LONG DISTANCE CAREGIVING

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Long-distance Caregiving

• Being prepared
• Caring for those at home
• Caring for those who live in facilities
• Hospitalizations
• Coping & Care for the Caregiver
POLL #1

Where do those you care for live?

a) They live in their own homes but in another state.
b) They live in their own homes, more than an hour away (same state).
c) They live nearby in their own homes.
d) They live in a long-term care facility (nursing home, assisted living, group home etc.) either nearby or at a distance.
BEING PREPARED
Where Care Recipients Live

1 in 4 live alone

11% more than 1 hour away

Source: Caregiving in the U.S. 2020, AARP & NAC
Family Discussions

- Your loved ones wishes and plans
- Estate planning
- Finances
- Living situation
- Legal
- Health
- Support team
- Priorities

Approach, Homework, Who, When, Where
COVID-19: Legal and Medical Information

• **Advance directives** – Powers of attorney, living will, POLST, MOLST, DNR, 5 Wishes

• **Medical information**
  – Medication list & allergies
  – Medical history
  – Doctors and other health care providers
  – Insurance cards
  – Emergency contacts

• **Can you submit** to local hospitals ahead of time in case of emergency?

• **Print copies ready** to take to hospital

• **Electronic copies** for team members
  – Shared files
  – Fax apps
Build Your Team: Friends/Family/Neighbors

• It’s not all on you
• Who can call local 911?
• Frequent contact:
  – Video chat
  – Distance: Mail, messages, calls
  – Local: Window visits, parking lot parades, porch visits
• Shopping: Grocery, household and personal
• Home, yard, mail, deliveries
• Transportation
Build Your Team: Professional Help

- **Eldercare Locator** [eldercare.acl.gov](http://eldercare.acl.gov)
- **Assessments**
  - Area agency on aging (AAA) & Aging & Disability Resource Centers (ADRC)
  - Other local disability and aging-focused organizations
  - VA
  - Occupational and physical therapists
- **Local care managers**
  - Area agency on aging
  - Medicaid case managers
  - VA case manager
  - Geriatric care managers/aging life care experts
    - [www.aginglifecare.org](http://www.aginglifecare.org) “Find an aging life care expert”
Finding Paid Caregivers

- **Local agencies** - Community Resource Finder communityresourcefinder.org
- **Online matching services** like Care.com, Carelinx.com
- **Area agency on aging**
- **Ask** friends/neighbors, faith community, other service providers
- **Always:**
  - ✔ Background checks
  - ✔ References
  - ✔ Training
  - ✔ Someone to monitor
Assess and Re-assess

- **Mental health and emotions**
  - Sensitivity, fear, depression, anxiety
  - Reflective listening
  - Socialization & connections – family, friends, pets

- **Physical health**
  - Current status, tracking for changes

- **Personal care**
  - Bathing, hair, nails
  - Laundry, clothing
  - Meals
  - Sleep

- **Functioning**
  - Routines
  - Home & yard
  - Hobbies & interests
AARP Prepare to Care Guide
English, Spanish, Chinese, Asian-American, Military, LGBT

Two ways to get the guide:

1. Go to aarp.org/preparetocare
   - Download by choosing a version
   - Or click and request a print copy

or

2. Call AARP toll-free 1-877-333-5885
   - Select option 1 and request "Prepare to Care: A Planning Guide for Families"; item #D20152
AARP Caregiving Resources

- **AARP Family Caregiving Site**
  - **English:** aarp.org/caregiving
  - **Spanish:** aarp.org/cuidar
  - Basics, care at home, nursing homes, financial, legal, medical, life balance and more.

- **AARP Caregiving Support Line**
  - **English:** 1-877-333-5885
  - **Spanish:** 1-888-971-2013
  - Speak with a live person Monday-Friday, 7 a.m. to 11 p.m. ET
HOME & FAMILY / COMMUNITY VOICES
Veterans, Military and Their Families

AARP Veterans and Military Discount
Save up to 30% when you join AARP

Supporting Military, Veteran and Family Caregivers
Tips to update your journey during COVID-19

AARP's Military Caregiving Guide
For veterans, service members and their families
LIVING AT HOME
Connections, Physical & Cognitive Stimulation

**Visits**
- Video
- Phone
- Outdoors
- Porch
- Windows

**Technology**
- Set up devices
- Patiently provide help, videos
- Smart TV, Roku, smartphone, computer, tablets
- Apps & how-to

**Fun**
- Laughter
- Music
- Happy Hour
- Movies & TV
- Games
- Exercise

**Projects**
- Organizing
- Photographs & scrapbooks
- Gardening
- Puzzles
What body process helps keep you cool?

- Pooling
- Spilling
- Perspiration
Home Safety
AARP HomeFit Guide
aarp.org/homefit
Technology - Monitoring

• Medical alert or emergency response system
  – GPS
  – Fall detection
  – Who is contacted
  – Stop at any time
• Checking in
• Monitor movement around the home
  – Motion sensors
  – Video cameras
• Two-way communication
• Integrated systems or a la carte
Medications

• **Services** to fill pill boxes and/or administer meds
  – Pharmacy
  – Home health nurse
  – Privately paid caregivers

• **Pill organizers**

• **Smart speaker** - reminders

• **Smart pill organizers and dispensers** – reminders, alarms, notify caregivers
Meals, Shopping and Supplies

- Arrange for meal delivery or prep
- **Call** during mealtimes
- **Weekly inventory**
  - Medical supplies
  - Medications
  - Household supplies
  - Groceries
- **Purchase and delivery**, backup plan
- **Banking**
- **Library**
COVID-19 Complications

• Telehealth
• Reminders about safety precautions
  – Hand washing
  – Visitors
  – etc.
• If you get sick – who will keep them informed?
• If they get sick
  – Preparations
  – Communication with hospital
  – Care for pets
  – Care for home
  – Communicate with care team
AARP COVID-19 Resources

• **English:**
aarp.org/Coronavirus

• **Spanish:**
aarp.org/ElCoronavirus

• Caregiving, tele-health, mental well-being, staying home, scams & fraud, work, finances insurance and more.
  - Articles
  - Tele-townhalls
  - Videos
  - Tools
AARP COVID-19 Supports

AARP Community Connections

- **English:** aarpcommunityconnections.org
- **Spanish:** aarp.org/micomunidad

Give and get help, find local mutual aid groups.

