



SENIOR NUGGET - JULY 2023

Caregiving Duties, and Tips

A caregiver wears multiple hats: Such as nurse, chef, house cleaner, driver, advocate, just to name a few. Knowing financial arrangements is most helpful for caregiver.

Some insights, from those that cared for a family member:

- 1) Handling Doctor's Appointments. Caregivers need to be on the Medical Power Of Attorney Form in order to speak with Medical Providers. Depending on state of the patient, caregiver may need to be an advocate for their loved one and ensure they are complying with current medical needs.**
- 2) At-Home Care – taking over medical management is very common and may require multiple types of medication that are taken at specific times each day. Caregivers need to control medication administration as well as picking up prescriptions. Many patients will also need toilet assistance and help with getting dressed and bathing.**
- 3) House-Cleaning/Maintenance – Keeping loved one's home in good shape is important. Basic day-to-day tasks like washing dishes, laundry, watering plants and dusting, as well as lawn care or hiring someone to repair appliances.**
- 4) Transportation – Being chauffeur is added to the list of duties. Driving is one of the most common activities reported, whether it be for appointments, social interactions, family events, church ... the list goes on.**
- 5) Meal Preparation – Feeding – providing meals is a regular care-giver's duty. It involves buying groceries, cooking, meal preparation and even feeding your loved one if they are not able to feed themselves. Nutritious meals are a vital dietary guideline and following a doctor's specific dietary orders.**
- 6) Pet Care – caregiving may involve a furry pet. If that is the case, assure pet food is on hand, take pet(s) for annual vet appointments and schedule a few pet sitters in case of last-minute hospital visit or travel.**
- 7) Exercise Assistance – Having physical activity is an essential part of maintaining good health. Caregivers should make sure to add a low-intensity workouts to the**

regular routine. Exercise is a great way to bond with loved one. There are many low-impact exercises that can be done at home instead of going to the gym.

Tip: Have Doctor provided an exercise regime appropriate for loved one.

- 8) **Calendar Organization – Coordinating calendar is an important part of caregiving. Juggling to fit in appointments, family, and social events can be challenging. Caregiver may be caring for someone that still is in school or requires transport assistance to work. Tracking exactly when and where they need to be can be challenging.**

Tip: Use a large calendar, with writing material close-by

- 9) **Running Errands – There are always items to pick up, grocery, pharmacy, clothes, post office, oil and gas in car. Keeping track of errand runs in a month helps with scheduling:**

Tip: Many online stores offer free and fast home delivery

- 10) **Financial Assistance ... add banker to list of hats. Caregivers frequently help out with paying bills, managing funds, helping with taxes and more. It may even include providing financially from their own pockets, a duty that for many is a significant burden.**

Tip: Financial Responsibilities should be known from the start

- 11) **Accepting Help – Caregivers state this is the most challenging aspect of the entire experience. Learn to accept and welcome family and friends' assistance. You show strength by accepting help. Next time someone offers to take over carpool duty or help out around the house, just say "yes!" It will get easier.**

- 12) **Caregivers need periodic breaks.** Entire family should be involved, not just one!

- 13) **Caregivers need to have official written authorization to speak with Bankers, Medical Providers, etc. Involve family, friends.**

- 14) **Caregivers need a roster of names and contact information, in case of need.**

- 15) **Caregivers need to keep family members apprised of patients' condition.**

- 16) **Caregivers can't be superman or superwoman; they need to have time for themselves as well.**