

Northern Berkshire Family Caregiver Resource Guide

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This resource guide is brought to you by:



Northern Berkshire Community Coalition

and



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There are only four kinds of people in the world — those who have been caregivers, those who are currently caregivers, those who will be caregivers and those who will need caregivers.

—Rosalynn Carter

Caring for an ill loved one can be both one of the most challenging and rewarding experiences in life. The variety of conditions for which care can be provided by a spouse, family member, or friend can range from short-term, minor illnesses to chronic diseases from congenital conditions to terminal illness.

The caregiving role can come to one over time, such as when a loved one gradually ages and becomes feeble or suddenly, such as when a loved one gets an unexpected cancer diagnosis.

Similarly, the range of care provided also varies depending upon the situation. Many caregivers provide direct medical care to their loved ones, but those whose service includes shopping, cooking, household chores, transportation to medical appointments, bill paying and companionship are also caregivers. Caregivers may also find themselves in the role of advocating for a loved one with medical personnel.

If you find yourself caring for a loved one, you may feel isolated and lonely — maybe even invisible — but you are not alone. According to one survey, there are 65.7 million family caregivers in the United States today. One third of these are men.

As the U.S. population ages and hospitals treat more people on an out-patient basis, the number of family caregivers will only increase.

While it can be deeply satisfying at times, caregiving can also be very stressful. Caregivers need to take care of themselves, too, both physically and emotionally. You can't take care of someone else if you run yourself into the ground. Make sure you eat well and get as much sleep as you can. Take time for yourself. Attend to your spiritual needs. Seek out support.

When taking care of an ill loved one, your focus tends to be on the sick person and not on yourself. You may feel guilt because you don't feel you are helping enough; or you may even feel guilty because you are not the one who is sick. If you feel this way, be easy on yourself. You are striving to do your best, and you can't be everything for everyone.

When taking care of someone who is seriously or terminally ill, it's important to realize that emotions such as grief, guilt, anger and sadness are normal. Sadness and grief are related but also different. You may be feeling the loss of things you value greatly. This might be your loved one's health. Or perhaps the life you had before your loved one's illness. It's normal to grieve when a loved one is seriously ill, but if you are sad for a period of several weeks and it interferes with your life, you may be clinically depressed. If this is the case, consider seeking help.

In addition, you may find yourself getting angry at times, whether at yourself, others or the person for whom you are caring. This may be because your loved one is ill; it may be because of fear or stress or panic. Try to think about what is making you feel this way — knowing the cause might help. A helpful way to cope is to concentrate on things you can control, both for your loved one and for yourself.

Indeed, you'll find it is both beneficial and personally satisfying to find ways to give your loved one the most control over her or his life as possible.

This can include helping the ill person access the best medical information on which to base their care. If you attend medical appointments with your loved one, write down questions the patient and you have ahead of time. Take a pad and pencil or, if you are not a good notetaker, ask the doctor or other health professional if you can record the appointment.

Let the health professional know how home life is for both the patient and for the caregiver, including symptoms and/or difficulties that aren't apparent at the doctor's office. Increasing communication can help the patient, caregivers and medical personnel work together more effectively as a team.

Especially when the caregiver role has come upon someone suddenly, he or she may be unaware of local resources that can help. The following is a list of a variety of resources that may be of help to caregivers, including support groups.

Don't be afraid to ask for help — it may well be the best thing for your loved one, yourself and your family.

-Mark Rondeau

Adult Day Services/ Respite Care

Adult Day Health North @ The Brien Center

124 American Legion Drive
North Adams, MA 01247
(413) 664-4048
www.briencenter.org

A community-based 6 hour/day, M-F program that coordinates skilled health care, rehabilitation/recreation therapies, personal care, respite and supportive services for families and caregivers providing care for chronically ill loved ones, those with physical or cognitive impairments, the frail, the isolated elderly, the disabled and people with disabling conditions that do not require 24-hour a day care.

Eligibility: For adults 18 years or older with physical or mental disabilities.

Payment Options: Mass Health, Elder Services, long term care insurance, private arrangement

BFAIR

771 South Church St.
North Adams, MA 01247
(413) 664-9382
www.bfair.org

Day, vocational, residential, clinical and individual and Adult Family Care supports for children and adults, people with developmental disabilities and autism; case management and social/rec services for people with acquired brain injuries.

