



# CAREGIVER GUIDEBOOK



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**Developed by:**

*NEMCSA - Region 9 Area Agency on Aging*



The NEMCSA Region 9 Area Agency on Aging (AAA) is pleased to provide you with this guidebook of helpful materials and publications directed toward family caregivers.

The toll of caring for someone can be emotionally and financially overwhelming with the cost of food, clothing, medical bills, and supplies. Many family caregivers are coping with their own health problems. An added emotional stress often arises from the expansion of their household when caregiving becomes necessary.

The materials provided in this manual are designed to offer family caregivers resources and information. We hope you find this manual a helpful resource guide.

Feel free to contact us if you have any questions.

Kind Regards

Laurie L. Sauer  
Region 9 AAA Director



**Serving the Counties of:**

Alcona, Alpena, Arenac, Cheboygan, Crawford, Iosco, Montmorency, Ogemaw, Oscoda, Otsego, Presque Isle and Roscommon

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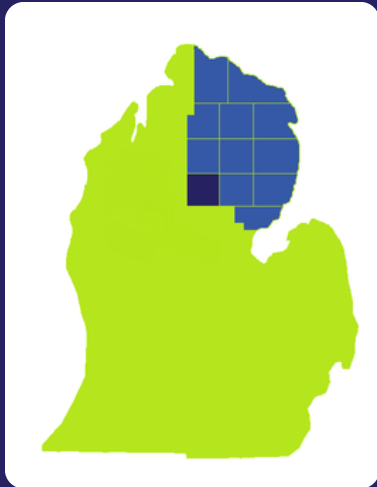
## GUIDEBOOK

The Caregiver Guidebook is updated annually. Corrections, changes, or suggestions should be emailed to the Region 9 Area Agency on Aging at [healthyaging@nemcsa.org](mailto:healthyaging@nemcsa.org).

## REGION 9 AREA AGENCY ON AGING

Region 9 Area Agency on Aging (AAA) is a division of Northeast Michigan Community Service Agency. Region 9 AAA is a nonprofit agency that manages a wide variety of services to help seniors and adults with disabilities remain living in their own homes or with family caregivers.

Business hours from 8:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. to answer your questions, register you for caregiver workshops, provide resources, and support you and your loved one.



## FUNDING

Funding for this manual is made possible through the Title III E National Family Caregiver Support Program. This program is funded in part by the U.S. Administration on Community Living Supports (ACLS) Bureau through the Michigan Department of Health and Human Service and Region 9 Area Agency on Aging.



# AM I A CAREGIVER?

If you are reading this guide, it is likely that **you are a caregiver**. Many caregivers struggle to see their contributions as caregiving; to many caregivers, it is simply offering help or taking care of a family member because they are family.

If you regularly provide any form of assistance to someone, such as helping with personal care, managing medical appointments and schedules, preparing meals, assisting with mobility, or offering emotional support or companionship, then you are a caregiver. Caregiving encompasses a wide range of activities and does not require you to fulfill every possible care task and need. Your contributions are valuable and classify you as a caregiver whether your role is large or small. Take a look at the questions below. If you answered yes to even one question, **you are a caregiver**.

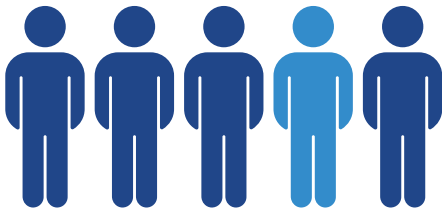
Do you frequently spend time ensuring the well-being of someone other than yourself?

Do you ever coordinate or make decisions on behalf of someone else?

Do you help someone who has trouble managing on their own due to age, illness, or disability?

Do you often spend time thinking about or planning for someone else's health and well-being more than your own?

Have you taken on financial responsibilities for someone else, like paying bills or managing their budget?



Nearly 1 in 5 American adults (53 million) are family or informal caregivers.



Average caregiving duration is 3.9 years.



On average, 22.3 hours per week are spent on caregiving tasks.



Family caregiving spans across all generations, including Boomer, Gen-X, Gen-Z, Millennials, and Silent.

# Document Checklist

**Documents that you may be asked to bring when applying for various public assistance programs:**

- Legal identification documents
  - Social Security cards
  - Birth certificates
  - Adoption papers
  - Marriage licenses
  - Driver's License
  - Passports
- Tax documents
  - Most recent tax returns
  - W-2s and 1099 forms
  - Any tax-related forms, receipts, and records
- Property records
  - Vehicle registration and titles
  - Mortgage statements, deeds, and bills of sale
  - Insurance policies (home, auto, personal property, etc.)
- Medical records
  - Wills, powers of attorney, or trusts
  - Medical bills
  - Prepaid burial arrangement documents
  - Health insurance policies
- Finance records
  - Pay stubs
  - Canceled checks
  - Disability or unemployment records
  - Retirement/pension plan records
  - Most recent investment statements

# Region 9 Area Agency on Aging Programs

There are many services and supports available to help you navigate the web of caregiving responsibilities. Here are some examples.

## Nutrition



Congregate Meals  
Home Delivered Meals  
MI Cafe

## Elder Rights



Long Term Care  
Ombudsmen  
Legal Services

## Health & Wellness



A Matter of Balance  
Chronic Pain PATH  
Diabetes PATH  
Webinar Series

## Caregivers



Adult Day Care Centers  
Powerful Tools for  
Caregivers  
Dementia Care Consultations  
Webinar Series  
Support Groups

## Supportive Services



In-Home Services  
(Homemaking, Personal  
Care, and Respite)  
Homemaking  
Care Management  
Program  
MI Choice Waiver Program

## Other Programs



State Health Insurance  
Assistance Program (SHIP)  
Person-Centered Options  
Counseling (PCOC)  
Senior Community Service  
Employment Program

**Contact Region 9 Intake Specialists to help connect you to programs and services.**

**Alpena Intake Specialist:** 989.358.4631

Service Area: Alpena, Alpena, Montmorency, and Presque Isle Counties,  
and City of Oscoda

**West Branch Intake Specialist:** 989.358.4740

Service Area: Arenac, Crawford, Iosco, Ogemaw, Oscoda, and  
Roscommon Counties

**Cheboygan Intake Specialist:** 989.272.2268

Service Area: Cheboygan County, Lewiston, and Otsego County

# REGION 9 AREA AGENCY ON AGING PROGRAMS

Region 9 Area Agency on Aging can help guide and connect you to a wide variety of services and resources available in your area including:

- **In-Home Services:** In-home services include homemaking, personal care, home-delivered meals and respite care.
- **Nutrition Programs:** Congregate Meals, Home Delivered Meals and MI Cafe (Bridge Card).
- **Adult Day Care Centers:** Are designed to provide care and companionship for older adults who need assistance or supervision during the day.
- **Care Management:** Is a program that offers supports to help you live in a community setting rather than moving to a nursing home or other institutional setting. To qualify, one must be at least 60 years old. There is no income or asset requirement.
- **MI Choice Waiver Program:** Is a program that provides an array of Medicaid-covered nursing facility-level services to anyone age 18 or older so that they can remain in their home with the same level of service.
- **State Health Insurance Assistance Program (SHIP):** Free, confidential counseling and assistance is available for people with Medicare.
- **Long-Term Care Ombudsman Program:** This program provides information and education to families and individuals about long-term care facilities and services. The Ombudsman investigates concerns and helps residents, families, and friends resolve problems such as quality of care, residents' rights, and state regulating services.
- **Legal Services:** Region 9 AAA contracts with Legal Services of Northern Michigan (LSNM) to provide free legal assistance to adults aged 60 or older.
- **Person Centered Options Counseling:** An interactive, unbiased, decision-support process that helps individuals make informed choices about long-term services and supports, focusing on their preferences, strengths, and values.

