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Simple Ways To Organize Your Older Relatives

So many of my friends these days have one or more older relatives they are taking care of in one form or another.

In fact in 2010, nearly half of the American workforce will be caring for an elderly parent. I am certainly one of them. My mother is 89 years old and suffers from dementia. My two sisters and I take care of her needs which are many (e.g. bill payment, getting her medical attention) even though she is in an assisted living facility.

Here are some great tips from Health Advocate™ that you might find useful if you are looking for advice on caring for an elderly relative.

I know they help me.

1. Know what to expect. Understanding common progressive conditions, such as Alzheimer's disease, is crucial. Close communication with doctors can help you better plan for care giving needs.
2. Carefully review Medicare and supplemental insurance. Be sure that medications, long-term care and other needs are all covered.
3. Keep current records. A personal medical record keeper like a Medical.doc can be a convenient way to track medical history, medications, etc.
4. Hold a family meeting. A social worker or other facilitator can help with difficult issues, such as placement in assisted living, dividing up responsibilities or a skilled nursing facility. .
5. Discuss advance directives. Living wills detail medical care preferences. A power of attorney for health-care document allows your parent to designate another person to make financial or medical decisions, should your parent become unable to do so. Make sure people have copies of these handy if they are needed.
6. Take care of YOU. Caregivers can be more prone to stress, depression, colds and serious illnesses. Keep up with your own doctor visits.
7. Get support for yourself. Local organizations may offer adult day care, emergency respite and support groups.
8. Investigate eldercare products. Work with the case manager and/or insurance company to locate emergency call buttons, stair chair lifts, electric scooters and other helpful items.

For more tips and help, you can go to Health Advocate™, Inc., the nation's leading independent healthcare advocacy and assistance company, offers a spectrum of time- and money-saving solutions to businesses.

<http://www.getbuttonedup.com/2010/01/simple-ways-to-organize-your-older-relatives/>