

Considering Long Term Care

Caring for someone with dementia can be a full time job for families. It is one that has its ups and downs -- its joys and sorrows. Despite the desire to keep your family member at home, the time may come when you, as a caregiver, may need additional help with your caregiving responsibilities. This might be the time when you need to consider long term care.

Due to the progressive, degenerative nature of Alzheimer's disease and related dementias, it is likely that a person with dementia may eventually need to be moved to a long term care facility.

As the disease advances, the amount of care an individual requires will increase. Eventually, they may need round the clock attention. Family members often intend to provide this care for their loved one, however, there may come a time when this responsibility becomes too much.

The needs of each person with dementia and each caregiver are different; consequently, there is no right or wrong time to decide on long term care placement. To aid in this difficult decision, caregivers should take a step back and honestly examine some of these considerations:

How is your physical health?

- Are you getting sick more often than you used to?
- Are you having difficulty sleeping?
- Have you developed any chronic health issues, such as headaches, back problems, high blood pressure, etc?

How is your emotional health?

- Do you become more irritated and angry than is usual?
- Do minor upsets tax your emotional resources?
- Do you feel a sense of isolation or hopelessness?

Are you caring for yourself?

Often, caregivers must focus so much attention on the person with dementia that they neglect to attend to their own needs and well-being. Stress can result in serious physical and emotional challenges for a caregiver.

What do the professionals say?

If you are unsure whether it is time to consider long term care, you can contact Community Care Access (Home Care) and request an assessment. A Community Care Coordinator will come to your home and evaluate your situation. They may recommend home care services or suggest that moving your loved one into long term care may be best option for the both of you. To obtain an assessment, please contact Community Care Access at (403) 943-1920.



ARTICLES MAY BE REPRINTED WITH PERMISSION

201-222 58 Ave. S.W., Calgary, Alberta T2H 2S3
(403) 290-0110 or toll free 1-877-569-HELP/4357

www.AlzheimerCalgary.com

Alzheimer Society

CALGARY

Information is Power

The more you learn about your care options, the better prepared and informed you will be to undertake this difficult decision. Remember, just because you may decide to place your family member into care, it does not mean that you have given up or are abandoning the person. Choosing long term care is a way of asking for help -- help that you need. By seeking this specialized assistance you are looking after yourself and, by doing that, you are indirectly looking after your family member. Even when the person moves into a care facility, you will be as important in their life as you were when you were their primary caregiver.

For an expanded version of this topic, contact us at 290-0110/Toll Free 1-877-569-HELP/4357 for a free copy of the Alzheimer Society of Canada's information sheet, *Considering Long Term Care*.



ARTICLES MAY BE REPRINTED WITH PERMISSION

201-222 58 Ave. S.W., Calgary, Alberta T2H 2S3
(403) 290-0110 or toll free 1-877-569-HELP/4357

www.AlzheimerCalgary.com