

Staying Informed

Reading about the latest medical breakthroughs, understanding recent research into aging and keeping up on the politics of elder care are all things that you can do to stay informed about the world around you—particularly as it relates to your role as a caregiver. Keeping abreast of changes in policies, procedures, recommendations, services and funding can help you in your quest to provide the best care possible.



It's difficult to find time to stay informed. With working, your own family and caring for your elderly relative, it's hard to find time for yourself as well. But you'll save much time and effort if you keep aware of things going on now. Also encourage your elder to keep up with the news via newspaper, television or radio.

Media

Where can you find information? The following are some common sources of knowledge.

- Newspapers
- Magazines
- Books
- Television
- Internet
- Newsletters
- Pamphlets
- Videos

Other Sources of Knowledge

You'll often want to ask for recommendations and advice about information that you have heard; where can you turn? Here are a few sources of help:

- Doctors, Social Workers and Other Professionals
- Hospitals
- Associations and Organizations (e.g., Alzheimer's Association)
- Support Groups
- Senior Centers
- Hospitals
- Assisted Living Facilities and Nursing Homes
- Area Agency on Aging
- Elder Law Attorneys
- Therapists

Specifics

Try to keep abreast of the specifics in your care recipient's life, talking with doctors, social workers, home health care workers, nurses and anyone else who works with your relative. They can all provide you with valuable information, helping you to stay informed about the things that matter most—both to you and to your care recipient.

If you are not living with your care recipient, ask neighbors and friends to keep an eye out for him or her while you are gone—and leave your home and work numbers with them so they can call you if something doesn't seem quite right. Also give your name and numbers to doctors, social workers, therapists and other professionals who deal with your care recipient on a regular basis. They, too, can let you know about any problems or emergencies.

Often, an aging parent can be a good source of information. Ask: how are you feeling? Why do you think you are feeling that way? What kinds of treatment do you prefer? Have you heard anything interesting about research into your condition lately? You may be surprised how closely your care recipient follows the news.