



Hiring in—Health Help

Advice for Caregivers

Having someone else take on some of your caregiving and housekeeping tasks might sound appealing to you. But what does it mean to have someone in your loved one's house "helping them"?

Do I Need Assistance?

Long-distance caregiving, working full-time and caregiving and/or caring for someone 24 hours a day, 7 days a week will take a toll on anyone. With a loved one who needs personal care and can't be left alone, you must be vigilant and "on duty" day and night. With constant care and companionship responsibilities, you may have very little time to yourself. Consider your needs as a caregiver and the needs of the person you are caring for. Here are the main areas to assess:

Personal Care: Bathing, eating, dressing, toileting, grooming

Household Care: Cooking, cleaning, laundry, shopping

Health Care: Medication management, physician's appointments, physical therapy

Emotional Care: Companionship, meaningful activities, conversation

Hiring help can relieve you of some of the tasks you are responsible for, freeing you to have some time for yourself. Interestingly, caregivers have found that in some instances the person receiving care can be more cooperative with someone other than the primary caregiver. Attendants come in fresh for a certain number of hours and therefore have the energy to be engaging and encouraging in a way you might be too exhausted to do around the clock.

My Loved One Only Wants Me to Help

It can be hard for your loved one to accept help from a stranger. Let your loved one know that **YOU** need help, and that this is something they can do to help you care for them. Reassure your loved one that hiring help does not signal that you are going to abandon them.

If your loved one lives alone, you might hear, "I don't need any help." Suggest that it will make **YOU** feel more comfortable knowing someone is with them part of the day. You can also suggest that they "just try it for a week." This will give your loved one some control in decision making and help them be open to having an attendant.

Sometimes the best way to get an attendant accepted is to hire a "housekeeper." Loved ones are often more open to having someone come in and "help" with the housework before they are willing to accept someone to help with personal care. This gives your loved one time to become familiar with the attendant and build trust.

Hiring help might not only be a necessity but a gift you can give yourself.

"I Don't Want a Stanger in My House!"

Some people enjoy meeting someone new. But for others who are naturally more reticent or are feeling vulnerable due to their illness, there is reluctance to expose their private life and personal living space.

Hiring through an agency will give you some choice for attendant selection. Most agencies have done background checks and bonded the people who work for them – be sure to ask them if this is the case. And if you feel

uncomfortable with the person who is sent, you can always ask the agency to send someone else. But typically an agency will attempt to match the attendant to your specific needs and requests, so if you aren't immediately comfortable with the attendant sent, consider giving it a day or two to warm up to them.

Caregivers and their loved ones often worry that their belongings will be stolen. This does happen, but it is much rarer than you might be led to believe. Lock up or take out of the house any especially valuable belongings, such as heirloom jewelry, just to keep yourself less anxious about this happening. Keep track of cash and checks/checkbooks/credit cards. If hiring through a homecare agency report any concerns you might have. Keep in mind that if you loved one has dementia, they may report an item as "missing" when it is only misplaced or stashed away.

RESOURCES

Trualta through Central Ohio Area Agency on Aging (See ad below)

Family Caregiver Alliance, National Center on Caregiving: www.caregiver.org

FCA Care-Journey: www.caregiver.org/carejourney

Family Care Navigator: www.caregiver.org/family-care-navigator

Information received from Family Caregiver Alliance



Central Ohio Chapter

**Fairfield County
Alzheimer's
Care Giver Support Group**

**Held at The Senior Hub Library
1515 Cedar Hill Road, Lancaster**

**Wednesday, August 13
2:00-3:00pm**

Build your network of support.

Share, learn, and gain emotional support from others who are also on the journey of caring for a loved one living with Alzheimer's disease or other forms of dementia.

**To register, please call the Aging Services
Office at 740-681-5050 option 4**

**Walk-In Hours at The Senior Hub
NOT AVAILABLE IN AUGUST BUT WILL BE BACK
IN SEPTEMBER. STAY TUNED...**

Have your questions answered about caring for a loved one with Alzheimer's or other dementia.

Lindsay Blackburn

Alzheimer's Association-Central OH Chapter Representative

TRUALTA

**Free Online Resource for Caregivers
Overwhelmed by Learning How to Be A Caregiver?
Improve your confidence, reduce stress,
and prevent burnout.**

coaaa.trualta.com

This free-services offers on-demand videos with practical advice-Toolkits for quick, hands on learning-over 500 articles from caregiving experts that address your questoins.

A variety of topics

- Communication changes
- Behavior management
- Transition from hospital to home
- Mobility and fall prevention
- Documents and decision-making

TRUALTA can help you on your caregiving journey.
Sign up for free today!

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For additional information, call the Central Ohio Area
Agency on Aging (COAAA) 614-645-7705.

