



CAREGIVER PROFILE



Our caregivers are totally committed, highly qualified and carefully selected individuals who are personally and thoroughly screened, bonded and insured.

Most importantly our caregivers are dependable and extraordinarily caring of others. In addition to their previous experience, our caregivers receive continuous training that includes a specialized curriculum exclusive to The Senior's Choice that results in them becoming Certified Companion Aides™. These highly qualified and trained caregivers are ready to help you and your loved ones with a variety of daily activities such as:

- Caring companionship
- Meal planning and preparation
- Incidental transportation
- Running errands
- Light housekeeping
- Medication reminders
- Assistance with bathing and grooming
- Assistance with bill paying
- Information and referral services

Our personalized and affordable services are available 7 days a week and can range from a few hours a day to 24 hour and live in care.

Welcome to the Winter 2015 Senior's Choice Connection

Welcome to our Winter 2015 Senior's Choice Connection! We wish to congratulate our Caregiver of the Season, Eda Ramirez, of *Families Choice Home Care*.

Eda embodies the values of *Families Choice Home Care*, and holds true to our company's mission every single day. Her client, Mrs. O, has said many times that she has "hit the jackpot with this one." Several weeks back, while bathing our client, Eda came across a lump on the client's side that neither the client nor her family were aware of. Mrs. O was taken to the hospital the very next day, and it was determined that the lump was a cancerous tumor. Fortunately, it was caught in time, thanks to Eda's thorough bathing and quick response of reporting it to the office. The doctors were able to surgically remove the growth, allowing the client to avoid chemotherapy. When Eda learned the date and time of Mrs. O's discharge, Eda, on a day off and without expecting pay, (though we did pay her for it) met Mrs. O and her son at the hospital, helped get her home and stayed with her

for a couple of hours to ensure she was settled in comfortably. About a week later, on the following Saturday (another day off for Eda), Eda learned that Mrs. O. had been admitted to the hospital again, so she dropped what she was doing (enjoying a hike with her family) and headed to the hospital to spend several hours keeping her company, again, all without the expectation of getting paid.

Eda embodies what it means to go above and beyond your job description and provides exemplary service every time she goes to work (and apparently even when she's off work, too!) Eda is a cherished member of the *Families Choice* team and a model of professionalism and dedication for all who know her.

– Tim Ingram
Families Choice Home Care

Best wishes,
Steve Everhart,
President & CEO,
The Senior's Choice



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FINANCE & CONSUMER RESOURCES

Understanding Power of Attorney

A **Power of Attorney** is a document in which the person signing the form (referred to as the Principal) gives someone else the authority to make decisions or enter into agreements on his or her behalf.

The person who is given this authority is referred to as the Agent or Attorney-in-Fact ("AIF".) With this power, the AIF may perform tasks for the Principal, such as pay bills, hire aides or negotiate with government agencies. If an older person does not have a Power of Attorney in place and then loses mental capacity, family members may need to apply to a Court to obtain a Guardianship. This can be a time-consuming and often expensive legal proceeding.

There are generally two kinds of Power of Attorney forms that are commonly used.

One is a **Springing Power of Attorney**. Here, the authority of the AIF does not begin until the Principal is no longer able to make decisions for him or herself -- when the Principal is determined to be incompetent. This might be an appropriate type of Power of Attorney for someone who is very reluctant to give another person the power to act on his behalf. However, it can be burdensome to activate because financial institutions and others relying on the form will want proof that the Principal is incompetent. Supplying that proof just when the AIF needs to act can be frustrating.

The other type of Power of Attorney is a **Durable Power of Attorney**. With this, the AIF has the power to act on the Principal's behalf when the Principal is competent, and the power continues should the Principal become incompetent. It may be useful to have the Power of Attorney activated even if the Principal is competent. For example, a parent may be competent, but would still appreciate their child helping pay bills, manage investments, contract with service providers and handle general tasks.

Here are some very important things to know about Power of Attorney

forms that you sometimes don't find out until it is too late:

1. Each state has its own Power of Attorney requirements. A Power of Attorney signed in one state should work in any state. However, since each state has its own requirements and often their own forms, it's a good idea to have POAs from each state where you spend a considerable amount of time.
2. Some financial institutions will balk at recognizing a General Power of Attorney and will ask that the Principal sign one that is specific to that institution. So it is a good idea to call the institutions where assets are held and ask them to send their own forms. Signing an institution's Power of Attorney form should be *in addition* to a General Power of Attorney, not instead of.
3. In many states, in order for the AIF to have the authority to make gifts, transfer assets, or set up trusts, the Power of Attorney form must specifically authorize those actions. This is particularly relevant in the Elder Law context where the transfer of assets may be an important part of the long-term care plan or as a means to do estate tax planning.
4. Choosing an AIF is no simple matter. Because of the authority and access that the AIF has, there are opportunities for abuse. Therefore, the person named as the AIF must be trustworthy and understand the seriousness of the role.

