

# Making the Most of Eldercare at Home

Presented by the Lincoln Council on Aging

# BEING A CAREGIVER...

- ▶ Whether for a long or short time, whether nearby or long distance, whether for a spouse, parent, child, or other person...
  - ▶ Can be rewarding and meaningful, but also stressful and physically exhausting, both at the same time
  - ▶ Remember that you have resources to help and that you are not alone
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# RESOURCES

- ▶ In-home Services
  - ▶ Community-based Services
  - ▶ Respite Care and Other Services for Caregivers
  - ▶ Other Family and Friends
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# IN-HOME SERVICES

- ▶ The purpose of in-home services or those offered in the community is to help you or a loved one remain safely and independently at home as long as possible.
  - ▶ You need to consider what is important to you – privacy vs. safety vs. independence
  - ▶ Appropriate in-home care is a continuing process.
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# When might you need services?

- ▶ A short-term medical problem
  - ▶ A longer term disability with changing needs
  - ▶ A change in life circumstance, if, for example, another caregiver is no longer available to help
  - ▶ After a stay in the hospital, rehab, or nursing home. (In this case, much of the planning and arranging will be done by the facility's discharge planning department.)
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# What is the process?

- ▶ Evaluate your or your relative's needs are
  - ▶ Look at the range of options
  - ▶ Develop a service plan
  - ▶ Arrange for services
  - ▶ Continually monitor to make sure the services are meeting your or your relative's needs and to determine if you need other services
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# Who can help?

- ▶ The Council on Aging's Assistant Director, Pam Alberts, a licensed social worker
  - ▶ Minuteman Senior Services, (781) 272-7177, [minutemansenior.org](http://minutemansenior.org)
  - ▶ Private Geriatric Care Managers
  - ▶ [www.800ageinfo.com](http://www.800ageinfo.com) and
  - ▶ [www.Eldercare.gov](http://www.Eldercare.gov)
  - ▶ COA's resource guide
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# What types of services are available?

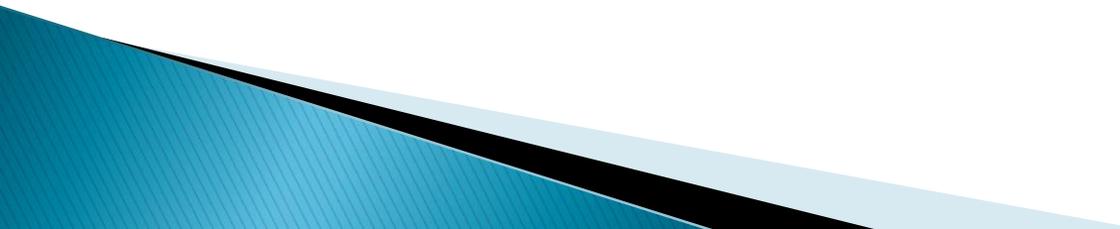
- ▶ In-home nursing care, physical therapy, occupational therapy, respiratory therapy, etc.
  - ▶ Home health aides, personal care assistants for bathing, toileting, dressing, transferring between bed and chair, etc.
  - ▶ Companions
  - ▶ Shopping and chore help
  - ▶ Adult day programs (at the program's site)
  - ▶ Concierge services
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# Arranging for services

- ▶ Many, many agencies serve the Lincoln area providing these services
  - ▶ Generally a 3 to 4-hour minimum
  - ▶ Usually about \$25/hour for home health aides, personal care, etc.
  - ▶ Usually about \$50–60/hour for nursing, PT, OT, etc.
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# Choosing an agency

- ▶ What types of services are offered? (Ask for a written list)
- ▶ Is there a minimum number of hours?
- ▶ What are the fees?
- ▶ Will services be provided by the same person or people?
- ▶ How are employees screened and supervised?  
Criminal records checks, references, interviews?