## DEMENTIA CARE CONSULTATION PROGRAM:

The Dementia Care Consultation Program is built to provide you with information, guidance, and support to help you live a happier, fuller life while you care for someone with dementia. This program provides you with tools and strategies to better handle the unique caregiver challenges you face as a dementia caregiver.

Support and information will be provided through individualized meetings at your home or other suitable location. Individualized meetings are scheduled with you three times over a six week period.

The Dementia Care Consultation Program can provide:

- Information and guidance including information about diagnosis and aspects of living with dementia.
- Provide information and referrals to local resources, services, and organizations.
- Practical support to help you cope with the day to day challenges of living with dementia.
- Emotional support to help you work through your circumstance.



**For more information, contact 989.358.4667 or [healthyaging@nemcsa.org](mailto:healthyaging@nemcsa.org)**

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## CAREGIVER WEBINARS:

Region 9 Area Agency on Aging routinely hosts a free Caregiver Webinar via Zoom. Older adults, caregivers of all types, and healthcare professionals are welcome to attend. Previous topics have included Making a Caregiving Plan, Dementia Friendly Environments, and Caring for a Veteran.

**For more information or to register, contact 989.358.4667 or [healthyaging@nemcsa.org](mailto:healthyaging@nemcsa.org) or [click here](#).**

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## QUARTERLY CAREGIVER NEWSLETTER

Each newsletter provides family caregivers with resources, information, and helpful tips to keep local caregivers informed. To view previous newsletters [click here](#).



**To register for upcoming Caregiver Newsletters, contact 989.358.4667 or [click here](#).**

# Powerful Tools FOR Caregivers

Powerful Tools for Caregivers (PTC) is a six-week workshop led by experienced class leaders. PTC gives caregivers the skills to take care of themselves while caring for someone else. By taking care of your own health and well-being, you become a better caregiver.

## Powerful Tools for Caregivers will give you tools to help:

- Reduce Stress
- Improve Self-Confidence
- Manage Time, Set Goals, and Solve Problems
- Better Communicate your Feelings
- Make Tough Decisions
- Locate Helpful Resources

Participants will receive a copy of *The Caregiver Helpbook* to accompany the class and provide additional caregiver resources.



For more information or to register, contact 989.358.4667 or [healthyaging@nemcsa.org](mailto:healthyaging@nemcsa.org).

## Dementia Caregiving Series

A three-session webinar series, for those caring for a person with dementia. It assists with reducing caregiving stress by providing useful tools and information.

### DEMENTIA INFORMATION FOR EVERYONE

This session will examine dementia basics, explore impacts to the brain, and demonstrate how to communicate more effectively with someone who has dementia.

1

### ACTIVITIES FOR PERSONS WITH DEMENTIA

This session will discuss the stages, explore the benefits of activities, and examine ways to involve your care recipient in daily living.

2

### DEMENTIA BEHAVIORS AND SELF-CARE

This session will examine address dementia-related behaviors, teach the benefits of self-care, and explore how to build your network of support.

3

FOR MORE INFORMATION OR TO REGISTER, CONTACT  
989.358.4667 OR [HEALTHYAGING@NEMCSA.ORG](mailto:HEALTHYAGING@NEMCSA.ORG)

5



The four-week Caregiver Wellness Workshop is designed to provide caregivers with strategies to improve their well-being and self-care, allowing them to become better caregivers. Many caregivers struggle to see the importance of Self-Care until it is too late.

The workshop series meets once a week for four-weeks, and each session is ninety minutes long.

The interactive workshops, discussions, and brainstorming will help you choose what resources and strategies you would like to use daily. Participants will receive a participant handbook with all the documents.

# CAREGIVER WELLNESS WORKSHOP

## MODULE 1: IMPORTANCE OF SELF-CARE



Self-care is essential for a family caregiver's survival. Learn why self-care matters, the warning signs of stress, five types of self-care, and information for taking care of yourself.

## MODULE 2: SUPPORT AND LOCAL RESOURCES



You are only as strong as your support, learn to build your network of support, signs of caregiver burnout, practical steps to reduce the effects of stress, and communication strategies.

## MODULE 3: DEALING WITH DIFFICULT EMOTIONS



Not paying attention to your emotions can lead to poor sleep, illness, trouble coping, stress eating, and substance abuse. Learn about how to deal with your emotions in a healthy way through coping techniques.

## MODULE 4: MANAGING STRESS



Create an emergency stress plan, while you build skills to be more assertive, use "I" statements, and set boundaries.

Participants will receive a copy of the participant workbook and self-care handbook.



# ADULT DAY CARE CENTERS IN REGION 9 AREA AGENCY ON AGING

Adult Day Care Centers provide socialization, community, stimulating activities, healthy meals and snacks, and support with activities of daily living. Some centers also offer nursing and healthcare services.

Adult Day Care Centers can be an essential aid to caregivers. They allow caregivers to hold a job, take care of household responsibilities, see friends, and pursue other activities, knowing their loved ones are safe and entertained during the day.

## OTSEGO HAUS



Otsego County Commission on Aging  
120 Grandview Boulevard  
Gaylord, MI 49735  
Phone: 989.732.1122  
Website: [www.otsegocountycoa.org](http://www.otsegocountycoa.org)



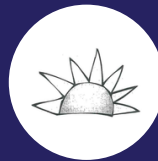
## THE COTTAGE

Ogemaw Commission on Aging  
1528 South M-33  
West Branch, MI 48661  
Phone: 989.345.3010 ext. 1810  
Website: [www.ogemawcoa.org](http://www.ogemawcoa.org)

## SAND CASTLES



Cheboygan County Council on Aging  
1531 Sand Road  
Cheboygan, MI 49721  
Phone: 231.597.8317  
Website: [www.3coa.com](http://www.3coa.com)



## PLEASANT DAYS

Sunrise Side Senior Services  
131 Clyde Street  
Omer, MI 48749  
Phone: 989.653.2692

## SERENITY DAY LODGE



Roscommon County Commission on Aging  
1015 Short Drive, Suite A  
Prudenville, MI 48651  
Phone: 989.366.0205  
Website: [www.rccoa.net](http://www.rccoa.net)



## BENEFITS OF ATTENDING:

- A place they can go during the day.
- Socialize with other people.
- Take part in numerous activities.
- Activities can tire them so that they will sleep through the night.

# Contact Your County/Council Commission on Aging (COA)

The AAA works closely with all COA's in the region service area. They are county-based and provide services to support older adults, however, services vary from agency to agency. Some services include, but are not limited to, respite, medication management, homemaking, personal care, foot clinics, transportation, nutrition programs, and activities.

