

# Talking to **Your Parents** About Home Care



Guidelines for facilitating in-home care for your aging parents

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## Talking to **Your Parents** About Home Care

It can be hard for any of us to accept difficult truths, especially when it comes to our own abilities. As our parents age, they will slowly lose their independence. They may face frailty, memory loss or even chronic disease; everyday tasks such as preparing a meal or driving to the store pose a challenge. Your primary concern is for their safety but you also respect their desire for independence.

At Home Care Assistance, we have helped thousands of families navigate the difficult waters of aging. We create personalized care plans for seniors so they receive the lifestyle assistance, personal care and companionship that is suited to their needs while maintaining as much independence as possible. We provide families with peace of mind and older adults with security and comfort.

Our framework for an open and honest discussion about home care can help you and your loved ones recognize the need for care and understand how it can positively impact your lives.

### **Warning Signs That Your Parents Need Care At Home**

- **Increasing Forgetfulness.** You might notice that dad is always searching for his car keys or mom has trouble remembering appointments. Though it is natural for older adults to become more forgetful, it could also be an early warning sign for Alzheimer's.
- **Messy Home.** You might notice that the garbage is not being taken out, dishes are left undone or laundry is piling up. A messy home may indicate that daily activities such as cooking and cleaning have become difficult for your parents.
- **Poor Hygiene.** You might notice that mom is no longer taking care of herself or dad hasn't brushed his teeth in a few days. Poor hygiene could be the result of Alzheimer's or other conditions.
- **Falls or Injuries.** You might notice bruising and other discoloration even though dad won't admit to falling. Frequent falls could be a sign that your loved one has diminished motor skills, has difficulty walking or balancing by themselves or suffers from vertigo or nausea.
- **Changes in Personality.** You might notice that mom has become withdrawn or moody and no longer enjoys the hobbies and activities she used to participate in. Changes in personality can be indicative of Alzheimer's or depression caused by the aging process and loss of independence.
- **Social Isolation.** You might notice that dad no longer makes any trips out of the house. Maybe he no longer keeps up with his friends or goes for walks around the neighborhood. Social isolation can have many causes, but it could be a sign that your parents are having difficulty managing their declining conditions.

## How Can Home Care Help You?

A caregiver can be a tremendous source of support for seniors as they age. Home Care Assistance caregivers can provide support for all activities of daily living, including bathing, grooming, dressing, ambulating, household tasks, meal preparation and transportation. They also provide companionship, encourage mental and physical stimulation and promote independence and overall wellness. Caregivers are available for a few hours every day or around-the-clock, depending on each client's individual needs. Our care plans at Home Care Assistance are tailored specifically to the circumstance and we have trained caregivers for various situations including older adults who are transitioning home from the hospital, recovering from a stroke or a major medical procedure, or managing chronic conditions such as Alzheimer's, Parkinson's or diabetes.

## Arranging a Family Meeting to Discuss Aging

At Home Care Assistance, we recommend a family meeting with your loved ones to discuss your parents' care needs. It is critical to set an agenda and address all the difficult questions associated with aging, but it is even more important to understand how every family member feels about the various care options.

- **What are the signs of aging and what do they mean for your parents?** Perhaps you notice that mom has trouble remembering recent events, or that dad's meals are now limited to canned foods. It could be that one of them experienced a recent fall. Either way, it is important to be upfront and communicate your concerns; help your parents understand why you're worried about them and give them an opportunity to share their own concerns with you.
- **Do your parents prefer to age at home like 9 out of 10 seniors do?** Home care provides a solution that serves as a comprehensive alternative to an assisted living facility or nursing home. Care plans are personalized so your parents can receive care for a few hours a day

or around the clock, depending on their needs. Focus on the advantages: your parents can continue to age comfortably at home, they will receive personalized attention from the caregiver and the cost can be lower than facility care.

- **What concerns has aging presented for each involved party?** For your parents, it may be a fear of dependence or frailty or mortality. For you or your siblings, it may be feeling overwhelmed at the prospect of caregiving, or worried at the thought of your parents being alone in an emergency. It is important for everyone to communicate and address their concerns to prevent fear from overwhelming the conversation.
- **What is most important to your parents?** It could be safety, or independence, or cost. Many of our parents simply don't want to become a burden to us as they age. Draft a list of tasks that you or your siblings would have to take on without additional support. Make sure you communicate clearly so as to arrive at an informed and collective family decision.
- **What does a caregiver do, exactly?** Communicating the role a caregiver plays in your parents' lives is important. Caregivers are not there to take away their independence and do everything for them; caregivers are there to help them when they need it, stand back when they don't and provide a regular source of comfort, compassion and understanding.

Most important, make sure that you listen carefully to what your parents share with you. Maybe you're only able to introduce the possibility of home care and they need time to accept it, or maybe they recognize the need for home care right away. This is the most important decision of their lives and it is important to respect their choices.

Depending on your family situation, you might consider asking a Home Care Assistance care manager to facilitate your family meeting. We can help ensure that everyone effectively communicates their feelings about home care while addressing questions that arise. We're happy to help in any way we can – without any obligation.

Call us today at **1-732-930-1935** or visit **[HCAJerseyShore.com](http://HCAJerseyShore.com)**

# About Home Care Assistance



Our mission at Home Care Assistance is to change the way the world ages. We provide older adults with quality care that enables them to live happier, healthier lives at home. Our services are distinguished by the caliber of our caregivers, the responsiveness of our staff and our expertise in Live-In care. We embrace a positive, balanced approach to aging centered on the evolving needs of older adults.

- **Live-In Experts.** We specialize in **around the clock** care to help seniors live well at home.
- **Available 24/7.** Care managers are **on call** for clients and their families, even during nights and weekends.
- **High Caliber Caregivers.** We hire only **1 in 25** applicants and provide ongoing training and supervision.
- **Balanced Care.** Our unique approach to care promotes healthy **mind, body and spirit.**
- **No Long Term Contracts.** Use our services only as long as you're **100% satisfied.**
- **A Trusted Partner.** We're honored to be **Preferred Providers** for professionals in both the medical and senior communities.
- **Peace of Mind.** Independent industry surveys place our **client satisfaction** rate at 97%.



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