- ▶ What do you do if you have a problem or concern about an employee?
  - ▶ What training do employees receive?
  - ▶ How does the agency communicate with family members, if appropriate?
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# Paying for In-Home Care

- ▶ Medicare/Medicaid in some circumstances – COA SHINE counselor can help
  - ▶ Long Term Care Insurance
  - ▶ Minuteman Senior Services – subsidized home care for income eligible
  - ▶ Private pay
  - ▶ Veterans Administration – Lincoln's Veterans Services Officer can help
  - ▶ Other sources
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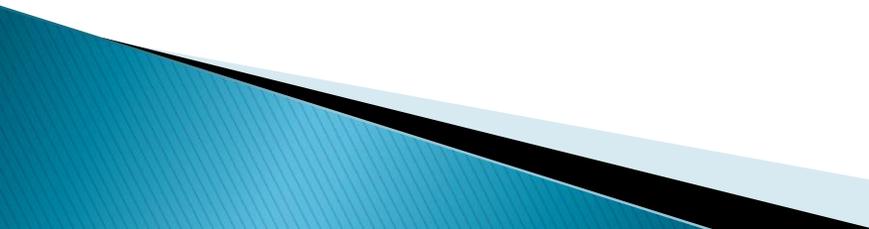
# SERVICES FOR CAREGIVERS

There are many resources to help you be a caregiver. Take advantage of them for both your benefit and that of your relative.

# Respite Care

- ▶ Temporary or ongoing care for your relative so you can do errands, go to your own medical appointments, go on vacation, work, etc.
  - ▶ Can be in your home or at a facility. Stays at facilities can be a good way to begin transitioning your relative to the facility.
  - ▶ You are not being neglectful to have someone else care for your relative for a time.
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# Support Groups

- ▶ Support groups can be general caregiver groups or be for caregivers of those with specific conditions or illnesses
  - ▶ May be only for caregivers or also for your relative
  - ▶ There are caregiver groups currently at The Groves first Wednesday at 10 am, Emerson Hospital, and Lahey Clinic. Minuteman Senior Services may have others.
  - ▶ Groups change, start, and end frequently.
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# Education and Support

- ▶ Educational programs at the COA on health, legal, and other issues can help. You are welcome to come to any of them
  - ▶ We are happy to give suggestions and discuss your situation with you.
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**HOW CAN WE HELP YOU?**  
**Services of the**  
**Lincoln Council on Aging**



# What Is the COA?

- ▶ A department of the Town of Lincoln
  - ▶ Located in Bemis Hall
  - ▶ 8:30 – 4:30 Monday through Friday
  - ▶ Funded by the Town, the state, and grants and donations
  - ▶ All are welcome (no age limit except for certain activities and services)
  - ▶ Almost everything is free
  - ▶ Carolyn Bottum, Director, and Pam Alberts, Assistant Director
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# Activities at Bemis Hall of Special Interest

- ▶ Fitness classes – chair aerobics, aerobics and weights, Tai Chi
  - ▶ Expert speakers on physical and emotional health, legal issues, benefits like Medicare and Social Security, caregiving, stress relief
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# One-To-One Help

- ▶ Health benefits counseling
  - ▶ Tax preparation counseling
  - ▶ Assistance in evaluating in-home needs, preparing a service plan, arranging services (only elder services)
  - ▶ Help in financial emergencies
  - ▶ Transportation – LINC, taxis, The Ride
  - ▶ Medical equipment loans
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- ▶ Help applying for benefits like Fuel Assistance and The Ride
  - ▶ File of Life
  - ▶ Free home safety evaluations by a physical therapist
  - ▶ Housing information and counseling when the time comes
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All residents are welcome to come to us for help with individual service needs:

- For yourself
  - For a family member who lives in Lincoln
  - For a family member who lives outside of Lincoln
  - For a friend or neighbor
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# How To Get in Touch with us

- ▶ Phone: (781) 259-8811
  - ▶ Email: [Bottumc@lincolntown.org](mailto:Bottumc@lincolntown.org)
  - ▶ Internet: [www.lincolncoa.org](http://www.lincolncoa.org) – has our newsletter, information about our programs and services, resources, and more
  - ▶ “News from Bemis Hall”
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# Family and Friends

- ▶ Family and friends can be a great resource for respite care, food preparation, chores, and more. But...
  - ▶ Many times people who would like to help don't want to bother you by asking if you need help.
  - ▶ Your task is to ask for help and then organize those who are willing
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# Where Can You Find Helpers?

