

2019 AVENIDAS CARE FORUM TOOL KIT
SESSION TITLE: PRO-ACTIVE PLANNING FOR ADULT CHILDREN
APRIL 6, 2019

WELCOME CAREGIVERS!

The Avenidas Care Forum is uniquely positioned to benefit family caregivers and their personal support teams. This series of 7 lectures will provide participants with insider information from a physician, a psychologist and a social worker who have dedicated their careers to helping family caregivers navigate complex levels of care transitions, minimize stress, cultivate resilience, and thrive!

“There are only four kinds of people in the world. Those who have been caregivers. Those who are currently caregivers. Those who will be caregivers, and those who will need a caregiver.” - Former First Lady Rosalyn Carter

GUIDE FOR CAREGIVERS

- Stay informed, educated, learn resources and plan pro-actively. Seek support from other caregivers. You are not alone!
- Cultivate communication skills to advocate, mediate, negotiate, for your care recipient's best interests and your own!
- Communicate effectively with doctors and other members of the healthcare team and ask them about resources, information and concerns. Be open to new ideas and technologies.
- Organize medical, financial, legal information so it's up to date and easy to find.
- Research on-line Validation Therapy for Dementia Communications techniques. Research Alzheimer's Association on-line library.
- Research on line national associations providing information and benefits to patients and their families with a disease such as cancer or diabetes.
- You do not need to solve everything. Accept what you cannot change. Avoid making rushed decisions during a crisis. Accept help.
- Take care of your own health so you are strong enough to take care of your loved one. Signs for being overwhelmed include lack of sleep and appetite, increased anxiety, inability to keep track of appointments and tasks, etc. Consult a health provider and join a caregiver support group.
- Give yourself credit for doing the best you can in one of the toughest jobs there is!

PROACTIVE PLANNING GUIDE

FINANCES: Create a list of all accounts, locations, advisors' contact information, all beneficiary designations up-to-date, track Social Security benefits and medical tax benefits. Know the monthly and yearly budget. Evaluate projected costs for private pay care. Streamline bill paying.

HOME CARE: Evaluate benefits of caregiver agencies vs private pay caregivers.

CARE COMMUNITIES: Learn about their policies and functioning, costs, legal details for independent, assisted, memory care and skilled nursing facilities.

INSURANCE: Medicare/Medicaid, dental and vision insurance, Veteran's benefits, long-term care insurance; create lists of all insurance policies (life, health, long-term care, etc.), how to pay for costs not covered by Medicare, prescription plans, coordination of benefits between care providers and insurance companies.

LEGAL: Learn about medical, legal, capacity and competency standards. Review homeowners, auto and umbrella liability insurance, wills, trusts, Advance Health Care Directive, Durable Powers of Attorney for financial and health care, 'end of life treatment' options.

LIVING ARRANGEMENTS: Evaluate safety issues of current home, cost of modifications, contingency plans for illness and disability. Create networks of caregiver zip code buddies.

SAFETY: Reduce fall risks by removing cords, loose rugs, clutter. Create passage for mobility devices. Retain professionals for overall home, ramps, stairs and bathroom safety.

HEALTH PLANNING GUIDE

- Choose a physician familiar with expertise in aging, treatments and side effects of medications unique to the elderly and adequate emergency back-up. Maintain contact information for all MD's.

KEY COMPONENTS OF HEALTH HISTORY

- Medical history, diagnoses, past illnesses, injuries, hospitalizations, surgeries, lab tests, access to electronic health record (EHR), family history of physical/mental illness, eyeglasses, hearing aids, dentures.
- Medications - past and current, over the counter and prescription, supplements, cannabis.
- Allergies and sensitivities to medications.
- Daily habits - eating, toileting, sleeping, exercise.
- Difficulties in daily life - bathing, dressing, stairs, balancing checkbook.

WARNING SIGNS FOR COGNITIVE DISORDERS

- Memory problems, changes in mood or personality.
- Planning difficulties, difficulty with everyday tasks.
- Confusion with time or place, trouble understanding visual images or spatial relationship.
- New problems with words in speaking or writing, misplacing things.
- Decline in or poor judgement, withdrawal from work of social activities.
- Getting lost while driving in familiar places, frequent minor accidents, (when you begin to feel unsafe allowing this person to drive or you will not let children ride in the car).

TIPS FOR PRESERVING BRAIN HEALTH

- Exercise regularly
- Get enough sleep
- Manage your stress
- Nurture social contacts
- Continue to challenge your brain by learning new things
- Protect your head
- Improve your blood pressure, diabetes, cholesterol
- Curtail tobacco, alcohol use, stop substance abuse

SITES FOR RESOURCES

- American Association of Retired People - www.aarp.org. Resources for adults 50 and above.
- Alzheimer's Association - <https://alz.org>. Information, tips and support for Alzheimer's Disease.
- Avenidas Care Partners- www.avenidas.org. Information, resources, caregiver support.
- Family Caregiver Alliance - www.caregiver.org. Comprehensive on-line caregiver education, tips, articles.
- Farewell To Falls - <https://stanfordhealthcare.org/for-patients-visitors/farewell-to-falls.html>. Assists older adults with fall prevention tips.
- Eldercare Locator- <https://eldercare.acl.gov>. Find help in the community by entering zip code, OR city, state.
- KARA - <https://kara-grief.org/>. Grief counseling.
- National Council on Aging - <https://www.ncoa.org>. Tools to stay healthy, secure, and independent.
- Office of Disease Prevention and Health Promotion - www.healthfinder.gov. Information to stay healthy.
- Rehab Mart - <https://www.rehabmart.com>. Adaptive equipment for seniors.
- Senior Housing Referrals - www.seniorseasons.com – referrals for Assisted Living and Memory Care.
- VA - www.va.gov/GERIATRICS/Guide/LongTermCare/index.asp. Guide to long term services and support.

2019 AVENIDAS CARE FORUM FACULTY FOR SESSION 1

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