**Alcona County  
Commission on Aging**  
807 North Barlow Road  
Lincoln, MI 48742  
Phone: 989.736.8879  
[www.alconaseniors.org](http://www.alconaseniors.org)

**Alpena Senior  
Citizen Center**  
501 River Street  
Alpena, MI 49707  
Phone: 989.356.3585  
[www.alpenaseniors.com](http://www.alpenaseniors.com)

**Sunrise Side  
Senior Services**  
P.O. Box 36  
131 Cylde  
Omer, MI 48749  
Phone: 989.653.2692

**Cheboygan County  
Council on Aging**  
1531 Sand Road  
Cheboygan, MI 49721  
Phone: 231.627.7234  
[www.3coa.com](http://www.3coa.com)

**Crawford County  
Commission on Aging**  
4388 West M-72 Highway  
Grayling, MI 49738  
Phone: 989.348.7123  
[www.crawfordcoa.org](http://www.crawfordcoa.org)

**Iosco County  
Commission on Aging**  
P.O. Box 160  
220 North Washington  
Hale, MI 48739  
Phone: 989.728.6484  
[www.ioscocoa.org](http://www.ioscocoa.org)

**Montmorency County  
Commission on Aging**  
P.O. Box 788  
Atlanta, MI 49709  
Phone: 989.785.2580  
[www.montmorencycoa.org](http://www.montmorencycoa.org)

**Ogemaw Commission  
on Aging**  
1528 South M-33  
West Branch, MI 48661  
Phone: 989.345.3010  
[www.ogemawcoa.org](http://www.ogemawcoa.org)

**Oscoda County  
Council on Aging**  
429 Mt. Tom Road  
Mio, MI 48647  
Phone: 989.826.3025

**Otsego County  
Commission on Aging**  
120 Grandview Boulevard  
Gaylord, MI 49735  
Phone: 989.732.1122  
[www.otsegocountycoa.org](http://www.otsegocountycoa.org)

**Presque Isle County  
Council on Aging**  
6520 Darga Highway  
Posen, MI 49776  
Phone: 989.766.8191  
[www.piccoa.org](http://www.piccoa.org)

**Roscommon County  
Commission on Aging**  
1015 Short Drive, Suite A  
Prudenville, MI 48651  
Phone: 989.366.0205  
[www.rccoa.net](http://www.rccoa.net)



# Northeast Michigan Community Service Agency (NEMCSA) Services

The AAA is a division of NEMCSA and can provide linkage to a variety of other programs under the NEMCSA umbrella, such as:

- **HEAT AND UTILITY ASSISTANCE PROGRAM**
  - This program provides assistance to qualifying at-risk households for electricity and natural gas as well as delivery of fuel for a household's primary heat source either propane, fuel oil, or firewood.
  - Interested applicants are screened for eligibility by calling 989.358.4713.
  
- **HOUSING**
  - *Homeless Prevention Program (ESG):*
    - Has an annual income below 30% of AMI.
  - *Housing Choice Voucher Program with a homeless preference (HCV) –*
    - Offers those individuals and families who are identified as homeless the opportunity to obtain ongoing rental assistance through a voucher.
  
- **LOW-INCOME WEATHERIZATION PROGRAM**
  - This program provides ceiling and attic insulation and ventilation, wall, floor, and perimeter insulation, caulking, weather-stripping, and other measures to prevent air infiltration.
  - Interested applicants are screened for eligibility by calling 989.358.4714.
  
- **THE SENIOR COMPANION PROGRAM (SCP)**
  - Volunteers provide companionship and assistance to frail/homebound elders and older persons with special needs. For more information contact: 989.358.4660 or email [fgpsc@nemcsa.org](mailto:fgpsc@nemcsa.org).

**For a full list of NEMCSA Services visit:  
[www.nemcsa.org](http://www.nemcsa.org)**



# Northeast Michigan Community Service Agency (NEMCSA) Services

- **NATIONAL FAMILY CAREGIVER SUPPORT KINSHIP CARE**
  - This program funds care providers age 55 and older, caring for related children under the age of 18, and in need of services such as school expenses, recreational activities, clothing, necessary furniture, and more.
  - For more information, contact 989.358.4667 or [healthyaging@nemcsa.org](mailto:healthyaging@nemcsa.org)
- **EARLY CHILDHOOD SERVICES**
  - Early Head Start (Pregnancy to Age 3): Home visits and play groups support families with infants, toddlers, and pregnant women.
  - Head Start (Ages 3 to 5): A no-cost preschool program for children that will help prepare them for school.
  - Great Start Readiness Program (Age 4): Provides many of the same services as Head Start for children 4 years of age.
- **FAMILY SELF-SUFFICIENCY PROGRAM**
  - Provides case management to participating families through coordination of local, community-based resources that promote economic independence. The program goals are to help families maintain employment, become self-sufficient, move off assistance, and move into home ownership. For information, contact: 989.358.4653.
- **THE WATER PROGRAM**
  - Provides funding to eligible, low-income households to assist with paying water and sewer bills. For more information, contact 989.358.4675.

*\*Availability of all programs are dependent on funding levels.*  
**FOR A FULL LIST OF NEMCSA SERVICES VISIT:**  
**[www.nemcsa.org](http://www.nemcsa.org)**

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# Nutrition

Food and nutrition programs exist to assist caregivers in meeting the daily requirements of the children who depend on them.

- Churches and Community Centers
- Community Meals
- Congregate Meals at Senior Centers
- Department of Health and Human Services
- Food Pantries
- Foodbanks
- Home Delivered Meals
- MiCAFE
- Salvation Army
- Soup Kitchens
- Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP)/Food Stamp Program



2.1.1

Michigan

**CALL 211  
OR VISIT  
MI211.ORG TO  
FIND LOCAL  
RESOURCES.**

# Michigan Department of Health and Human Services

Provides child care expenses when the parent or guardian is unavailable due to employment, education, or health/social condition.

## **ALCONA COUNTY**

No physical location, open Tuesday,  
Wednesday, and Thursday from 9  
a.m. to 4 p.m.  
Phone: 989.724.9000

## **ALPENA COUNTY**

600 Walnut Street  
Alpena, MI 49707  
Phone: 989.354.7200

## **ARENAC COUNTY**

3709 Deep River Road  
Standish, MI 48658  
Phone: 989.846.4365

## **CHEBOYGAN COUNTY**

827 South Huron Street  
Cheboygan, MI 49721  
Phone: 231.627.8500

## **CRAWFORD COUNTY**

230 Huron  
Grayling, MI 49738  
Phone: 989.348.7691

## **IOSCO COUNTY**

2145 East Huron Road  
East Tawas, MI 48730  
Phone: 989.362.0300

## **MONTMORENCY COUNTY**

13210 M-33  
Atlanta, MI 49709  
Phone: 989.785.4218

## **OGEMAW COUNTY**

444 East Houghton Ave  
West Branch, MI 48661  
Phone: 989.345.5135

## **OSCODA COUNTY**

200 West Fifth Street  
Mio, MI 48647  
Phone: 989.826.4000

## **OTSEGO COUNTY**

931 South Otsego Ave  
Gaylord, MI 49735  
Phone: 989.732.1702

## **PRESQUE ISLE COUNTY**

1242 West 3rd Street  
Rogers City, MI 49779  
Phone: 989.734.2108

## **ROSCOMMON COUNTY**

715 South Loxley Road  
Houghton Lake, MI 48629  
Phone: 1.844.464.3447



# CAREGIVER BURNOUT

Caregiver burnout is a state of physical, emotional, and mental exhaustion. It may be accompanied by a change in attitude. Burnout can occur when caregivers do not get the help they need, or if they try to do more than they are able. When you can identify warning signs of burnout and learn interventions to reduce stress, your caregiving tasks will be more manageable and enjoyable. Sometimes caregivers do not realize that they are experiencing caregiver burnout even if they have acknowledged to themselves or to others that they feel an increasing amount of stress and pressure.

## Here are some warning signs of Caregiver Burnout:

- Increased use of alcohol or stimulants.
- Change in eating or sleeping patterns.
- Inability to relax.
- Scattered thinking.
- Feeling increasingly resentful.
- Being short-tempered.
- Increasing thoughts of death.

