

Preparing for a Day of In-Home Adult Care



Getting ready for a first time with an at-home caregiver for a parent or adult relative? Following a few simple guidelines can lay the foundation for a positive experience for both the caregiver and your family. By being prepared and setting clear expectations, you can help ensure top-notch communication and the greatest satisfaction with care.

Prior to the Caregiver's Arrival

Once care is scheduled, you'll receive an introductory call from the caregiver or his/her agency. If you have not received a call by the evening before the first day of care, please contact the *Back-Up Care Advantage Program*® at 877-BH-CARES (242-2737).

Use this introductory call to ask questions about the caregiver, learn about his or her background, discuss special care instructions, provide directions to your home, and confirm arrival time.

Before the caregiver arrives, please download the daily activity log from our website. This document includes a list of items to be completed prior to receiving care and should be reviewed with the caregiver upon arrival.

In the event you will not be present when the caregiver arrives, discuss all appropriate information with the care recipient that he or she should be prepared to go over with the caregiver. This should include the following:

- How to reach you
- Who should be contacted in the event of an emergency
- What types of non-emergency situations would warrant a call to you
- Signs of illness/injuries or an emergency medical situation
- Medications, and how and when they should be taken (medications must be self-dispensed by the care recipient; if that isn't possible, a medical professional will be deployed and additional costs will apply)
- Information about items such as canes, eyeglasses, walkers, dentures, etc.
- Assistance required for walking and/or using a wheelchair
- Preferred food and drink options and information about prepared meals and snacks
- Food allergies
- Daily routines such as rest times, meal times, and favorite activities

After the Caregiver's Arrival

When the caregiver arrives, make sure you or the care recipient makes introductions and discusses the care needs for the day.

A few things you'll want to do:

- **Provide a home tour:** Point out all exits and indicate any rooms that are off limits. Provide instructions on operating window and door locks and when to lock the house or apartment; indicate if the caregiver is allowed to adjust the thermostat; instruct on television, remote control, and other household appliances (such as ranges, ovens, blenders, washer/dryer) potentially needed to care for your relative.
- **Leave house keys:** If you've authorized an outing, make sure the caregiver knows how to lock up and get back in.
- **Discuss phone use:** Specify if you would like the caregiver to answer your phone and outline expectations of use.
- **Show where to find:**
 - A change of clothes (if possible, select these items and lay them out in case they are needed)
 - Cooking utensils and serving items
 - Cleaning supplies for spills, cleaning up after meals, etc.
 - Medication and/or medical supplies as well as how they should be used (for those requiring a trained medical professional)
 - First-aid kit

When You Return

Take a few minutes after you return home to review the day with the caregiver.

Examples of questions you may want to ask include:

- What did you do today?
- Were there any concerns or problems we should discuss?
- Is there anything I could have done to make your day go more smoothly?

Evaluation

Following the delivery of back-up care services, you will receive a brief survey by email from the *Back-Up Care Advantage Program*[®] to complete. Your comments and suggestions will enable us to continually revise and improve the quality of our services. Thank you in advance for your assistance!