Having a good Power of Attorney form in place is a crucial part of any estate plan -- no matter how old you are. It is particularly relevant for older adults who may be more likely to need assistance. The best way to ensure that the form covers the bases and is executed properly is to consult with an attorney familiar with this area of law.

By Allison Busch
Contributor, www.care.com

<https://www.care.com/a/what-is-a-power-of-attorney-1009271430>



ROTATING TOPIC:

Fun Holiday Ideas for Seniors

Winter weather can make it hard to stay active and productive, but there are many fun and creative ways to stay mentally and physically active during the winter holidays. Here are a few fun activity ideas for this holiday season:

Attend a holiday crafts fair

A festive way to enjoy the holiday season is to go to a holiday crafts fair with friends and loved ones. Crafts fairs generally support local artisans and feature an array of gifts that can give you a big head start on your holiday shopping.

Make holiday arrangements

Everyone enjoys a beautiful wreath, holiday centerpiece, or floral arrangement. If you're a little rusty in your crafting skills or just want some expert advice, some florists, craft stores, and nurseries offer classes that demonstrate how to make holiday-specific arrangements.

Bake together

Christmas cookies, gingerbread houses, marzipan -- there's no shortage of holiday goodies that all ages can enjoy making and eating together. Team up with a friend, sharing recipes, and sampling your best work in the kitchen.

Go caroling

You don't have to be a great singer to get in on the fun of holiday caroling. Check your local newspaper in December for opportunities to participate in Christmas caroling, or call your local community center. If singing isn't your thing, take in the comforting sounds of others caroling at a Christmas concert or play.

Paint a holiday window mural

Christmas is a time to decorate your home and make it merry. Holiday murals transform your ordinary windows or glass doors into a winter wonderland. And you don't have to have special talent in painting to make something look nice -- just use a template of an image that you enjoy. You can purchase water-based acrylic glass paint at any arts and crafts store, and it will easily wash off your windows in January.

Continued on page 3

Winter Nutrition for Seniors

SENIOR HEALTH & LIFESTYLES



Even in the best of times, seniors are at risk of nutritional deficits due to many factors, including loss of appetite, problems chewing or swallowing, or a need to reduce fat and sugar with certain chronic conditions. Now with the winter months upon us, colds, flu and risk of injuries are at their highest. The nutritional needs of seniors are at an increased risk of suffering.

Tips for Better Elderly Nutrition

Increase Vegetables and Fruits.

The fiber, vitamins, and enzymes present in fresh plants is the best choice for all of us. Steaming the vegetables so that they are softer for those with dental issues is easy to do. For those who have no trouble chewing, cut up raw vegetables with a tasty dip as a snack or a small meal. If you cannot always have fresh, frozen is preferable to canned.

Go for the grain. When making decisions about which breads to choose, always go for one higher in whole grains. Brown rice and quinoa are great choices that are more nutritious than many other grains.

Stay Hydrated: It is important for all bodily processes to drink fluids throughout the day. And the more fruits and vegetables in our diets, the more naturally hydrated we are.

Make lunch the big meal of the day. Often by dinner, seniors are too tired to finish meals. Also, some seniors can have more digestive problems that interfere with a good night's sleep. We all actually need more calories earlier in the day.

Don't skip meals: Skipping a meal usually makes someone eat more at the following meal and can drop blood sugars causing dizziness. If not hungry, it is better to eat a little than to skip.

Eat small meals more often. It is better for most seniors to eat 5-6 small meals a day. This reduces the highs and lows of insulin levels, and encourages more calorie intake for those who have lost their appetites.

For Seniors Who Need to Gain Weight

Eat with your loved one. No one likes to eat alone. Often a lack of interest in eating is because a person is bored, lonely, or distracted with TV.

Don't rush: It is especially important for senior digestion to eat slowly. When eating with a loved one, be patient and don't rush them through a meal. Reheating food may

help them to finish a meal that has cooled.

Increase calories: For those who need extra calories or nutrients, consider these high calorie tips:

Make high calorie drinks like milk shakes. You can add bananas, peanut butter, wheat germ, etc. to a chocolate shake for a nutritious, high calorie drink. Eggnog also packs the calories.

Eat more high calorie, high protein, easy to chew foods such as avocado, hummus and nut butters. These provide excellent nutrition and are easy to eat as snacks.

For Dental, Chewing and Swallowing, or Motor Skill Feeding Problems

Make chunky stews that are soft and easy to eat.

Shredded and cutup meats: For those with chewing and swallowing problems, shredded meat and chicken with a nice sauce can really help. If a person needs food cut up, do it before it is served to increase the dignity of the meal.

Think "Finger Food": Many seniors have eyesight and motor issues that make eating with a fork, knife and spoon difficult. Things like chicken

nuggets, cheese sticks, cut up veggies with dip, etc. can help.