## Here are some suggestions to help cope:

- Develop a support network.
- Attend a support group to receive positive feedback and coping strategies from others in similar situations.
- Consult with a professional counselor for one-on-one counseling.
- Maintain good health by exercising regularly and eating a healthy diet.
- Take regular time out for journaling, meditating or contemplation.
- Stay involved in hobbies and activities you enjoy.

## Ask yourself the following questions:

1. Do you feel any symptoms of depression?
2. Do you feel you are being pulled in many directions?
3. Do you feel like you are trapped in your role as a caregiver?
4. Is there a conflict with the people closest to you and the person you are caring for?
5. Do you feel you are not getting support from other people?
6. Is the person you are caring for placing unrealistic demands and expectations on you?
7. Do you feel like you are unable to meet the expectations and needs of the person you are caring for?
8. Are you unable to communicate effectively with others around you?
9. Is your health or the health of the person you are caring for getting worse?
10. Do you feel overwhelmed?

# CAREGIVER EMOTIONS

Family caregivers can experience a range of different emotions, including guilt, abandonment, anger and many others. It can help to acknowledge these difficult feelings, and seek information and support to deal with them.

## GUILT

- Having unrealistic expectations.
- Feeling bad because you are still able to enjoy life.
- Feeling that you have failed.
- Having negative thoughts about the person you are caring for.
- Regretting things about your relationship before the diagnosis.

## DENIAL

- Hoping that the person is not ill.
- Expecting the person will get better even if the disease is progressive.
- Convincing yourself that he or she has not changed.

## ANGER

- Frustration with the person with dementia.
- Resenting the demands of caregiving and family members have not helped.
- Feeling abandoned.

## SADNESS

- Feeling overwhelmed by loss.
- Crying frequently.
- Withdrawing from social activities.

## ACCEPTANCE

- Learning to live in the moment.
- Finding your sense of humor.
- Asking for and accepting help from others.

# CAREGIVERS AND DEPRESSION

20% of family caregivers suffer from depression, twice the rate of the general population. Discuss the signs of depression with your primary doctor. Proper diagnosis and treatment can improve sense of well-being and function.

## CAUSES OF DEPRESSION:

- High anxiety and agitation
- Reaction to event or death
- A symptom of another disorder or disease
- Not being able to do everyday tasks
- A side-effect of medication
- Not being able to do the things previously enjoyed
- Feeling stressed or worried over issues such as money, relationships or the future
- Loss of independence
- Increasing reliance on others
- Confusion and loss of memory
- Environmental factors
- Inability to go out alone
- Physical illness
- Social isolation
- Fatigue

## SIGNS OF DEPRESSION:

- Mood that varies day to day
- Loss of interest and enjoyment
- Slowed movement and reactions
- Feelings of agitation and restlessness
- Reduced self-esteem or self-confidence
- Sleeping more or less than usual
- Loss of interest in usual hobbies or activities
- Feeling guilty, worthless, hopeless, full of regret
- Thoughts of ending one's life
- Constipation
- Aches and pain
- Loss of appetite
- Weight gain or loss
- Lack of energy
- Poor sleep
- Increased confusion
- Loss of libido

## SOME SOLUTIONS:

- Consider talking to a psychologist, psychiatrist or other trained health professional.
- Get the person involved in meaningful and enjoyable activities.
- Create and maintain daily routine.
- Incorporate daily exercise.
- Consider getting a pet.
- Anti-depressant medication.
- Change the environment around you.
- Be positive, celebrate small successes.
- Consider joining a support group .
- Make a list of activities, people, or places that the person receives pleasure from and schedule these things more frequently.
- Make sure a small amount of time is spent in the sun each day.

# Manage your Stress:

1. **Recognize warning signs early.** These might include irritability, sleep problems, and forgetfulness. Know your own warning signs, and act to make changes. Do not wait until you are overwhelmed.
2. **Identify sources of stress.** Ask yourself, "What is causing stress for me?" Sources of stress might be that you have too much to do, family disagreements, feelings of inadequacy, or the inability to say no.
3. **Identify what you can and cannot change.** Remember, we can only change ourselves; we cannot change another person. When you try to change things over which you have no control, you will only increase your sense of frustration. Ask yourself, "What do I have some control over? What can I change?" Even a small change can make a big difference.
4. **Take action.** Taking some action to reduce stress gives us back a sense of control. Stress reducers can be simple activities like walking and other forms of exercise, gardening, meditation, or having coffee with a friend. Identify some stress reducers that work for you.

1. Establish an exercise routine. Increasing physical activity to at least two and a half hours a week can slow the decline in quality of life.
2. Find a neurologist you trust.
3. Dispense medication consistently on time.
4. Identify the symptoms which are most bothersome and discuss them with your doctor.
5. Practice good sleep habits.
6. Take control of the things that you can. It will help you minimize stress.
7. Continue face-to-face interactions with family members, friends, and neighbors.
8. Set short-term goals. Do not over-schedule yourself.
9. Be open and honest about what you are going through, rather than isolating yourself.
10. Support groups can offer comfort and practical advice.

# Caregiver Self-Care

Taking care of yourself is one of the most important things you can do as a caregiver. This could mean asking family members or friends to help out, doing things you enjoy, using adult day care services, or attending a support group. Taking these actions can bring you some relief. It also may help keep you from getting ill or depressed.

**Here are a few helpful tips for caregivers to make self-care a priority:**

- Ask for help when you need it.
- Exercise as often as you can.
- See your doctor on a regular basis.
- Keep up with your hobbies and interests.
- Attend a caregiver education workshop.
- Split up caregiving responsibilities.
- Pursue your passions and interests.
- Attend to your own healthcare needs.
- Get proper rest and nutrition.
- Spend time with friends.
- Join a support group.
- Take a bath.
- Keep a journal.
- Give yourself credit.
- Set limits for what you can do.
- Repeat positive self-affirmations.

## Self-Care Examples

- Meditate
- Take a nap
- Watch T.V.
- Go on a hike
- Soak your feet
- Listen to music
- Take a hot bath
- Go to bed early
- Plan a vacation
- Create a wish list
- Work on a puzzle
- Apply a face mask
- Sit in the sunshine
- Listen to podcasts
- Go for a walk outside
- Visit your therapist
- Shut your phone off
- Watch a funny movie
- Diffuse essential oils
- Find a good therapist
- Light scented candles
- Read a good book
- Color in a coloring book
- Take a break from all social media
- Paint your fingernails
- Do yoga
- Workout
- Garden
- Go shopping
- Go for a run
- Bake cookies
- Go for a drive
- Go on a date
- Get a massage
- Visit the dentist
- Try a new recipe
- Read a good book

**"You cannot pour from an empty cup.  
Take care of yourself."**

# Family Dynamics: Healthy Communication

Family dynamics are how family members interact and relate to each other. In caregiving situations, these dynamics can complicate the already challenging work. Arguments may arise over money, lack of involvement, or longstanding family emotions. Here are some ways to help defuse conflicts stemming from family dynamics, and how to keep communication open, respectful, and productive.