Eligibility: Referrals from DDS, MRC, DOE

Payment Options: State and school contracts; private pay, community referrals

Craneville Place of Dalton

265 Main St
Dalton, MA 01226
(413) 684-3212

Call for information.

Elder Services of Berkshire County Inc.

66 Wendell Ave.
Pittsfield, MA 01201
(413) 499-0524
esbc@esbci.org, www.esbci.org

Offers a wide variety of programs to assist elders to remain in their homes, including information and referral, home care, housing programs, ombudsman services, SHINE health insurance counseling.

Family Caregiver Support Program offered to all caregivers caring for someone over 60, or caregivers caring for someone under 60 with a diagnosis of Alzheimer's, a related dementia, or a disability. A caregiver support group is also offered at the Spitzer Center, open to all caregivers.

Eligibility: Call for more information

Payment Options: Call for information

Home Instead Senior Care

364 South Street
Pittsfield, MA 01201
(413) 442-0907
<http://www.homeinstead.com/369/>

Companionship, home helper, personal services, respite care, Alzheimer's care, short-term recovery.

Eligibility: Call for more information

Payment Options: Call for information

Springside Rehabilitation/Skilled Care Center

255 Lebanon Ave.
Pittsfield, MA 01201
Phone: (413) 499-2334
www.springsidema.com

Eligibility: Call for more information

Payment Options: Call for information

Sugar Hill at Home

66 West Street, Suite L1
Pittsfield, MA 01201
(413) 499-1777
www.sugarhillathome.com

Medication reminders/monitoring, grooming/dressing, bathing, toileting/incontinence care, light meal preparation, individualized activity companionship, ambulatory assistance, respite care, light housekeeping, transportation for medical appointments and shopping.

Eligibility: Call for more information

Payment Options: Call for information

United Cerebral Palsy of Berkshire County

535 Curran Highway
North Adams, MA 01247
(413) 664-9345

Social opportunities, respite, assistive technology and skills training for individuals with disabilities. Adult foster care, early intervention.

Eligibility: Adults and children with physical and developmental disabilities

Assisted Living

Melbourne Assisted Living

140 Melbourne Road
Pittsfield, MA 01201
(413) 499-1992

Traditional assisted living, Bridges memory care and respite. Services include dining, 24-hour support, housekeeping, transportation and diverse activities.

Payment Options: Private pay, limited GAFC

Sugar Hill

45 Main Street
Dalton, MA 01226
(413) 684-0100

An assisted and senior living facility offering traditional care services which include activities of daily living, medication monitoring, personal assistance, gourmet dining, and private living accommodations.

Safe Haven Program- Sugar Hill provides care for individuals with Alzheimer's Disease and related dementia in a residential setting. Staff includes nursing, activities and social services staff. The Safe Haven Program will assess and evaluate each individual and implement a plan of care to maintain the highest quality of life.

Payment Options: Call for information

Sweetwood

1611 Cold Spring Road
Williamstown, MA 01267
(413) 458-8371

Independent living community. Services include dining, housekeeping, transportation, local cultural activities, exercise gym, fitness pool, and computer lab. Health care services provided by registered nurse and certified nursing assistants.

Councils on Aging

All Councils on Aging (COA) are unique to their communities. It is strongly encouraged to call your local Council to see what services they can offer and/or recommend. Any one person can attend any COA, you do not have to rely solely on your community's Council.

Adams COA/Community Center

3 Hoosac Street
Adams, MA 01220
(413) 743-8333

Socials, health screening, SHINE councilors, free AARP Tax prep and filing, SNAP applications, BCAC fuel assistance program signups and renewals, referrals/info, meals, transportation for adults 60+, and more.

Cheshire COA/Senior Community Center

119 School St.
Cheshire, MA
(413) 743-1172

Health testing, socials, transportation.

Clarksburg COA/Senior Center

712 W. Cross Rd.
Clarksburg, MA 01247
(413) 663-8253

Fitness classes, health testing, socials, transportation.

Florida Council on Aging/ Senior Center

367 Mohawk Trail
Florida, MA 01247
(413) 662-2811

Education, support, no transportation.

