

Healthcare Spotlight

Respite Care: Relief and Revitalization

by **NANCY WEBRE, MS, CEO of Evergreen In-Home Care Services,**

The challenge of care giving can be a difficult and demanding job that no one is equipped to handle alone. Even though many families take joy in providing care to their loved one so they are able to remain in the home, the physical, emotional and financial consequences can be overwhelming without support such as respite. Getting help is essential to maintain a caregiver's health and their resilience to care for their loved one.

What is respite care? Respite care provides a short term, temporary break to relieve the stress, restore energy and promote balance in the life of a caregiver. Respite care can provide a much needed break from the often exhausting challenges faced by a family caregiver. Using respite care before one becomes exhausted, and overwhelmed can be a life saver. Respite care shares the responsibility of caregiving and also provides support for the caregiver. Services may last from a few hours a day to overnight or even several days at a time.

How do I plan for respite care? Planning starts with assessing needs. Both your needs and your loved ones needs. Analyz-

ing daily activities and making a list of specific activities and times you need the most help is a good start. Identifying your loved ones abilities, preferences and requirements will also help you to find a good match for respite care options. What are your primary needs? Assistance with medications, eating, exercise or social activities?

Respite care services can be either in-home or out-of-home. In-home respite care can be provided by other family members, volunteers, and through paid caregivers (private or an agency). In-home respite care enables individuals to remain in their own environment. A major component to successful home respite is matching needs to services, selecting qualified providers, providing meaningful information and



Nancy Webre, MS CEO

evaluating the results. Out-of-home respite care is commonly provided in outside facilities, such as adult day care, residential respite programs, foster homes or in a care facility. When selecting either, it is essential to take time to conduct basic research to find the right situation for your peace of mind and your loved one's safety.

Conduct interviews of agencies and providers. Visit facilities. Observe care and interaction of other respite participants.

- Be specific about all tasks, skills and schedules involved.
- Request references and check them thoroughly.
- Ask how providers are screened. What is their training and skill level?

- How are care providers supervised?
- What is the cost of services and how is payment arranged?

Successful respite care benefits everyone involved in the caregiving process.

- Plan & schedule frequent breaks.
- Utilize a checklist for providers such as likes and dislikes, suggestions for daily routine and handling behaviors.

Make a back-up plan. Research alternative providers and resources in the community.

- Evaluate on-going. Be observant of your loved one before and after respite care was provided. Request respite caregiver reports after each session.

Expect change. Respite care is an on-going process that may require fine tuning. Anticipating and accepting change can keep you from becoming discouraged.

- Research local respite resources. Attend support groups where you can connect with others in similar situations. Talk with local professionals who can help you navigate their systems and provide support.

Questions about respite care options may be addressed to Nancy Webre, MS, CEO at Evergreen In-Home Care Services, 541-389-0006.

What is respite care? Respite care provides a short term, temporary break to relieve the stress, restore energy and promote balance in the life of a caregiver.



EVERGREEN
In-Home Care Services

Care for loved ones.
Comfort for all.

Respite Care: Relief and Revitalization

The challenge of caregiving can be a difficult and demanding job that no one is equipped to handle alone. Even though many families take joy in providing care to their loved one so they are able to remain in the home, the physical, emotional and financial consequences can be overwhelming without support such as respite. Getting help is essential to maintain a caregiver's health and their resilience to care for their loved one.

What is respite care? Respite care provides a short term, temporary break to relieve the stress, restore energy and promote balance in the life of a caregiver. Respite care can provide a much needed break from the often exhausting challenges faced by a family caregiver. Using respite care before one becomes exhausted, and overwhelmed can be a life saver. Respite care shares the responsibility of caregiving and also provides support for the caregiver. Services may last from a few hours a day to overnight or even several days at a time.

How do I plan for respite care? Planning starts with assessing needs. Both your needs and your loved ones needs. Analyzing daily activities and making a list of specific activities and times you need the most help is a good start. Identifying your loved ones abilities, preferences and requirements will also help you to find a good match for respite care options. What are your primary needs? Assistance with medications, eating, exercise, or social activities?

Respite care services can be either in-home or out-of-home. In-home respite care can be provided by other family members, volunteers, and through paid caregivers (private or an agency). In-home respite care enables individuals to remain in their own environment. A major component to successful home respite is matching needs to services, selecting qualified providers, providing meaningful information and evaluating the results. Out-of-home respite care is commonly provided in outside facilities, such as adult day care, residential respite programs, foster homes or in a care facility. When selecting either, it is essential to take time to conduct basic research to find the right situation for your peace of mind and your loved one's safety.

- Conduct interviews of agencies and providers. Visit facilities. Observe care and interaction of other respite participants.
- Be specific about all tasks, skills and schedules involved.
- Request references and check them thoroughly.
- Ask how providers are screened. What is their training and skill level?
- How are care providers supervised?
- What is the cost of services and how is payment arranged?

Successful respite care benefits everyone involved in the caregiving process.

- Plan & schedule frequent breaks.
- Utilize a checklist for providers such as likes and dislikes, suggestions for daily routine and handling behaviors.
- Make a back-up plan. Research alternative providers and resources in the community.
- Evaluate on-going. Be observant of your loved one before and after respite care was provided. Request respite caregiver reports after each session.
- Expect change. Respite care is an on-going process that may require fine tuning. Anticipating and accepting change can keep you from becoming discouraged.
- Research local respite resources. Attend support groups where you can connect with others in similar situations. Talk with local professionals who can help you navigate their systems and provide support.

Questions about respite care options may be addressed to Nancy Webre, MS, CEO at Evergreen In-Home Care Services, 541-389-0006.