

THE FAMILY CAREGIVER

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HOME CARE'S ADDED BENEFITS AND REALITIES

If you're an elder care professional than you know that home care services assist people with their activities of daily living. You must also know that aides help in the home on an hourly and/or live-in basis. Lastly you must know that the goal of home care is to help the individual maintain independence at home. However, home care can have a much broader scope. It does not have to be provided only at home and it does not have to only include daily activities. Below are some added benefits of having a home caregiver:

1. Supervision of the patient in a hospital setting. A caregiver could alert nurses if the patient needs attention, keep the patient company throughout the

hospital stay, and help the patient endure a stressful period of time.

2. Travel accompaniment. The caregiver could escort the individual on travelling out of state or on a plane ride.
3. Moving assistance. The caregiver could help the individual move in and out of a home by assistance with packing, and purging unwanted items.
4. Nursing home attendant. The caregiver could provide one-on-one attention to a patient living in a nursing home.
5. Special events attendant. The caregiver could

accompany an individual to a special event (weddings, funerals, graduation ceremonies, etc.) for more one-on-one attention and security.

Many families that are dealing with an aging loved one do not know what to expect with regards to home care. Many times their expectations are unrealistic. Below are some of the common misconceptions of a home caregiver:

1. Arranging for a caregiver with the right qualifications and compatibility takes time; on average a week to two weeks. Last minute requests for a caregiver often have undesirable results.

2. Many professional caregivers are not college educated. They are people who give of themselves out of a desire to help others. It is unrealistic to expect a caregiver who has specific academic achievements or specialties.

3. Professional caregivers are not housekeepers. They perform light household chores such as dusting, vacuuming, laundry, wiping down countertops, sweeping, floors, and changing bed linens. Heavy duty housekeeping is different and includes scrubbing bath tubs, cleaning out toilets, washing windows, and/or mopping floors which are not a part of the caregiver's job duties.

RESOURCE OF THE MONTH

Hands On Huntington is a unique program that helps seniors to remain in their homes by helping them to access social, recreational and health services. Services are provided in a designated area called a naturally occurring retirement community (NORC). The case workers

of Hands On Huntington help the seniors in these communities with things like counseling, connection to benefits, coordination of doctors appointments, and minor home repairs. Hands On Huntington is funded by the New York State Office for the Aging and is a part-

nership with FEGS Health and Human Services System, a family services agency. For more information call 631-351-6610 or email: hands@town.huntington.ny.us.