North Adams Council on Aging/Mary Spitzer Senior Center

116 Ashland St.
North Adams, MA 01247
(413) 662-3125

Fitness classes, health testing, socials, transportation.

Savoy Council on Aging/ Senior Center

720 Main St.
Savoy, MA 01256
(413) 743-4290

Fitness classes, health testing, socials, transportation.

Williamstown COA/Harper Senior Center

118 Church St.
Williamstown, MA 01267
(413) 458-8250

Socials, meal programs, information, transportation.

Lanesboro Council on Aging

83 N. Main Street
Lanesboro, MA 01237
(413) 448-2682

Fitness classes, health testing, socials, transportation.

Education

American Cancer Society

59 Bobala Road
Holyoke, MA 01040
(413) 493-2100; 1-800-227-2345
www.cancer.org

Information and support for cancer patients and their families/friends, including 24/7 cancer info call center, always speak to a live person. Programs and services for cancer patients, including rides to treatment.

Eligibility: All are eligible

Payment Options: All services are free

NAMI BC National Alliance on Mental Illness, Berkshire County

33 East St., Rm. 417
Pittsfield, MA 01201
(413) 443-1666

namibc@namibc.org, www.namibc.org

Support, education and advocacy programs for all those whose lives are affected by mental illness. Resources for consumers, families, professionals and the general public.

Eligibility: All are eligible

Payment Options: All services/programs free

Northern Berkshire Community Coalition

61 Main Street, Suite 218
North Adams, MA 01247
(413) 663-7588
www.nbccoalition.org

We help connect our community members with services available.

Pediatric Palliative Care Program
@ VNA/Hospice of Northern Berkshire, Inc.

99 Hospital Ave., Suite 100
North Adams, MA 01247
(413) 664-4536
www.nbhealth.org

Support for families who wish to provide care at home for children with a variety of life-limiting illnesses.

Financial Support or Referrals

Ecu-Health Care

71 Hospital Ave.
North Adams, MA 01247
(413) 663-8711
www.ecuhealthcare.com

North Berkshire's primary health coverage access organization, helping residents of all age groups apply for all available health insurance programs, including MassHealth, Commonwealth Care, the Medical Security Plan for those receiving unemployment and all Medicare assistance programs, including Medicare Part-D, Prescription Advantage, and Medicare premium assistance. SHINE Counselors on staff helping Medicare beneficiaries understand benefits/insurance options.

Eligibility: All are eligible

Payment Options: Free

Services in the Home

Ad-lib Inc. Center for Independent Living

85 Main St., 4th floor,
N. Adams, MA
(413) 663-6200, (800) 232-7047

Services for people with disabilities: home health care, counseling, etc.

Amedisys Home Health Care,

7 North Street, Suite 300
Pittsfield, MA 01201
(413) 236-8500; (800) 370-3573
www.amedisys.com

Skilled nursing; home health aides. Physical, occupational and speech therapy. Medical social workers, specialized programs for wound care, diabetes, rehab services, cardiac care, COPD, and behavioral health.

Eligibility: All are eligible

Payment Options: Medicare, Medicaid, private pay, and most insurances

At Home TLC, Inc.

46 Stoneybrook Drive
Clarksburg, MA 01247
(413) 664-0746
athometlc@gmail.com

Certified nursing assistants, home health assistants, skilled nursing, transitional assistance, personal care, companionship, light housekeeping, transportation, nursing services & wound care

Eligibility: All are eligible

Payment Options: Private pay and assistance with insurance filings

BFAIR

771 South Church Street
North Adams, MA 01247
(413) 664-9382
www.bfair.org

Day, vocational, residential, clinical and individual and Adult Family Care supports for children and adults, people with developmental disabilities and autism; case management and social/rec services for people with acquired brain injuries.

Eligibility: Referrals from DDS, MRC and DOE

Payment Options: State and school contracts; private pay, community referrals

Compassionate Care Home Health

1000 Massachusetts Ave.
North Adams, MA 01247
413-664-6611
www.compassionatecarehomehealth.org

Home care services ranging from assistant services, home health aides, certified nursing assistants and nursing care

Eligibility: All are eligible

Payment Options: Accepts private pay, long term care insurance, veterans benefits

Elder Services of Berkshire County Inc.

