

If I Had Known Then What I Know Now

A Journey into Finding Elder Care Services – REVISED July 13, 2023

I wrote this missive in 2018 to assist our clients in finding helpful sites for elder care services. So much has changed since then so I have edited the information to include new or different services now available.

I am just one of thousands of Boomers whose parents aged in an era that did not provide the greatest information about how to anticipate the myriad of elder care needs. It never even occurred to me to consider whether or not I could afford to support whatever my parents needed; I just knew that I would do it. As hard as it was emotionally, physically and financially, I persevered and learned that I could do much more than I ever thought possible to help give them a decent quality of life. After all, without them, I would not be here to share what I now know so that it may help you if you find yourself caring for loved ones who cannot care for themselves. However, I wouldn't recommend using my "hunt and peck" method. It was exhausting and wrought with mistakes that could have easily been avoided had there been better resources available at the time.

Most seniors I have known, including my parents, wanted to stay in their home for as long as they could. In my case, I promised to uphold their wishes to stay at home unless they became a danger to themselves or their caregivers. I was fortunate, I kept my promise, but many seniors need skilled care that home caregivers may not be able to provide. Today, there are many services available that can facilitate the necessary steps to find the professionals who can help you help your loved ones.

Sharing what I have learned is my mission here. None of the services mentioned in this missive are recommendations or endorsements by Raymond James. However, our home office posted a piece on LinkedIn entitled "Don't go it alone: 10 experts to lean on as you build a care team". I used this publication as a guide to add the many services I have researched and, in some cases, used in the ten areas of care mentioned in the LinkedIn post. It would be advisable to do further research on the ones that are of interest to you.

The following are resources that may help make your life and those of your aging loved ones lives easier.

Health Care Advocates – They help navigate public and private medical resources such as Medicare or individual insurance.

- The Department of Health & Human Services – 800-677-1116 – www.hhs.gov

Other resources:

- www.eldercare.acl.gov
- <https://www.longtermcarelink.net>
- <https://findhoustonseiorcare.com>
- www.carepathways.com

Medical Specialist – Some doctors hold special designations that may be helpful, i.e., Certified Dementia Practitioners who specialize in memory care and medication management.

- **Elder Law Attorneys** – Services available with most Elder Law Attorneys: Health Care, Guardianship, Estate Planning, Assisted Living, End-of-Life planning, Older Adult Abuse and more
- **Mobility Solutions** – Transportation Experts
- **National Mobility Equipment Dealers Association** – www.nmeda.com
- **Senior Move Manager** – **National Association of Senior Move Managers** – **NASMM** – www.nasmm.org
- **Veteran's Service Officers** – Assists veterans and their families with navigating the benefits and integrated health services offered by the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs

Other resources:

- The American Legion – www.legion.org/serviceofficers
- Lifeline for Vets - <https://nvf.org/lifeline-for-vets>

It is my sincere hope that the information will be helpful to those of you who have begun the right of passage. Remember to take care of yourself during this arduous process, but I know firsthand that the effort has its rewards.

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