Smoothies can be considered a light meal for breakfast - and are great for adding vitamins and nutrients for people who have trouble chewing or eating.

Easy Ways to Improve Senior Nutrition

Soup is on! For you, it may be easier to cook a huge pot of stew or soup when you have the time, then divide it into smaller portions to freeze. This way you will always have something to offer on busy days.

Utilize Meals On Wheels. If you are having trouble coming up with the time or money for good meals for a homebound relative, see if you have a *Meals On Wheels* program in your area. These programs are different throughout the US, but generally serve people age 60+.

Invite! Family and friends often ask "what can I do to help?" Invite them to sit with your loved one and eat a meal. This is a simple thing most people, including children, can do to help—and offers nourishment in more ways than one!

Excerpted from: <http://www.sageminder.com/Caregiving/ElderlyNutrition.aspx>

Visit the website to see the full article

Fun Holiday Ideas for Seniors *(Continued from page 2)*

Start a game night

There's no better way to wile away wintery evenings than to challenge some partners to test their skills at your favorite games. Whether you prefer a board game, puzzle, bridge, or cards, inviting others over for a game night gives everyone a great opportunity to celebrate together.

Get kids involved

If you have grandchildren or other special young people in your life, the holidays present a magical chance for connection. Show kids how to cut paper snowflakes, string together cranberry and popcorn garlands for the Christmas tree, or make colorful paper chains as ornaments. You can also teach kids to bake Christmas cookies, sing favorite Christmas songs

together, or read holiday-themed books to them.

Volunteer with charities

Whether or not you volunteer regularly, the holiday season is an ideal time to start. Many charities coordinate special programs to help the needy during the winter. You'll find that by volunteering, you'll reap rewards that are at least as great as what you're giving.

These are just a few ideas to get you going. With a little imagination, this holiday season can be full of active fun, as you connect with others in your family and community. So get started and have fun!

*— By Caren Parnes
For The Senior's Choice*



SPOTLIGHT ON CAREGIVERS

Useful Apps for Caregivers

A 2014 report indicated that the health and fitness mobile app market is worth \$4 billion, and is expected to increase to \$27 billion by 2017, so it should come as no surprise that apps for caregivers are a fast growing market. Below are a few to consider (Google the names for more info).

Balance: For Alzheimer's Caregivers

Designed specifically for Alzheimer's caregivers, *Balance* is a great app for gathering information about the disease, as well as caregiver advice. It offers medication management and has a place to store doctor's notes.

- Alzheimer's disease reference and information
- Alzheimer's caregiving and advice
- Advanced medication management features, such as refill date, start date and dosage
- Uses the iPhone and iPad's native scheduling features, but adds categories relevant to caregivers
- "Doctor diary" for logging symptoms and taking notes that may be relevant at the next doctor's visit
- News about Alzheimer's

CareZone (free, IOS & Android)

CareZone is a great care-based app. You can keep all your loved one's pertinent information on the secured app and invite family and friends to view and participate in care.

- A care profile to log all pertinent information about the loved one who is receiving care

- Invite friends and families to join you and become "helpers"
- A shareable task-list to help you keep on track
- A shareable journal, which includes the ability to log observations and upload photos to keep loved ones up to date about the elder's well-being
- Medication tracking, "to keep a list of all meds, dosages, purpose, prescribing physician, pharmacy, RX number and more."
- File storage service so that you can share files with loved ones about elder's care
- "CareZone Broadcast" allows you to send a recorded voice message to up to 100 recipients

Caring Ties (free, web-only)

- Reminders, for example, to test blood sugar
- Note taking on loved one's well being
- Log medical information such as blood pressure
- Share information with loved ones, including setting different levels of access for different loved ones
- List of medications

Elder 411 (\$.99, iphone)

Unlike many of the apps mentioned above, *Elder 411* is an informational and self-help app rather than an organizational tool. It's based on the writings of experienced geriatric care manager and eldercare scholar, Marion Somers, Ph.D.

- Over 500 pieces of advice and information for caregivers
- Video lectures and audio tips for caregivers
- A fully searchable question and answer section, with thoughtful responses by Dr. Marion.
- Content can be shared with friends and relatives
- Add notes to content within the app

Lotsa Helping Hands (free, iphone & web)

Built around a calendar, this app is designed to coordinate the efforts of multiple caregivers to assure your loved one's needs are addressed.

- Post requests for support on a calendar
- Track information about helpers, including contact information and availability
- Schedule assistance from registered helpers
- Contains a "Helping Hands" message board for connection between loved ones

RX Personal Caregiver (\$9.99, iphone)

RX Personal Caregiver may have the best medication related features of all the caregiver apps, but that is all it is designed to do.

- Detailed medication management support, including tracking doses, dosage, refills and so on
- Missed dose instructions
- Guide to more than 15,000 drugs
- FDA alerts for recalled medications

—Compiled by Caren Parnes
For *The Senior's Choice*