## Tips on Family Meetings:

- Setting aside one-on-one time to talk to the person, before the meeting starts.
- Create an atmosphere for openness to discuss the full range of topics.
- Create an agenda, and give it out a couple of days before the meeting.
- Research different options before attending the meeting.
- Use respectful listening.
- Keep an open mind.
- Going over the list of caregiving needs you previously drew up.
- Pointing out areas in which someone might be able to help.
- Asking if they would like to help, and if so, in what way do they feel comfortable.
- Making sure the person understands what would be most helpful for both you and the caregiving recipient.
- Build consensus.
- Designate a note-taker to record.
- Recognize the emotional factors that can surface during a family meeting.
- Consider enlisting the help of an outside facilitator.
- Give people time to digest what is happening.
- Once the meeting has ended use technology to stay connected.
- Be flexible. Be willing to give different ideas a trial run.

### Example of activities caregivers need assistance with:

- Bathing/grooming
- Filling Medication Boxes/Refilling Prescriptions
- Making Medical Appointments
- Providing Transportation
- Housekeeping
- Paying Bills
- Shopping
- Preparing Meals

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# Tips for a Successful Family Meeting

The purpose of a family meeting is to foster open communication among family members. It is a safe place where everyone is free to say what they think and feel as they cooperate to make decisions and solve problems. A structured meeting helps this to happen when a family is ready for it.

- Give everyone the agenda a couple of days before the meeting.
- Choose a location where most people will feel comfortable.
- Meetings can occur regularly, a narrow focus for each meeting can help.
- Encourage all family members to participate, long-distance caregivers can call in.
- Speaking in a respectful way helps the group stay calm and keep the discussion productive.
- Use "I" messages, instead of "you" messages. Watch for hidden "you" messages.
- Anyone can call a break.
- Remind everyone that the goal is to talk about care for your older adult, not to fix family issues.
- Distributing a calendar with different days marked with responsibilities and commitments can also help each person honor the agreements made.
- Consider having a mediator at the family meeting.
- End the meeting with something fun that affirms family members.



# EFFECTIVE COMMUNICATION WITH YOUR HEALTH CARE PROVIDER

As a caregiver you likely are the person who collects information, speaks to doctors, transports the patient, ensures lab tests are done, picks up, prepares and gives medications, researches treatment options and risks, handles insurance, and fulfills many other related tasks. Here are tips to consider for having successful communication with your doctor:

- Make a list of your questions and concerns.
- Write down and prioritize those questions, highlighting the main three or four you want to discuss.
- Send a list of the questions to your doctor in advance, if you think that would be helpful.
- Provide a list of medications and supplements you are taking, recent symptoms and the dates at which they occurred, any recent tests and names of other doctors you are seeing can be useful information to share with your doctor.
- Make sure your top concerns are known at the beginning of the visit.
- Tell your doctor if you have trouble hearing.
- Bring someone to take notes and be a second pair of ears.
- Bring a tape recorder and ask the doctor if she wouldn't mind your recording the visit to help you better remember the information you discuss.
- Ask questions.
- Ask about your medications.
- Stick with the same doctor.
- Do not hesitate to ask when words the doctor is using are unfamiliar or his instructions are not clear to you.
- Do not minimize the symptoms or situation.
- Share information about valuable community resources that have helped you.
- Inform your doctor of any cultural beliefs that may affect your treatment choices or preferences.

# BENEFITS OF ATTENDING A SUPPORT GROUP

1. Feel less lonely, isolated, or judged.
2. Reduce depression, anxiety, or distress.
3. Gain a sense of empowerment and control.
4. Get advice or information about practical solutions or treatment options.
5. Improve or learn healthy coping skills.
6. Get a better understanding of what to expect in the future.
7. Improve caregiving skills and give a better quality of life to you and your care receiver.

## CANCER SUPPORT GROUPS

### ALPENA COUNTY

Guys Like Us (Men Only)  
Wednesdays 10:00 a.m. -  
11:30 a.m.

Facilitator: Peer lead  
Circle of Hope (Women Only)  
Wednesdays 4:30 p.m. - 6:30  
p.m.

Facilitator: Alisha Allen

Friends Together  
105 Prentiss Street  
Alpena, MI 49707

Phone: 989.356.3231

### ALCONA COUNTY

First & Third Wednesday of  
each month.  
6:30 p.m. to 7:30 p.m.

Friends Together  
Alcona Elementary  
181 N Barlow Road  
Lincoln, MI 48742

Facilitator: Marcie Cowles

Phone: 989.356.3231

### GRAND TRAVERSE COUNTY/VIRTUAL

First Monday of each month,  
in-person or virtual.  
4:00 p.m. - 5:00 p.m.

Cowell Family Cancer Center  
217 S. Madison Street  
Traverse City, MI 49684  
3rd-Floor Conference Room  
(3002)

Phone: 231.392.8494

### IOSCO COUNTY

Every Tuesday.  
5:00 p.m. - 7:00 p.m.

Friends Together  
Tawas Methodist Church  
22 M-55  
Tawas City, MI 48763

Facilitator: Mary Morse

Phone: 989.356.3231

### PRESQUE ISLE COUNTY

Every Monday.  
12:30 p.m. - 1:30 p.m.

Friends Together  
Presque Isle Library  
181 E. Erie Street  
Rogers City, MI 49779

Facilitator: Marie Eldridge

Phone: 989.356.3231

# DEMENTIA SUPPORT GROUPS

Dementia support groups are designed for people with Alzheimer's, Lewy Body, Cardiovascular, and other forms of dementia, as well as their families and other support individuals.

## ALPENA COUNTY

First and third Thursday of every month.  
4:00 p.m. - 5:00 p.m.

Alpena Senior Citizen Center  
501 River Street  
Alpena MI 49707

Phone: 989.356.3585  
Contact: Annie

## CRAWFORD COUNTY

Third Wednesday of every month.  
11:00 a.m. - 12:00 p.m.

The Brook of Grayling  
503 Rose Street  
Grayling, MI 49738  
Respite care available

Phone: 989.348.7123

## OTSEGO COUNTY

First Wednesday of every month.  
1:00 p.m. - 2:30 p.m.

Otsego Commission on Aging  
1165 Elkview Avenue  
Gaylord, MI 49735  
Respite care available.

Phone: 989.732.1122

Contact: Evie Riozzi  
Evie@occoaonline.org

## ARENAC COUNTY

Third Thursday of every month.  
12:30 p.m. - 1:30 p.m.

Sunrise Side Senior Services  
131 Clyde Street  
Omer, MI 48749

Phone: 989.653.2692

Contact: Amy Carson  
Email: amy-cyndi@hotmail.com

## IOSCO COUNTY

First Wednesday of every month.  
4:00 p.m. - 5:30 p.m.

Hale Creek Manor  
3191 M-65  
Hale, MI 48739

Phone: 989.728.1300

Contact: Wendy Lauria

## CHEBOYGAN COUNTY

Second Wednesday of every month.  
2:00 p.m. - 3:00 p.m.

Tuscaror Township Hall  
3546 S Straits Hwy.  
Indian River, MI 49749

Phone: 734.730.7736

Contact: Jean Lang

## OGEMAW COUNTY

Second Monday of every month.  
10:00 a.m. - 11:30 a.m.

Ogemaw Commission on Aging  
1528 M-33  
West Branch, MI 48661

Phone: 989.345.3010  
Ext. 203

Contact: Amanda Kissler  
thecottage@ogemawcoa.org



# PARKINSON'S DISEASE SUPPORT GROUPS

Parkinson's support groups are designed for people with Parkinson's, their families and other support individuals. They are intended to provide education, advice and awareness of community services available in dealing with this chronic disease.

## ALPENA COUNTY

Third Monday of every month.  
1:00 p.m. - 3:00 p.m.