AARP Friendly Voices

Sign up online or call:

- **English:** 1-888-281-0145
- **Spanish:** 1-888-497-4108

AARP volunteers make 1:1 phone calls as a friendly voice.
AARP Caregiving Resources

- AARP Family Caregiving site
  aarp.org/caregiving
- AARP Caregiving Books
  aarp.org/caregivingbooks
- Community Resource Finder
  communityresourcefinder.org
How to Assist the Stubborn Male Caregiver
Offer support, but on terms he will accept

Staying Safe as Stay-at-Home Orders Lift
Expert guidance for keeping your loved one safe

Free Webinar: August 13 at 7 p.m. ET
Decluttering: Clearing your house and mind

Is It OK to Visit Family Members at Home Now?
How to weigh the risks and benefits

How to Keep Active and Engaged During Coronavirus
Practical advice from seasoned caregivers

Home Safety Tips and Tactics for Dementia Caregivers
When you worry about a loved one leaving the house

How to Find and Hire the Perfect Caregiver
Finding the right care for your loved one
POLL #2

How are you interacting with your loved ones?

a) I’m not visiting them right now due to the COVID-19 pandemic.
b) I’m visiting them in their homes on a limited basis but keeping my distance when I’m there.
c) I’m visiting them and providing care just as I always have.
d) I’m connecting with them periodically from a distance via video chats and phone calls.
e) I'm doing window visits or outside visits.
LIVING IN A FACILITY
Advocate

- Ask and keep asking
- Regular communication
  - Health, cognitive, mental health status
  - Changes at the facility
- **Staffing** levels and changes
- **Basic care quality** and consistency
- **Ongoing** therapies, activities, socialization, exercise, engagement, quality of life
Questions to Ask if Your Loved Ones Live in Nursing Homes

1. Has anybody at the nursing home tested positive for COVID-19?

2. What is the nursing home doing to prevent infections?

3. Does the staff have the proper PPE (face shields, masks, gloves, etc.) and are they trained in how to use it?

4. How are they helping patients and families communicate on a regular basis?

5. How will they keep residents and family updated on important information?

6. Is the nursing home fully staffed with nurses, aides, social work, activities and therapy staff?
What if I can’t get good, consistent information or have problems that aren’t being solved?

- **Staff**: direct care, social worker, nursing director, administrator
- **Family council**
- **AARP state office** advocacy efforts
  aarp.org/states
- **Long-term Care Ombudsman**
How to Find the Long-Term Care Ombudsman in Every State

Phone numbers, websites for complaints about nursing homes and assisted living

AARP, April 27, 2020   |   Comments: 1

- Alabama
- Alaska
- Arizona
- Arkansas
- California
- Colorado
- Connecticut
- Delaware
- District of Columbia
- Florida
- Georgia
- Hawaii
- Idaho
COVID-19 Complications

• If they get sick
  – Notification and keep you informed
  – Updates, decisions

• If you get sick
  – Primary contact
  – Who will take over advocacy?
  – Keeping them informed
Connections and Visiting

- Video chat
- Two-way devices
- In-person visits:
  - Window visits
  - Outdoor visits
  - Indoor visits
- Mail and packages
- “Compassionate care”, end-of-life, dementia
Bringing Them Home

- Travel
- Health conditions
- Care needs
  - Family
  - Paid care
- Changing routine
- How long
- Your needs - work and family
- Can they return?
- Logistics and quarantine
AARP Nursing Home Information

• **English:**
aarp.org/nursinghomes

• **Spanish:**
aarp.org/HogaresDeAncianos

• Track state-by-state nursing home visitation, advocacy, testing, safety; learn what to ask and more.
IN THE HOSPITAL
Managing Hospitalizations from a Distance

• **Communication** with health care professionals
  – Who
  – When

• **Communication with loved ones**
  – Devices, video chat etc.

• **Legal** documents

• **Decision-making**

• **Compassionate care** and end of life visits, assisting those with disabilities
COPING
Dealing with Worries, Guilt and Emotions, Stress

• **Acknowledge** feelings
• **Unpredictable** situation
• What can you **control**?
• **Guilt** – or concern? Channel it:
  – Connections
  – Solutions
  – Quality of care
• **Connect** with other caregivers
• Combat your own **isolation**
• **Stress** - Long-distance caregivers may feel as much or more stress, financially & emotionally
• **Care for yourself** – keep filling your tank
Care for the Caregiver, Connect

- AARP Family Caregiving – Life Balance
  aarp.org/caregiving/life-balance

- AARP Online Caregiving Community
  aarp.org/caregivingcommunity

- AARP Facebook Family Caregivers Discussion Group
  facebook.com/groups/aarpfamilycaregivers
A little advice from Daddy…
QUESTIONS?