

Caregiver Headlines

In-Home Workers

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Not sure if an in-home worker is right for your loved one, then caregivers can try respite.

Now that you have made the decision to let an aide come into your home to assist, you may be getting apprehensive about what to expect when the aide arrives for work. If you do not have experience with in-home assistance, all sorts of “worst case scenarios” are whirling about in your head. And then there are the questions. What do I do if I do not like the aide? How should I approach problems? Who supervises the aide?

Assuming the aide is from a home health care agency, caregivers can expect a lot of support in easing their anxieties. It is the agency’s job to answer caregiver questions in advance and resolve any issues that arise. The key to facilitating caregiver satisfaction and comfort is good communication with the agency management and with your own aide.

Here are a few tips for establishing positive relationships with home health care professionals:

Be completely honest about your needs. Caregivers

should try to overcome any embarrassment or guilt associated with describing why they need help and what kind of help is specifically needed. Remember that you are dealing with professionals who have helped a variety of clients. They are experienced in meeting the needs of people just like you. Home Health Care professionals are prepared to deal with tough situations such as Alzheimer’s, alcoholism, Parkinson’s, strokes, incontinence and stressful family circumstances. State your preferences from the start.

The best way caregivers can get exactly what they want is to be specific. Give a detailed request to the agency so that the aide they send will meet your needs. Caregivers should include their household rules, and daily routines and how to follow them.

Caregivers should give feedback to the agency on a timely basis. “Nip it in the bud,” is good advice. Most problems start out small and can be best resolved when addressed promptly. If care-

givers are having a problem with the aide, call the agency. This benefits the caregiver in two ways: the caregiver does not have to be involved in reprimanding the aide, and it prompts the agency to diplomatically resolve the problem. Employee supervision is the responsibility of the agency. If the problem cannot be resolved to your satisfaction, request the agency send a different aide. The agency will handle the hiring and firing.

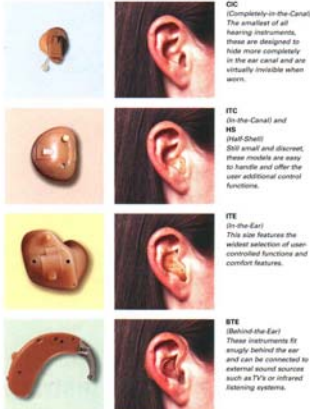
If caregivers start off with honesty and communication, having a home health care aide will be a successful and beneficial experience.

If caregivers are thinking about an in-home worker, but are not sure it will work for them, then respite is available to caregivers to try out an in-home aide. Interested caregivers should contact the Caregiver Advisor toll free at: 1.888.560.8805 ext. 1062.

Source:

www.cargiver.com

Choosing a Hearing Aid



There are many different types of hearing aids to choose from. These 10 tips can help in choosing the proper hearing aid for your needs.

- 1. Do not go it alone.** Bring a friend or relative to an examination for a hearing aid. Two people can hear and remember more than one.
- 2. Interview a provider.** Get referrals from health care professionals. The American Speech-Language-Hearing Association and the American Academy of Audiology offer information on how to find a hearing professional.
- 3. Know before you go.** Know what you want the hearing aid to do for you. The worse the hearing loss, the harder it is for your brain to adjust, so it is important to act as soon as you think you may have hearing loss. Knowing your priorities will help the professional determine what style and technology are best.
- 4. Have your hearing tested.** During your visit, you should be given a hearing test in a soundproof booth. It will tell the audiologist or hearing specialist what type of hearing loss you have so a hearing aid can be programmed specifically for you. Not all devices will fit every person or every degree of hearing loss.
- 5. Try before you buy.** Ask for a demonstration of the hearing aids recommended for you.
- 6. Ask about add-ons.** Consider what is needed, but do not be pressured into buying extras you do not need.
- 7. Can you hear me now?** After buying a hearing aid do not leave the office without checking whether it fits. And not just physically; does it do what you want it to do? Ask for an automated “real ear” test to see how the hearing aid works in your ear.
- 8. Get it in writing.** Get a signed copy of a contract that outlines what you are buying: the make and model of the hearing aid, price, trial period, any nonrefundable fees, and the warranty. Most manufacturers allow a 30-60 day trial period, and follow-up visits are a must.
- 9. Ask about training.** Ask your audiologist about hearing aid education. And see if hearing rehabilitation is offered.
- 10. Pay the piper.** Hearing aids can be very expensive, with the average cost between \$1,200—\$3,700. In 2009 Consumer Reports survey noted that there is an average retail markup of 117%, which leaves room to bargain.