66 Wendell Ave.
Pittsfield, MA 01201
(413) 499-0524
esbc@esbci.org
www.ebsci.org

Offers a wide variety of programs to assist elders to remain in their homes. Including: Information and referral, home care, housing programs, ombudsman services, SHINE health insurance counseling.

Family Caregiver Support Program offered to all caregivers caring for someone over 60, or caregivers caring for someone under 60 with a diagnosis of Alzheimer's, a related dementia, or a disability. A caregiver support group is also offered at the Spitzer Center, open to all caregivers.

Eligibility: Call for more information

Payment Options: Call for information

Home Instead Senior Care

364 South Street Pittsfield, MA 01201
(413) 442-0907
<http://www.homeinstead.com/369/>

Companionship, home helper, personal services, respite care, Alzheimer's care, short-term recovery.

Hospice Services of Western Mass.

66 West St., Suite L2
Pittsfield, MA 01201
Dennis C. Castella
(413) 442-0045
dcastella@hospiceofwesternma.com

A six-week grief support group is offered several times throughout the year. It is free and open to the public, but those who wish to take part need to pre-register. They can call the office to find out when and where the groups are being held.

Eligibility: All are eligible

Payment Options: Free

Interim HealthCare of the Berkshires

31A Church Street
Lenox, MA 01240
(413) 551-7116
Fax: (413) 551-7128
www.interimhealthcare.com/neny

Companionship, homemaking, personal care and nursing services throughout Berkshire County. Services include light housekeeping, meal preparation, transportation, errands, personal care, pet care and much more.

Eligibility: All are eligible

Payment Options: Private Pay, most Long Term Care Insurance policies and Veterans Benefits. Call for more information

Pediatric Palliative Care Program @ VNA/Hospice of Northern Berkshire, Inc.

99 Hospital Ave., Suite 100
North Adams, MA 01247
(413) 664-4536
www.nbhealth.org

Support for families who wish to provide care at home for children with a variety of life-limiting illnesses.

Sugar Hill at Home

66 West Street, Suite L1
Pittsfield, MA 01201
(413) 499-1777
<http://www.sugarhillathome.com>

Medication reminders and monitoring, grooming and dressing, bathing, toileting and incontinence care, light meal preparation, individualized activity companionship, ambulatory assistance, respite care, light housekeeping, transportation for medical appointments and shopping.

United Cerebral Palsy Association of Berkshire County

534 Curran Highway
North Adams, MA 01247
(413) 664-9345

Social opportunities, respite, assistive technology and skills training for individuals with disabilities. Adult foster care, early intervention.

Eligibility: Adults and children with physical and developmental disabilities

VNA & Hospice of Northern Berkshire

99 Hospital Ave., Suite 100
North Adams, MA 01247
(413) 664-4536
www.nbhealth.org

Provides skilled home health care, hospice, and paternal/child health services. This includes nursing, physical therapy, speech and language therapy, occupational therapy, medical social services, home health aides, and volunteers.

Eligibility: All are eligible

Payment Options: Medicare, Mass Health and most private insurances. Sliding fees are available.

Support Groups

Ad-lib Inc. Center for Independent Living

85 Main St., 4th floor,
N. Adams, MA 01247
(413) 663-6200; (800) 232-7047

Services for people with disabilities: home health care, counseling, etc.

Elder Services of Berkshire County Inc.

66 Wendell Ave.
Pittsfield, MA 01201
(413) 499-0524
esbc@esbci.org; www.ebsci.org

Offers a wide variety of programs to assist elders to remain in their homes. Including: Information and referral, home care, housing programs, ombudsman services, SHINE health insurance counseling.

Family Caregiver Support Program offered to all caregivers caring for someone over 60, or caregivers caring for someone under 60 with a diagnosis of Alzheimer's, a related dementia, or a disability. A caregiver support group is also offered at the Spitzer Center, open to all caregivers.

Eligibility: Call for more information

Payment Options: Call for information

Grandparents Raising Grandchildren Support Group

Mary Spitzer Senior Center
116 Ashland Street
North Adams, MA 01247
(413) 236-1924
www.berkshirechildren.org

Support group for grandparents raising grandchildren. Call for schedule, child care is provided.

Eligibility: All are eligible

Payment Options: Free

Hospice Services of Western Mass.

