

Perspectives on Aging

- ◆ In 1900, the average person lived to age 48. Today, there are over 35 million people in the United States over age 65.
- ◆ By the year 2030, the older population will more than double to about 70 million.
- ◆ Persons reaching age 65 have an average life expectancy of an additional 17.9 years (19.2 years for women and 16.3 years for men).
- ◆ Of all fifty states, Pennsylvania has the second largest percentage of older people and the largest percentage of rural elderly.

Perspectives on Caregiving

- ◆ Nearly one out of every four households (23 percent or 22.4 million households) is involved in caregiving to persons aged 50 or over
- ◆ As many as 75% of all caregivers are women.
- ◆ The average age of family caregivers caring for someone aged 50 or over is estimated at 46.
- ◆ Just over half of all caregivers for persons aged 50 or over are employed full-time and almost two-thirds are employed either full- or part-time.
- ◆ Caregivers of people aged 50 or over spend an average of 17.9 hours per week providing care. This figure increases to 20 hours per week among those providing care for individuals aged 65 or over.

HELP, ADVICE AND INFORMATION ARE JUST A PHONE CALL AWAY.

No matter what your situation, you're not alone. Help is as close as your nearest Area Agency on Aging (AAA). If you like, you may call anonymously.

For older Pennsylvanians and their caregivers, AAA can play a major role in identifying where to turn and what to do to get the caregiving help you need.

In cases of possible abuse or neglect, the AAA will respond immediately to an emergency call. Otherwise, an AAA representative will contact the older person within 24 to 72 hours and make an assessment or extend services and resources to help change the situation.

Remember. It's never too late to help a loved one. Because, after all, it's a family matter.

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A Family Matter

*A Guide for Older
Pennsylvanians
and
The Loved Ones
Who Care for Them.*

IT'S NOT JUST ABOUT CARE ...

It's About Caring.



Many older Pennsylvanians are able to live independently and self-sufficiently throughout their lives. For many others, however, it is a different story. Men and women who once raised a family, worked hard for a living, managed a household, and made important life decisions may one day find that they are no longer able to live on their own.

When this situation occurs, the spouse or children of the elderly individual will suddenly be faced with important decisions that will likely affect the family for years to come. Decisions like what new living arrangements must be made. Where to turn for help. How to get more information.

Without a place to go for answers, many elderly people find themselves in a deteriorating situation. They can suffer from self-neglect, financial distress, abandonment ... even physical or mental abuse from their caregivers. In some cases, the abuse is caused intentionally. In others, the caregiver can no longer physically, emotionally or economically supply the care necessary. In still others, the older person can no longer care for him or herself and no one has realized how desperate the situation has become. And often, embarrassment or fear prevents an older relative from asking for help.

That's where this pamphlet can be of great help. It was designed to help older Pennsylvanians and their families assess their own particular situation, understand their options and respond appropriately to ensure that their elderly family members receive the care and comfort they need.

Take a moment now to review the following checklist to identify whether your family may need help for a relative who may be a victim of self-neglect. If you answer "no" to many of the following questions, check the back of this pamphlet to find out where to go for help.

TAKING CARE OF ONE'S OWN HOME

- Is the home clean?
- Is he/she still able to do basic housekeeping chores?
- Is the home in a state of good repair?
- Is the appearance of the house and yard being kept up?
- Can he/she still move around the house with ease?

TAKING CARE OF ONE'S OWN NUTRITIONAL NEEDS

- Is shopping being done on a regular basis?
- Is your elderly family member able to cook for him or herself?
- Is he/she eating nutritious foods?

TAKING CARE OF SELF

- Is proper hygiene being practiced?
- Does he/she wear clothing appropriate to the weather and the temperature?
- Is the clothing clean? In good condition?

TAKING CARE OF FINANCES

- Are bills being paid on time?
- Is he/she able to handle a bank account?
- Can he/she still make financial decisions?
- Are all other assets in order?

TAKING CARE OF ONE'S OWN MEDICAL NEEDS

- Does he/she remember to take prescribed medication?
- Is he/she able to follow medical advice and directions?
- Can he/she stay in bed if need be?
- If he/she has recently been hospitalized, are proper post-hospitalization instructions being followed?
- Have you noticed any dramatic personality variations?
- Does he/she have a chronic condition that seems to be getting worse?

TAKING CARE OF ONE'S OWN INTERPERSONAL NEEDS

- Does he/she socialize regularly with others?
- Is he/she maintaining an interest in activities and hobbies?
- Does he/she still have friends?
- Can he/she get around without the fear of falling?
- Can he/she get around without getting lost?