Source:
www.aarp.org

Protect yourself from Medicare errors, fraud, and abuse!

Protecting your personal information is the best line of defense in the fight against healthcare fraud and abuse. Every day consumers get ripped off by scam artists. Medicare and Medicaid lose billions of dollars each year. You can make a difference!

Here are some ways to take an active role in protecting your healthcare benefits:

- Treat your Medicare, Medicaid and Social Security numbers like a credit card number. Never give these numbers to a stranger
- Remember, Medicare does not call or visit to sell anything.
- **Do not** carry your Medicare or Medicaid card unless you will need it. Only take it to the doctor’s appointments, visits to your hospital or clinic, or trips to the pharmacy.
- Record doctor visits, tests and procedures in your personal health care journal or calendar.
- Save Medicare Summary Notices and Part D Explanation of Benefits. Shred the documents when they are no longer useful.
- If you suspect Medicare or Medicaid fraud contact: Illinois Senior Medicare Patrol at 1.800.699.9043 or Midland Area Agency on Aging at 618.532.1853

Library Resource Hours

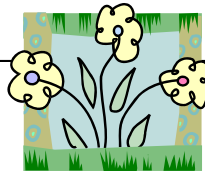
Fayette County: Evans Public Library

521 5th Street
Vandalia, IL

10:00 a.m. — 1:00 p.m. **(by appointment only)**

Next Visits: June 7

July 5
August 2



Remember...

Please call at least one day in advance to schedule your appointment with the Caregiver Advisor during Library Resource Hours toll-free at 1.888.560.8805 ext. 1062.



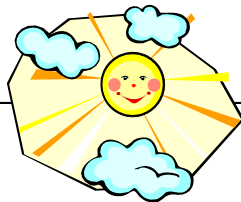
Effingham County: Helen Matthes Library

100 Market Street
Effingham, IL

10:00 a.m. — 1:00 p.m. **(by appointment only)**

Next Visits: June 2

July 7
August 4



Marion County: Bryan-Bennett Library

315 S. Maple Street
Salem, IL

1:00 p.m. — 3:30 p.m. **(by appointment only)**

Next Visits: June 21

July 19
August 16



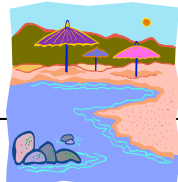
Jefferson County: CE Brehm Memorial Library

100 S. 7th Street
Mt. Vernon, IL

10:00 a.m. — 1:00 p.m. **(by appointment only)**

Next Visits: June 14

July 12
August 9



Clay County: Flora Public Library

216 N. Main Street
Flora, IL

1:30 p.m. — 3:00 p.m. **(by appointment only)**

Next Visits: June 28

July 26
August 23



Out of clutter, find simplicity. From discord, find Harmony. In the middle of difficulty lies Opportunity.—Albert Einstein
Schedule your appointment today to meet with the Caregiver Advisor.



Caregiver Connection: Learn, Share, Connect (In Vandalia & Mt. Vernon)

Fayette County & Surrounding Area

June 7
July 5
August 2

3:00 — 4:00 p.m.

Brookstone Estates
1607 W. Fillmore Street
Vandalia, IL

Guest speaker Kendra Craig from the Fayette County Health Department will be speaking about the different services the Health Department offers to senior citizens in Fayette County.

Jefferson County & Surrounding Area

June 14
July 12
August 9

3:00 — 4:00 p.m.

Lavender Ridge Memory Care
1400 S. 34th Street
Mt. Vernon, IL

Meets in Activity Room
Guest speaker Mary Cramer from Senior Services of Jefferson County will be speaking about the different services offered to seniors in Jefferson County.

Caregiver Resource & Support Meetings

Effingham County & Surrounding Area

June 20
July 18
August 15

3:30 — 4:30 p.m.

Heartland Human Services
1200 N. 4th Street
Effingham, IL

Meets in Room 119
Guest Speaker from Senior Services of Effingham County will speak about the services they offer to seniors in Effingham County.

Marion County & Surrounding Area

June 21
July 19
August 16

4:00 — 5:00 p.m.

St. Thomas Episcopal Church
512 W. Main Street
Salem, IL

Meets in Basement
(Wheelchair Lift Available)
Guest speaker Melanie Cortelloni from Marion County Senior Services.

