

## Take Care of Yourself!

Caregiving is hard work. It is easy to get so involved that you neglect to care about yourself. Here are some suggestions that may help:

- You may experience a range of feelings (anger, guilt, obligation) – these are all natural responses. Share your feelings, triumphs and frustrations. Just talking can work wonders
- Caregiving can be overwhelming. Take time to call a friend, or health care professional
- Take time to reward yourself
- Include personal time-off into your daily schedule
- Look for ways to relax - read, listen to music, eat balanced healthy meals, exercise regularly and try to get enough sleep- these can be difficult to do but can help you to maintain a balance in life
- Consider joining a caregiver support group to get more ideas
- Set realistic goals for yourself. You have limits – learn to recognize and accept them. Accept help when it is offered
- Set your own priorities. It's okay to say **no** sometimes

## Developing a Care Plan

Keeping up friendships and family connections can provide good support. Talk openly with others and develop a care plan that works for everyone.

- Developing a plan usually involves many others, including family and the person receiving the care
- Talk to children about what you are doing, answer their questions and involve them when you can
- Aging and illness can change people. Learning more can help you understand what is happening
- Enlist the help of family/friends; find out when and how they can help. Provide them with any info that they need (i.e. key contacts, emergency plan, info about illness)
- Get to know the people providing services, - physicians and nurses. Set up a good time to call to discuss health, concerns. Don't be afraid to ask questions
- Always write down the name of the person to whom you are speaking and ask who to call if you have questions/concerns with a service
- Foster as much independence as possible, encouraging and observing the individual doing daily activities

## Keeping Track

When there are so many involved in the care plan, it is easy to lose track of information. Keep an easy to carry notebook/calendar with you (include photocopies) and record:

- Community resources and their phone numbers (including doctor)
- Contacts with the individual receiving care and service providers  
Questions to ask when you see the people providing service/ person you are caring for, etc.
- Phone numbers of family members and friends
- Key information on the person receiving care:
  - 1) birth certificate
  - 2) citizenship papers
  - 3) SIN number, health insurance
  - 4) health card,
  - 5) medical history including allergies and immunizations
  - 6) list of current medications
- Legal documents:
  - 1) Power of Attorney for Property (for all financial matters)
  - 2) Power of Attorney Personal Care
  - 3) Living Will
  - 4) Will
  - 5) Funeral arrangements (notes on wishes or prearrangement)

\* See **Community Resources** Section (Legal Issues) for more information.

## Emergency Plan

Make a plan for emergencies. Keep a copy with you and give to others involved.

- Include all contacts (doctor, family, friends) that may be needed
- Use an Emergency Information Vial to record and store information Halton Region, 905-825-6000, 1-866-442-5866, ext. 7111
- Consider an Emergency Response System (ConnectCare, Lifeline)
- Call 911 for emergencies or lift assistance

## Telephone Tips

- Phones can help to meet the needs of the person requiring care. Consider features such as loud ring, lights, large numbers, number of rings, pre-programmed buttons to call friends/family or maybe just one red button pre-programmed to the caregiver. Pictures could also be used on buttons
- A simple phone list with large clear writing can be posted by the phone
- Individuals receiving care can benefit from regular visits/ calls from caregivers, friends or services
- Caregivers can consider features such as call waiting, answering machine, long distance calling card

## Long Distance Caregiving

- Look for a local person you can call on to help you when you can't be there
- Caregiving can be tiring – Look for an alternative to driving long distances – use a plane/train/bus if you can and rent a car/use taxis locally. Keep up-to-date phone numbers and schedules for quick referral

## Community Resources / More Information

Community Resources can play an important role in providing care. Don't be afraid to ask for help.

### General Resources

Local Information Centres:

Acton	519-853-3310
Burlington	905-639-4212
Georgetown	905-873-6502
Milton	905-875-4636
Oakville	905-815-2064

- *Halton Senior' Directory* (ESAC) 905-825-6000, 1-866-442-5866, ext 7773
- *A Guide to Programs and Services for Seniors in Ontario* at [www.gov.ca/citizenship/seniors](http://www.gov.ca/citizenship/seniors) or 1-800-910-1999

## Community Services

- Veterans Affairs (Services/Financing)
- Volunteer Visiting Programs
- Telephone Assurance Programs
- Meals-on-Wheels
- Adult Day Programs (CCAC)
- Respite Beds (locations for persons to go when caregiver needs a break or vacation) (CCAC)
- Supportive Housing
- Caregiver Education/Support Groups (e.g. VON, Alzheimer Society)
- Churches/Social Clubs
- Local Accessible Transportation
- Disabled Parking Permits

Check the *Halton Seniors' Directory* or call your local Information Centres or CCAC for contacts and phone numbers.

### In-Home Nursing and Personal Support/ Long Term Care Placement Options

- Community Care Access Centre (CCAC) of Halton 1-800-810-0000

### Housing Options

- Types of Accommodations/Services for Seniors in Halton (ESAC) 1-866-442-5866, 905-825-6000, ext. 7773

### Legal Issues

- Fast Facts on Legal Issues (ESAC) 1-866-442-5866, 905-825-6000, ext. 7773

## Caregiving References

- [www.TheCareguide.com](http://www.TheCareguide.com) or call 1-800-975-9736
- [www.caregiver.on.ca](http://www.caregiver.on.ca)
- [www.howtocare.com](http://www.howtocare.com)
- [www.clickintocaregivers.com](http://www.clickintocaregivers.com)
- [www.haltonpeelpalliativecare.ca](http://www.haltonpeelpalliativecare.ca) or call 905-827-8111, 1-800-426-9666
- Expressions (newsletter) [www.naca.ca](http://www.naca.ca) or 613-957-1968
- *36 Hour Day* by Nancy Mace and Peter Rabins
- *Caring for Loved Ones at Home* by Harry Van Bommel

### Safety

- Falls Prevention Program and Home Safety Checklist, Health Department, Halton Region, 1-866-442-5866, 905-825-6000, ext. 7447
- Housing Checklist (ESAC) 1-866-442-5866, 905-825-6000, ext. 7773

### Info on Diseases/Illness/Health Issues

- Health Department, Halton Region, 1-866-442-5866, 905-825-6000
- Tele Health, 24 hour hot line, Call 1-866-797-0000
- Research under specific disease such as [www.alzheimer.ca](http://www.alzheimer.ca)
- Look under support groups in the *Halton Seniors' Directory* or call your local Information Centre
- Halton Geriatric Mental Health Outreach Program, 905-693-9370

# Caregiving Tips

## Fast Facts



## Elderly Services Advisory Committee (ESAC)