First United Methodist Church  
167 Ripley Blvd  
Alpena, MI 49707  
Contact: Judy Poli  
Phone: 989.370.6854  
Judypoli9@gmail.com

## CHEBOYGAN COUNTY

Third Tuesday of every month.  
1:00 p.m. - 3:00 p.m.

Cheboygan Public Library  
100 South Bailey Street  
Cheboygan, MI 49721  
Susie: 231.625.8368  
Martha Orloff: 231.818.1900  
mJORloff@gmail.com

## IOSCO COUNTY

Third Thursday of April through October.  
10:00 a.m. - 11:00 a.m.

Tawas Area Presbyterian Church  
2095 US-23  
East Tawas, MI 48730  
Phone: 989.984.5292  
Contact: Rachel Haviland

## OGEMAW COUNTY

Second Tuesday of every month.  
2:00 p.m. - 3:00 p.m.

My Michigan Health: Executive Dining Room  
2463 S. M-30  
West Branch, MI 48661  
Phone: 989.246.6388  
Contact: Mary Griffore  
Mary.Griffore@Mymichigan.org

## OTSEGO COUNTY

Fourth Thursday of every month.  
2:00 p.m. - 3:00 p.m.

Otsego Commission on Aging  
1165 Elkview Avenue  
Gaylord, MI 49735  
Phone: 989.732.1122  
Contacts: John Panci, Pam Carlson, and Dona Wishart

## VIRTUAL SUPPORT GROUP

Second Thursday of every month.  
6:00 p.m. - 7:00 p.m.

Phone: 517.525.1707  
Contact: Mark Talbot  
Mrtalbot50@gmail.com

**For the full list of Parkinson's Support Groups, click here.**

## ADDITIONAL SUPPORT GROUPS

### CHEBOYGAN COUNTY

General Caregiver Support Group  
Every Wednesday.  
4:00 p.m. - 5:00 p.m.

Saint Paul United Methodist Church  
531 E Lincoln Ave.  
Cheboygan, MI 49721

Phone: 906.430.1411  
Contacts: Louise & John

### ROSCOMMON COUNTY

General Caregiver Support Group  
Second Thursday of every month.  
3:00 p.m. - 4:00 p.m.

Roscommon County Commission on Aging  
1015 Short Dr.  
Purdenville, MI 48651

Phone: 989.366.0205  
Contacts: Chuck & Heather

### ROSCOMMON COUNTY

Grief Support Group  
First & Third Monday of the month.  
11:00 a.m. - 12:00 p.m.

Houghton Lake Center  
2625 S. Townline Rd.  
Houghton Lake, MI 48629

Phone: 989.366.0205  
Contact: Amie Wittington

# DON'T SEE A SUPPORT GROUP LISTED IN YOUR AREA?

Consider starting one in your community! Region 9 Area Agency on Aging offers a free training, along with mentorship and a collaborative network of facilitators who are passionate about supporting family caregivers.

Interested in learning more about becoming a support group facilitator?  
Contact 989.358.4667 or [healthyaging@nemcsa.org](mailto:healthyaging@nemcsa.org) for more information!



## VETERAN COFFEE AND DOUGHNUTS SOCIAL EVENTS

### ALCONA:

First Sunday of every month.  
2:00 PM - 4:00 PM

Alcona High School Auditorium  
51 North Barlow Road  
Harrisville, MI 48740

### ALPENA:

Fourth Thursday of every month.  
9:00 AM - 10:00 AM

Art of the Loft  
109 North 2nd Ave  
Suite 300  
Alpena, MI 49707

### ARENAC:

First Tuesday of every month.  
9:00 AM - 12:00 PM

Veterans Club  
3221 M76  
Standish, MI 48658

### CHEBOYGAN:

Fourth Wednesday of every month.  
9:00 AM - 10:00 AM

Great Lakes Grill Banquet Room  
817 East State Street  
Cheboygan, MI 49721

### CRAWFORD:

Second Thursday of every month.  
10:00 AM - 11:00 AM

American Legion Post #106  
106 South James Street  
Grayling, MI 49738

989.344.3861

### IOSCO:

Third Thursday of every month.  
8:30 AM - 10:00 AM

Audie Johnson American Legion  
900 E. Lincoln St, East Tawas, MI, United States, 48730

### OGEMAW:

First Wednesday of every month.  
9:00 AM - 10:00 AM

Ogemaw County Commission on Aging,  
1528 M-33  
West Branch, MI

989.390.0614

### OTSEGO:

First Wednesday of every month.  
9:00 AM - 10:00 AM

Gaylord Regional Airport  
1100 Aero Drive  
Gaylord, MI 49735

### OSCODA:

Third Tuesday of every month.  
10:00 AM - 11:00 AM

Oscoda County Veterans Affairs  
205 East 11th Street  
Mio, MI 48647

### PRESQUE ISLE:

First Thursday of every month.  
9:00 AM - 10:00 AM

Posen Center  
6520 Darga Hwy.  
Posen, MI 49776  
&  
Onaway Center  
4203 S Lynn Street  
Onaway, MI 49765

989.766.8191

### ROSCOMMON:

First Thursday of every month.  
9:00 AM - 10:00 AM

The Roscommon County Airport  
5218 East Houghton Lake Drive  
Houghton Lake, MI 48629



# CAREGIVER ONLINE TRAININGS

## Here are a few online resources for caregivers:

- **NEMCSA REGION 9 AAA: CAREGIVER RESOURCE CENTER:**
  - The resource page provides a one-stop shop for family caregivers to find local resources, information, and helpful tips on our website.
  - Website: [www.nemcsa.org/services/caregiver-resource-center/caregiver-resource-center.html](http://www.nemcsa.org/services/caregiver-resource-center/caregiver-resource-center.html)
- **THE ALZHEIMER'S ASSOCIATION:**
  - Is the leading voluntary health organization in Alzheimer's care, support, and research. Their mission is to eliminate Alzheimer's disease through the advancement of research; to provide and enhance care and support for all affected, and to reduce the risk of dementia through the promotion of brain health.
  - Website: [www.alz.org](http://www.alz.org)
- **ALZHEIMER'S FOUNDATION OF AMERICA:**
  - Believes that education is vital to facilitating meaningful living for individuals with Alzheimer's disease and their caregivers. Our licensed social workers have developed these educational materials to provide tips and strategies that caregivers can incorporate into their routines.
  - Website: [alzfdn.org](http://alzfdn.org)
  - Provides information on Alzheimer's disease and related dementia care, research, and support.
  - Website: [www.Alzheimers.gov](http://www.Alzheimers.gov)
  - Call at: 1.800.438.4380
- **FAMILY CAREGIVER ALLIANCE (FCA):**
  - Seeks to improve the quality of life for caregivers through education, services, research, and advocacy. Through its National Center on Caregiving, FCA offers information on current social, public policy, and caregiving issues and provides assistance in the development of public and private programs for caregivers.
  - Website: [www.caregiver.org](http://www.caregiver.org)
- **THE UCLA ALZHEIMER'S AND DEMENTIA CARE VIDEO SERIES:**
  - Provides viewers with practical tools you can use in a variety of settings to create a safe, comfortable environment both for the person with dementia and the caregiver.
  - Website: [www.youtube.com](http://www.youtube.com)

# Helpful Caregiver Technology

Family caregivers can be better supported through the use of mobile, online, and in-home technologies. Technologies can provide better connections between family caregivers and health professionals, enabling them to work more effectively as a team in providing care. These ideas could make perfect holiday gifts.

## CELLPHONE APPS

Free apps available for iPhone or Android, to help family caregivers.



### CAREZONE

Helps caregivers easily access and store all medical information in one place.