- ▶ Family members
  - ▶ Neighbors
  - ▶ Work Colleagues – yours or your relative's
  - ▶ Churches, synagogues and other similar organizations to which you or your relative may belong
  - ▶ Council on Aging (friendly visitors)
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# Organizing Helpers

- ▶ Lotsa Helping Hands -- [nfca.lotsahelpinghands.com/caregiving/home/](http://nfca.lotsahelpinghands.com/caregiving/home/)
- ▶ Caring Bridge - [Caringbridge.org](http://Caringbridge.org)

# STRATEGIES

- ▶ Caregiving is a marathon, not a sprint. It can be rewarding, but also very physically and emotionally demanding.
  - ▶ Helping yourself stand up to the demands on you is critical to taking care of someone else.
  - ▶ You need to feel a sense of balance to maintain well being.
  - ▶ You are not alone. Resources are out there. Other people have been through what you are experiencing.
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# Relieve Stress and Stay Healthy

- ▶ Use what works for you at this moment.
  - ▶ Don't give yourself more stress by turning what should be stress relievers into chores.
  - ▶ There is no "right way" to nurture yourself and no goal you need to accomplish.
  - ▶ The COA has many programs and groups for stress relief that are open to those of any age.
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# Take Advantage of Quick Pleasures

- ▶ Step outside for a few moments, soak in the sunshine or breathe in the crisp, fresh air
  - ▶ Have a cup of calming tea, inhale the wonderful aroma
  - ▶ Put bouquets of flowers in your rooms.
  - ▶ Listen to soothing, uplifting music.
  - ▶ You deserve to enjoy the small pleasures of life.
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# “Buddy” with Another Caregiver

- ▶ Find someone who is also a caregiver and establish a time to talk on the phone, get together for tea, or find other ways to share experiences and ideas.
- ▶ If you don't know of any other caregivers, call us at the COA and we'll see if we can match you up.

# Care for Your Nutritional Needs

- ▶ Your body needs good nutrition to function well.
  - ▶ Plan a week's worth of nutritious meals at a time and post your list where you can see it.
  - ▶ It's ok to spend a little more for prepared foods if that's what you need to do to eat well.
  - ▶ Avoid sugary foods that will make you feel jittery then make you crash
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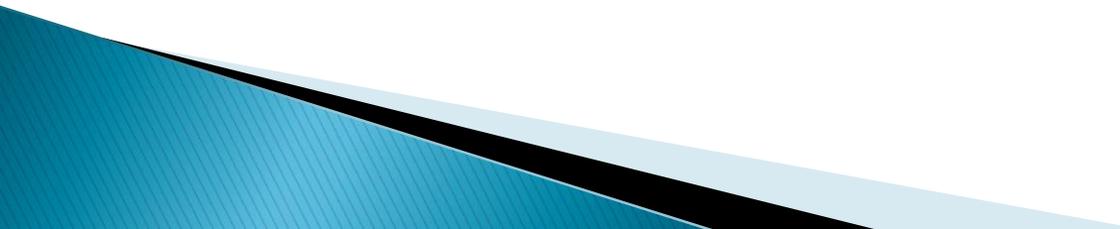
# Get Enough Exercise

- ▶ Exercise is a great stress reliever
  - ▶ You can exercise even if you no longer have time to go to the gym – watch a fitness DVD, do stretching exercises, walk to do errands, try some Tai Chi or yoga you find on tv
  - ▶ Try short segments – 10 minutes or so – more frequently if that is more feasible for you
  - ▶ COA exercise classes great for your health and for staying socially connected
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# Get Enough Rest

- ▶ Cut out other things before you cut your sleep time
  - ▶ Think of what you can pay others to do if it means you are able to take a nap or get an hour's more sleep at night
  - ▶ Watch your caffeine and alcohol intake
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# Relieve Your Stress

- ▶ Meditate. Even just taking ten minutes a day and focusing on your breathing can make a significant difference in your well being. Meditate when you are in waiting rooms, watching tv with your family member, or any other time you do not need to attentive to other tasks
  - ▶ Read and watch uplifting and/or humorous material
  - ▶ Journal your feelings
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- ▶ Focus on gratitude by listing what you enjoy about your life, being a caregiver, and your relative and rereading your list from time to time.

# Thanks!

- ▶ Please call us if you need help or support. Even if we don't offer the service or program you need, we will try to find out who does.
- ▶ Carolyn Bottum or Pam Alberts, (781) 259-8811 or [bottumc@lincolntown.org](mailto:bottumc@lincolntown.org) or [albertsp@lincolntown.org](mailto:albertsp@lincolntown.org).
- ▶ If you have ideas for other webinar topics or want to give feedback on this webinar, please call!