66 West St., Suite L2
Pittsfield, MA 01201
(413) 442-0045
dcastella@hospiceofwesternma.com

A six-week grief support group is offered several times throughout the year. It is free and open to the public, but those who wish to take part need to pre-register. They can call the office to find out when and where the groups are being held.

Eligibility: All are eligible

Payment Options: Free

NAMI BC National Alliance on Mental Illness, Berkshire County

33 East St., Rm. 417
Pittsfield, MA 01201
(413) 443-1666
namibc@namibc.org
www.namibc.org

Support, education and advocacy programs for all those whose lives are affected by mental illness. Resources for consumers, families, professionals and the general public.

Eligibility: All are eligible

Payment Options: All services and programs are free

VNA & Hospice of Northern Berkshire

99 Hospital Ave., Suite 100
North Adams, MA 01247
(413) 664-4536
www.nbhealth.org

Provides skilled home health care, hospice, and paternal/child health services. This includes nursing, physical therapy, speech and language therapy, occupational therapy, medical social services, home health aides, and volunteers. An Alzheimer's Information and Support Group meets on the second Tuesday of each month from 7-9 p.m. The support group is free and open to all families, friends, and caregivers of persons with Alzheimer's disease. Bereavement Support Groups are offered on a monthly basis and are free and open to anyone who has experienced a loss. Call for more information on dates and times.

Eligibility: All are eligible

Payment Options: Medicare, Mass Health and most private insurances. Sliding fees are available.

National Web Sites

- <http://www.caregiver.com>
Website of Today's Caregiver magazine
- <http://www.access2wellness.com>
Designed to assist people with limited or no health insurance get the help they need to lead healthier lives.
- <http://www.Carepages.com>
CarePages websites are free patient blogs that connect friends/family during a health challenge.
- <http://www.familycaregiving101.org>
National Family Caregivers Association and the National Alliance for Caregiving.
- <http://www.nextstepincare.org>
Provides easy-to-use guides to help family caregivers and health care providers work closely together to plan and implement safe and smooth transitions for chronically or seriously ill patients.
- <http://www.cancer.gov/cancertopics/coping/familyfriends>
National Cancer Institute: Coping with cancer for caregivers, family and friends.
- <http://www.alz.org>
The Alzheimer's Association
- <http://www.medicare.gov>
Compare nursing homes.
- <http://www.maseniorcare.org>
Research services in your community.
- <http://www.800ageinfo.com>
Research care, search for services, assess your needs.

Books About Caregiving

- "A Family Caregiver Speaks Up: 'It Doesn't Have To Be This Hard'" by Suzanne Mintz (Capital Books, \$15).
- "Share the Care" by Cappy Capossela and Sheila Warnock (Fireside, \$15). A how-to book on building a caregiving team of friends, family, neighbors and co-workers.
- "They're Your Parents, Too!" by Francine Russo. (Bantam, \$26). Information for adult children taking care of aging parents.
- "American Medical Association Guide to Home Caregiving" American Medical Association. Paperback, \$15.95.
- "Chicken Soup for the Soul: Family Caregivers: 101 Stories of Love, Sacrifice, and Bonding." Joan Lunden and Amy Newmark (Simon and Schuster, \$14.95)
- "Caregiver's Handbook: A Complete Guide to Home Health Care" Visiting Nurse Association, \$19.50.
- "The 36-Hour Day: A Family Guide to Caring for People Who Have Alzheimer Disease, Related Dementias, and Memory Loss" by Nancy L. Mace, M.A. and Peter V. Rabins, M.D., M.P.H. (Johns Hopkins University Press)

Helpful Numbers

For Fire, Police or Ambulance from anywhere in Massachusetts.....Dial 911
Mass 211 - 24/7 Emergency, Community Information, Referral ServicesDial 211
Massachusetts State Police..... (413) 743-4700
National Suicide Prevention Lifeline (800) 273-8255
Poison Control Center (800) 222-1222
Disabilities Information Center (800) 712-6600
Executive Office of Elder Affairs.....(800) AGE-INFO
Massachusetts Senior Care Association (800) CARE-FOR



Northern Berkshire Community Coalition

61 Main Street, Suite 218 • North Adams, MA 01247

(413) 663-7588 • www.nbccoalition.org