### ALZHEIMER'S CAREGIVER BUDDY

Provides support and information about communication tips, challenging behaviors, and daily routines.



### CARINGBRIDGE

Connects multiple caregivers through a single app, providing easy access to appointment dates, new changes in health, and other essential information.



### HEADSPACE

Is a self-care resource for caregivers to reduce stress and sleep soundly.



### MEDISAFE

Easy-to-use medication reminder that also provides tips, refill reminders, progress reports and discounted prescription offers.

## WEBSITES

Here are some helpful websites for family caregivers.



### AARP CAREGIVING

Contains articles, tools, and forums to assist caregivers



### LOTSAHELPINGHANDS.COM

Is a support network for family caregivers looking to connect when they need help.



### AGINGCARE.COM

Connects people to other caregivers, personalized information, and local resources.



### ALZHEIMER'S ASSOCIATION

Offers information, education, support, practical advice, and tips.



### AMERICAN CANCER SOCIETY

Everything you need to know about cancer, from the basics to detailed information on more than 70 different types of cancer.

## Other helpful Technology

- Medication Reminders
- GPS technology
- Health tracking tool
- Personal Emergency Response Systems
- Home Monitoring

## Virtual Support Groups & Trainings

- Family Caregiver Alliance Webinars
- Teepa Snow Positive Approach to Caregiving
- UCLA YouTube Dementia Caregiver Videos
- Virtual Cancer Support Group: [cancercare.org](http://cancercare.org)



# ASSISTIVE TECHNOLOGY

Assistive Technology (AT) is any item, product, system, or equipment that improves life for older adults or people with disabilities. AT can make a difference in family and seniors' lives by supporting their health, safety, and quality of life.

## BENEFITS OF ASSISTIVE TECHNOLOGY

- Increase independence
- Enhance convenience
- Helps Family Caregivers
- Help seniors age in place
- Protect senior safety
- Enable social connections
- Improve quality of life
- Support senior health
- Restore senior confidence

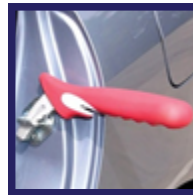
## WHERE TO PURCHASE?

Assistive technologies can sometimes be purchased directly from the companies that manufacture them. Stores such as Best Buy or Walmart or online retailers, like Amazon, often sell assistive technologies as well.

## EXAMPLES OF ASSISTIVE TECHNOLOGY



Portable Chair Assist can be moved around the house as needed to help with getting your person up.



Assist Bars attach to the U-Shaped latch in the car doorjamb. The device can be used as a handle to help a person in/out of the vehicle.



Swivel car seat act as a rotating cushion, allowing vehicle passengers to rotate a full 360 degrees, making it easier to enter/exit the car without twisting their bodies.



Ten button corded picture phone ensures that the person with dementia can connect with family and friends.

- Body Care Grooming Aids
- Lift Recliner Chair
- Suction Cup Plates/Bowls
- Comfort Grip Utensils
- One Handed Knife (Ulu)
- Foam Handle
- Plate Guard
- Jar Opener
- Dial-less Telephone
- Magnifier
- Automatic Oven Off
- Button and Zipper Aid
- Gait Belts
- Door Alarm with Keypad
- Robotic Vacuum
- Chair Lifts
- TV Ears
- Voice Controlled Appliances
- Vibrating Alarm Clocks
- Motion Detecting Lights
- Automated Pill Dispensers
- GPS Tracking Device
- Reachers
- Door Knob Handle Extenders
- Easy Glide Writer/Slip-on Writing Aid
- Shoe Horn
- Cane
- Walker
- Wheelchair
- Braces
- Grab Bars
- Shower Chair
- Commodes
- Raised Toilet Seats
- Bed Rail
- Bed Pull-Up
- Video Doorbell
- Hearing Aid
- Medical Alerts

# LEGAL AND FINANCIAL AFFAIRS

## DURABLE POWER OF ATTORNEY (DPA)

Durable Power of Attorney (DPA) is a written legal document giving someone other than the care recipient the authority to handle the financial decisions. It must be signed by the care recipient while they still legally can.

This power can be transferred immediately or can be designated to go into effect when it is determined that the care recipient has become mentally incapacitated.

Financial decisions made by DPA are binding for the care recipient, so caregivers and the care-receiver are urged to seek the advice of an attorney.

## DURABLE POWER OF ATTORNEY FOR HEALTH CARE (DPAHC)

Durable Power of Attorney for Health Care (DPAHC) is a written document that must be signed by the care receiver while they still have the capacity to make decisions.

The DPAHC gives someone other than the care receiver authority to make medical treatment and health care decisions on behalf of them.

It allows the care receiver to specify ahead of time of their decision. Decisions regarding extraordinary supportive care, including breathing machines and tube feeding, can be addressed in the Durable Power of Attorney.

## SELECTING AN ATTORNEY

It is important to select an attorney who is knowledgeable in the areas needed (estate planning, will drafting, probate or conservatorship). Ask friends or professionals for recommendations, or contact a Lawyer Referral Service, County Bar Association, or Senior Citizens Legal Services. Before agreeing upon a particular attorney, ask if they have previously done what you requesting.

# Other Services

**F.I.S.H Inc.:** FISH provides emergency aid to people in our community.

- Oscoda: 989. 739.9400
- Tawas 989. 362.8788

**St. Vincent de Paul:** Thrift Stores

- Alcona: 989. 736.6271
- Alpena: 989.354.3671
- Ogemaw: 989.345.0779 and 989.873.5797
- Roscommon: 989.366.7613 and 989.275.3036

**Habitat for Humanity:** Helps families build and improve places to call home.

- Alpena: 989.354.5555
- Fairview: 989.848.2200
- Lewiston: 989.786.3385
- Gaylord: 989.732.6070
- West Branch: 989.345.7085
- Cheboygan: 231.597.4663

**MDHHS The Family Independence Program (FIP):** Provides temporary cash assistance to Michigan families with children to help pay for living expenses such as rent, heat, utilities, clothing, food, and personal care items.

- Phone: 855.275.6424
- Website: [www.benefits.gov/benefit/1220](http://www.benefits.gov/benefit/1220)

**Salvation Army:** Operates thrift stores, and many other services.

- Alpena: 989.358.2769
- Cheboygan: 231.627.9003
- Gaylord: 989.731.5959
- Iosco: 989.984.5160
- Roscommon: 989.202.4652

**Elder Law of Michigan:** Resources to maintain independence, age with dignity, and improve quality of life.

- Website: [www.elderlawofmi.org](http://www.elderlawofmi.org)
- 866.400.9164

**Legal Services of Michigan:** Provide legal assistance to adults aged 60 or older.

- 989.356.9081 or 989.705.1067

**Northeast Michigan Community Mental Health Authority:** Provides comprehensive services and support that enable people to live and work independently.

- Website: <https://www.nemcmh.org/services/>

# Hospice's in Michigan

Hospice care is not about giving up, it's about letting others step in to help you live each day to the fullest. Hospice enables patients and their families to maintain their independence, improve their quality of life and reduce unwanted hospital visits.

