer personal home care unless you thoroughly understand and can meet the responsibilities and costs involved.** Closely examine your family's ability to provide long-term in-home care for a frail and increasingly dependent parent. Consider the family's physical limits. Plan how your own needs will be met when your responsibility for the dependent parent increases.
- 8. Gather information now on how to care for an aging parent.** There are numerous resources available which discuss: housing options, preparing wills and advance healthcare directives, long-distance caregiving, protecting and maximizing financial resources, healthcare, community and home-care services, dealing with Alzheimer's Disease or other disorders, etc. An excellent book to use as an ongoing reference is: *How To Care For Aging Parents*, by Virginia Morris.

Tri-State / National REACH EAP

1-888-734-8217

If you or one of your dependents needs help with a personal, family or work-related issue, contact Tri-State / National REACH Employee Assistance Program for professional assistance. We provide anonymous, confidential telephone counseling, referrals or information to help you or your immediate family members for issues including:

- Marital, Family and Relationship Issues
- Alcohol or Substance Use
- Job Concerns
- Bereavement
- Parenting Issues
- Stress
- Depression and Anxiety
- Debt Relief

If you have a problem, there are solutions ...and your EAP is here to help.
Anonymous, confidential help is just a phone call away **1-888-734-8217**.