



# Long Distance Caregiving

*How to Care For Your Loved Ones  
When You're Miles Away*



## Respect Your Own Needs

In today's world, long distance caregiving is becoming a necessity, and Visiting Angels is the leader in delivering the care you need where you need it!

Know your strengths, your limitations and let others help.

Rest assured with peace of mind that your loved one will be in experienced and caring hands.

## How Do I Prepare? Plan Ahead!

Discuss future care needs with your loved one and family members. Prepare any the legal and medical documents that may be necessary should an emergency arise. Create a local contact list of medical professionals, hospitals, pharmacies and other medical facilities they might need.

Consider working with a local geriatric manager or the certified senior adviser.

Most importantly, contact your loved one and their medical professionals, friends, neighbors and other support systems that may already be in place.

Establishing and maintaining these relationships can provide peace of mind to the family.

# How Do We Care for Our Long Distance Loved Ones?

In today's world, it's common for families and friends to be separated by great distances. At some point in their lives, your parents, grandparents or a loved one may need in-home care. Suddenly you are faced with the challenge of long distance caregiving.

The best approach to dealing with long distance caregiving is to educate yourself and your family to prepare ahead of time.

## Institutional Facilities vs. Their Home

Sometimes, nursing homes and retirement homes seem like the only options available for care. However, your loved one can suffer significant emotional trauma when they leave their long-time home and familiar surroundings. Studies have shown that seniors thrive when they remain in their homes and familiar communities with their friends and neighbors.

## How Do I Choose a Home Care Agency?

Home care agencies offer different levels of service. Choose an agency that offers more than basic homemaker services. Eventually your loved one will require personal care services (assistance with dressing, bathing, hygiene, etc.). The agency you choose should be bonded, insured and licensed (not all states require home care licensing). Their caregivers should be experienced and screened, including a criminal background check. You or your loved one should be able to meet with the caregiver before you agree to services. Choose an agency that complies with HIPAA.

## How Do We Afford The Care They Need?

Since home care services are non-medical, they currently are not covered by Medicare. Home care services are generally paid individually or by long term care insurance. Often, associations offer care and funds for members who suffer from a specific disease.

An excellent solution is the reverse mortgage. It allows your loved one access to funds from their home equity without touching their income.

Veterans and their spouses may qualify for the Disability Pension for Aid and Attendance, which provides funds for in-home care.



## *Does my loved one need care?*

- Does your loved one need assistance walking?
- Has their physical and/or emotional health been declining?
- Are they able to prepare nutritious daily meals?
- Are they able to shop for themselves?
- Are they able to manage their bills and financial responsibilities?
- Are they taking their medications on time?
- Are they still able to drive safely?
- Are they in need of companionship?
- Are they able to dress and groom themselves?

## *I feel guilty that I am not there for them.*

Guilt is a natural emotion. It's frustrating to be separated by distance and trying to manage remotely. Reduce anxieties by sharing the load with other family members.

If your loved one is dealing with a specific illness (ie. Alzheimer's, ALS, Cancer, Stroke, etc.) contact the local association/support group. Use the services of a care manager, elder-law attorney or certified senior adviser.

Most importantly, stay in contact with your loved one and their support group, establish periodic phone calls and visit as often as possible.

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- Personal Hygiene Assistance
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