- **HOSPICE OF NORTHERN MICHIGAN:**
  - Offers comfort and peace for patients and their loved ones at the end of life. Provides care for all, regardless of age, diagnosis, or ability to pay.
  - Phone: 888.247.5701
- **COMPASSUS**
  - Counties Served: Arenac, Bay, Crawford, Gladwin, Iosco, Kalkaska, Missaukee, Ogemaw, Oscoda, and Roscommon
  - Phone: 989.268.7772
- **COMPASSUS - ALPENA**
  - Counties Served: Alpena, Presque Isle, Montmorency, Oscoda, and Alcona
  - Phone: 989.342.3985
  - Website: [www.compassus.com](http://www.compassus.com)
- **PROMEDICA HOSPICE SERVING NORTHERN MICHIGAN**
  - Counties Served: Alcona, Arenac, Crawford, Gladwin, Iosco, Ogemaw, Oscoda, and Roscommon
  - Phone: 989.345.0651 and 800.275.4516
  - Website: [www.promedica hospice.org/WestBranch](http://www.promedica hospice.org/WestBranch)
- **MUNSON HEALTHCARE HOME HEALTH AND HOSPICE**
  - Counties Served: Crawford and Otsego
  - Phone: 800.252.2065
  - Website: [www.munsonhealthcare.org](http://www.munsonhealthcare.org)
- **MCLAREN HOSPICE**
  - McLaren Hospice provides health care with an emphasis on quality of life at the end of life. Whether during a short-term hospital stay or wherever you call home, McLaren Hospice provides comfort, support and dignity to those with a life-limiting illness.
  - Phone: 800.874.7176

# When is it Time to Stop Caregiving?

No one person can remain a full-time caregiver forever.

The job is much too taxing and stressful. While caregiving, think about your personal limits. Be honest with yourself. Once those limits are met, it is time to stop. When coming to a decision, think about the well-being of both you and the care-receiver. Other options for your care-receiver may be the right thing.

**Below are some signs that you need to seek professional help, utilize more stress reduction methods, or stop caregiving:**

- Snapping at the care-receiver constantly even over little things.
- Being constantly irritated.
- Rarely laughs anymore.
- Feeling constantly tired or pressured.
- Losing sleep, failing to fall asleep for hours, sleeping restlessly all night long.
- Yelling, screaming, crying fits, or rage frequently.
- Withholding affection, feelings of goodwill from the care-recipient.
- Withholding food, baths, dressing changes, etc.
- Constantly blaming the care-receiver for your being in this situation.
- Isolating the care-receiver.
- Refusing to go out anymore.
- Withholding goods or services the care-receiver needs.



# VETERAN RESOURCES

## U.S. DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS

- A one-stop hub for caregivers of veterans. It offers a wide variety of downloadable guides, training modules, and self-care tools covering topics like emotional well-being, financial planning, emergency preparedness, palliative care, and peer mentoring.

## CHOOSEVA

- ChooseVA is the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs' official benefits portal, designed to help veterans, active service members, and their families explore and apply for a full range of VA services. Whether they are looking for health care, housing assistance, education and career support, disability compensation, life insurance, or burial benefits. ChooseVA provides a centralized, easy-to-use gateway to explore options and initiate the application process.

## MICHIGAN VETERANS AFFAIRS AGENCY (MVAA)

- Michigan's central advocate and resource hub for veterans and their families. As part of the Michigan Department of Military & Veterans Affairs, MVAA connects former service members with the benefits and programs they've earned both at the federal and state levels.
- Call 1-800-642-4838 for help accessing benefits, finding a Veteran Service Officer (VSO), or getting state-specific support. Provides 24/7 access to information, support, and referrals

## MSUE VETERANS OUTREACH

- MSU Extension is committed to providing veterans with programs and services that support their personal and financial wellness. Whether they served decades ago or recently discharged, MSUE Veterans Outreach wants to support the success of veterans, family members, and caregivers.

## VA SUICIDE PREVENTION TOOLKIT FOR CAREGIVERS

- Designed specifically for those supporting veterans. It offers practical information on recognizing warning signs, helping create safety plans, and promoting self-care for both caregivers and their veterans. The toolkit also highlights mental health and substance use treatment options, provides crisis resources, and emphasizes the powerful role you play in suicide prevention.

## AARP VETERANS AND MILITARY FAMILIES CAREGIVER GUIDE

- Designed to help you navigate the challenges and opportunities of caring for a veteran or service member. It walks you through your caregiving journey—assessing needs, holding important conversations, creating a concrete care plan, and building a dependable support team.

## COUNTY VETERAN SERVICE OFFICES

- Alcona County Veteran Affairs: 989-846-9080
- Alpena County Department of Veterans Affairs: 989-354-9671
- Cheboygan County Veterans Services: 231-627-8833
- Crawford County Department of Veterans Affairs: 989-344-3861
- Montmorency County Veteran Service Office: 989-785-8043
- Ogemaw County Department of Veterans Affairs: 989-345-5170
- Oscoda County Department of Veterans Affairs: 989-826-9500
- Otsego County Department of Veterans Affairs: 989-731-7575
- Presque Isle County Department of Veterans Affairs: 989-734-0302
- Roscommon County Veterans Services: 989-275-6047
- Traverse City Vet Center: 231-935-0051

**VFW**

VETERANS OF FOREIGN WARS.

**Directory**

Visit the VFW

Directory:

[www.vfwmi.org](http://www.vfwmi.org)

# CAREGIVER EMERGENCY PLAN:

When you are stressed and overwhelmed pull this pre-filled form out. It will make the stressful situation easier to deal with, by offering specific suggestions for how to use each tip to reduce caregiver stress and boost overall health and well-being.

Care Recipient Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Caregiver Name: \_\_\_\_\_

1. **Known Stress Triggers:** (List situations, environments, or events that may cause stress or confusion)

2. **Early Warning Signs:** (What behaviors signal distress? Example: agitation, withdrawal, confusion)

3. **Calming Strategies that Work:** (What helps soothe or ground them?)

- Deep breathing
- Quiet space
- Music
- Walking
- 5-4-3-2-1 Technique
- Journaling:
- Talk to Someone
- Other: \_\_\_\_\_

4. **Communication Preferences:** (What works best?)

- Short/simple Instructions
- Written Reminders
- Calm Tone
- Open Posture
- Tactil Cues
- Use of "I" Statements
- Extra Processing Time
- Additional Notes: \_\_\_\_\_

5. **Daily Routine (Important Activities)**

Morning: \_\_\_\_\_  
Afternoon: \_\_\_\_\_  
Evening: \_\_\_\_\_

6. **Support Team & Resources:** (List providers, contacts, or services)

Name/Service: \_\_\_\_\_ Phone: \_\_\_\_\_  
Name/Service: \_\_\_\_\_ Phone: \_\_\_\_\_  
Name/Service: \_\_\_\_\_ Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

7. **Emergency Plan:** (Who to call? Or what to do in crisis.)

8. **Additional Notes:**

9. **Caregiver Self-Care Plan:** (What will YOU do to stay supported?)

- Take breaks
- Ask for help
- Attend support groups
- Practice self-care activities
- Take a hot bath
- Exercise
- Talk to a Friend/Family Member
- Practice Spiritual Beliefs
- Adult Coloring Book
- Go to bed early
- Therapy
- Creative Outlet
- Listen to Music
- Journal
- Work on Puzzle

**5-4-3-2-1 TECHNIQUE**  
**PAUSE AND BREATHE**

**5 NAME 5 THINGS YOU CAN SEE**

**4 ACKNOWLEDGE 4 THINGS YOU CAN TOUCH**

**3 IDENTIFY 3 THINGS YOU CAN HEAR**

**2 RECOGNIZE 2 THINGS YOU CAN SMELL**

**1 FOCUS ON 1 THING YOU CAN TASTE**

**TAKE ANOTHER DEEP BREATH**

inhale  
exhale





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REV. 2026