

Services for Dementia Caregivers – Presentation Notes

Slide 2: What We Know

- Family caregivers are:
 - Unpaid individuals
 - Family caregivers are known as informal caregivers because they are not paid for their assistance. They also have not had formal training, unlike a nurse, physician, or other kind of human service professional.
 - Providing care for varying amounts of time
 - There really is no set time limit for being a caregiver.
 - Some caregivers may provide help for a week, others for years.
 - Providing care for family members or friends
- 34.2 million caregivers for individuals 50+
 - 26% providing care for someone with a memory problem
 - This includes all forms of dementia
- 59% have received some kind of supportive service
 - These services vary, but can include in-home services, home modifications, information, referrals, etc.
 - Still many have trouble locating services
 - This is especially true for rural areas. Services are few and far between.
 - **Discussion question: Has anyone tried to find some service? What was your experience?**

Slide 3: Who Provides Services?

- The Aging Network
 - You'll hear the phrase "The Aging Network" a lot when you talk about services for older adults.
 - Network of federal, state, and local resources who provide services for older adults and their families
 - Federal govt. provides funds and oversight for state
 - State funds and oversees local
 - Local resources are typically where you'll receive assistance.
 - Funds trickle down from the federal government through the states to local organizations.

Slide 4: Area Agencies on Aging

- 11 districts in Oklahoma
 - The "boots on the ground" organization that provides the most resources for care families.
 - These agencies receive funds from Oklahoma Aging Services to connect families to programs.

- Help connect caregivers to:
 - Local resources
 - Area Agencies on Aging typically keep a directory list of all organizations within their districts that provide services for older adults and their caregivers.
 - These can include local in-home care services.
 - State resources
 - OK Aging Services (DHS) has several programs that are available to all Oklahomans over 60 years of age. The Area Agencies on Aging can help connect care families to services such as:
 - Respite providers, transportation, congregate meal sites, nutrition programs, legal assistance, etc.
- Can call 2-1-1 or visit 211oklahoma.org

Other Resources

- Oklahoma Caregiver Coalition
 - Network of organizations across Oklahoma
 - Provides access to respite providers and other needs
 - While going through the coalition is free, some of the providers may not be.
 - okcares.org
- American Association of Retired Persons (AARP)
 - Provides information and can help connect caregivers with needed resources
 - Do not need to be a member to contact
 - aarp.org
- Alzheimer's Association
 - 24/7 hotline or visit website alz.org
 - Has information on all types of dementia
 - Can meet with a care consultant for one-on-one help
 - Support groups

How to Locate Resources

- The best way is through internet searches
 - Use general search terms
 - If you are unsure what you are looking for, it best to be general so that you can find something
 - Ex. "in-home care"
 - You can be specific if you are looking for something specific, such as a specific company or specific service
 - Ex. "Redbud Assisted Living"
 - May want to narrow your search to your county
 - If you do not have a specific county in mind, it would be good to be sure to narrow your search down to your county
 - Otherwise, you may find services that are not close to you.

- Ex. “Assisted Living Payne County OK”
- If you do not find a resource in your city or county, you can expand out to the next city/county.
- Before deciding on a service:
 - It is important that you do your homework before you decide on a service.
 - We live in a world full of scammers, so make sure that the company is someone you can trust.
 - Research them – see if there are reviews
 - Ask friends if they have used the service or know of them
 - Contact the company for a quote or discuss services
- **Discussion question: What are other things you can do?**

Be Careful!

- Scammers know that caregivers want the best for their loved one
 - Know caregiving decisions are emotional and sometimes time sensitive
 - Scammers get you by feeding off your emotional state. We never make good decisions when we are emotional, so try to stay calm.
- Tips to avoid scammers:
 - Do not make quick decisions – things can always wait at least a few hours
 - A decision may feel like life or death, but typically any decision we make can wait at least a few hours if not a day or so. Legitimate companies know this – while they may try to sell their company to you, they will not pressure you to make a decision immediately.
 - Use companies that are established
 - Use companies that you know or have heard of. Now, new companies are popping up all the time. We do not want to avoid them just because they’re new. However, we do want to be cautious.
 - Or ask friends/family for reliable companies
 - Someone typically either knows the person who owns a business or has used the company before.
 - Get written estimates from multiple companies - if possible
 - Do not give large payments up front
 - Never give large payments up front! A company may require a deposit, but most do not require payment until the services have been provided. So keep an eye out for that.
 - If it sounds too good to be true, it probably is!
 - We all want to save money! But if it sounds like a fantastic deal, it may not be legitimate. Be sure to do your homework and not get swept up in the “savings.”
- Remember that you reserve the right to change your mind!
 - You can say no!
 - Legitimate companies will not try to pressure you into making a decision. It is common practice for people to request a quote. If they will not provide a quote or the estimate is too high, it is okay for you to walk away

- And companies respect customers decisions to walk away. Legitimate companies want to make you as happy as possible so you do not tell others that they are not great.
- Only scammers try to pressure you to make a decision then.

If you suspect a scam,

- Contact the Attorney General's Consumer Protection Unit:
 - (405) 521-2029
 - consumerprotection@oag.ok.gov
 - If you make a claim, the Protection Unit will follow-up with you regarding their investigation.
- Do not be afraid to report a scam!
 - It hurts no one to be investigated!
 - If a company is legitimate, then an investigation will only serve to establish their company.
 - If you have been scammed, be sure to report it!
 - If you do not, someone else will be scammed.