Clay County & Surrounding Area

June 28
July 26– Alzheimer's Association
August 23

3:30 — 4:30 p.m.

Flora Public Library
216 N. Main Street
Flora, IL

Meets in Community Room

Floor Safety Tips



Help your loved one get around safely in their home by following these floor safety tips.



People with dementia have special flooring needs. Many develop gait and balance problems and walk with a shuffle. While others have low vision and perceptual problems that increase fall risk. These people might perceive the dark carpet border as a hole, and the person may attempt to step over the border. Floors that have too glossy or waxy finishes are slippery underfoot. These shiny floors also reflect glare, making it harder for your loved one to see where they are going. As the person loses the ability to housekeep, items that become strewn in the walkways can be easily tripped over—like canes, shoes, newspapers, and extension cords.

But there are also ways caregivers can make the flooring as safe as possible for their loved one.

Clutter and Items in the Walkway:

People with dementia will lose housekeeping skills at some point in the disease, including keeping the living room tidy. Consider a housekeeper, if needed, to reduce the fall risk. There are several programs available to seniors to assist them and help them stay in their homes. Also consider placing baskets or small bins around your loved one's home to put their things in to keep them from spilling onto the floor.

Dark Floor Colors and Patterns

Some people with dementia perceive dark floor colors or borders as steps or holes. Your loved one may be uncertain of their step when walking on patterned carpeting, or they may be frightened at a misperception. Caregivers can fix or remove the flooring if the person refuses to walk in the area, or is stepping or jumping over the area.

A lighter floor color will make the room seem brighter and larger, as the dark floor colors absorb light and make the room look much smaller. Plain non-patterned carpets are preferable.

Wall to Wall Carpeting.

Low dense pile carpeting is safer to walk and wheel on than thick carpeting. If padding is used, make sure that it is thin padding.

Area Carpets.

Your loved one's toe can slip under the edge of the carpet causing them to fall. Area carpets can also bunch up causing your loved one to slip. Caregivers can remove the area carpets. If your loved one is resistive try suggesting removing the carpet for a week to see what it is like without the carpet. Caregivers can also place non-skid padding and double sided tape to area rugs to prevent them from sliding

and bunching up. It is important to make sure the padding and tape goes all the way to the edge of the rug.

Floor Finishes:

Use a matte or no shine floor finish, especially if your loved one walks in socks. If there is a slippery film on the floor check to see if the right amount of floor cleaner was used. This problem can be corrected by using a clear rinse of water.

Extension Cords:

Extension cords should be placed along the wall. It is important that caregivers make sure that extension cords are **not** across areas where your loved one will walk, and **not** under the carpeting. Do not tack down extension cords. Your loved one's house may need to have additional outlets installed if there are not currently enough wall outlets. Surface mounted cables (running along the baseboard) are less expensive.

These flooring tips can help keep your loved one safe at home and prevent unnecessary falls at home. For other tips on home safety for individuals with dementia contact the Caregiver Advisor at 1.888.560.8805 ext. 1062.

Source:

www.thiscaringhome.org



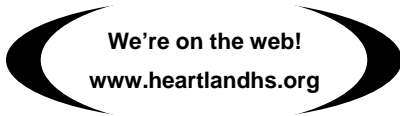
HEARTLAND
Human Services

1200 North Fourth Street
P.O. Box 1047
Effingham, IL 62401

Phone: 1.888.560.8805 x 1062

Fax: 217.342.6716

Email: tkatt@heartlandhs.org



Announcements

- June 1 *Keys to Successful Communication* 12:00 p.m.—1:00 p.m. Alzheimer's Association Audio Conference
To register call 309.662.8392 or visit www.alz.org/illinois
- June 7 Effingham County Grandparents Raising Grandchildren Support Group 6:30 p.m.
Meets at MBI Concrete Construction Conference Room. Call Linda Warner at 217.347.7179 x1046.
- June 14 *Safety in the Home* 1:30 p.m.—3:00 p.m. Alzheimer's Association Webinar
To register visit www.alz.org/stl
- June 28 *Complementary Approaches to Parkinson's* 1:00 p.m.—2:00 p.m. EDT
Presented by Melanie M. Brandabur, M.D., The Parkinson's' Institute and Clinical Center
This is an online webinar through the Parkinson's Disease Foundation. To register visit www.pdf.org

