

For more information, please contact us or visit our website at:

SeniorsNL

Mailing address: 243 Topsail Road, Suite 110
St. John's, NL A1E 0G5

Our physical location is in Babb Manor (Saint Luke's Home complex), 24 Road Deluxe, St. John's
709-737-2333 or toll free 1-800-563-5599

email: info@seniorsnl.ca

www.seniorsnl.ca

Facebook and Twitter: SeniorsNL

***When you need us,
we are here to help.***



Petro-Canada
CareMakers
Foundation™

Proud Supporter of this
This Caregiver Information Series

SeniorsNL

RESOURCES • INFORMATION • CONNECTION

Caregiver Information Series

Caregiving with Family Members

2023

Agreeing to respect each other's feelings, ideas and contributions.

Caregiving with other family members can be a positive family experience, especially when you are all aware of and manage expectations and issues that arise. However, far too often, things do not go as you might hope and if not dealt with right away, it can cause a tremendous amount of stress, resentment and broken relationships.

Manage expectations. Be Honest. Write everything down. Involve everyone, including the person that needs care.

In some cases, caregiving falls on one family member that lives nearest to the person being cared for. It is important to work with everyone on how best to keep communication open, to share all information and share the responsibilities, if that is possible. This can start with taking about what needs to be done, who can help, what they can do, what they cannot do. Topics to discuss could be time, finances, care planning, and research. **Write everything down and copy everyone. Agree to listen and not be judgemental.**

Open and honest communication keeps everyone on the same page which will reduce any misunderstandings and feeling of being out of the loop.

Regular meetings, for example, would keep everyone up to date and allow time to discuss any changes in

National Institute on Aging

<https://www.nia.nih.gov/health/how-share-caregiving-responsibilities-family-members>

SeniorsNL has a family and Friend Section with other resources not listed here

www.seniorsnl.ca

Support Groups

Are you on FaceBook? If so, just search caregiver support groups and there are so many to choose from.

Other Resources for other online groups:

CHATS-online

<https://chats.on.ca/support-for-caregivers/>

Family Caregiver Alliance

<https://www.caregiver.org/connecting-caregivers/support-groups/>

Over 8 million Canadians devote their lives to loved ones. For them, caring is more than an act of kindness, it's an everyday commitment. We believe that caregivers need support too, and we are focusing our efforts on this important cause.



LEARN MORE: Visit Caremakers.ca

Great Resources to help you and your family work together. Sign up for their newsletters that will have lots of tips and other resources you can use.

Caremakers

They have a section for learn, for free. Just go to their resource page <https://www.caremakers.ca/>

Carers Canada <https://www.carerscanada.ca/>

Canadian Centre for Caregiver Excellence
<https://canadiancaregiving.org/>

Caregivers Nova Scotia

They also have links to virtual support groups
<https://caregiversns.org/>

Family Caregivers BC

<https://www.familycaregiversbc.ca/>

Daily Caring <https://dailycaring.com/>

Hapy Healthy Caregiver

<https://happyhealthycaregiver.com/>

Caregiver Solutions:

<https://caregiversolutions.ca/caregiving/family-caregiving-in-canada/>

the level of care each sibling might provide. If some family members live elsewhere, FaceTime or online meetings are good ways to communicate. **Involve everyone.**

Some topics that should be talked about include:

- Who is better at finding information?
- Who is more comfortable talking with and understanding medical professionals?
- Who can drive for appointments, getting groceries, etc.
- Who is better at numbers (paying bills, reviewing bank statements, etc.)?
- How often are you willing to travel to provide care if you live in another city or province?
- Schedule of care

Dealing with issues:

Even with the closest relationships among brothers and sisters, issues can happen throughout the caregiving process. While healthy relationships may talk through issues, poor relationships may break. That is why it is important to keep the lines of communication open so everyone is on the same page. Make sure everyone has the same information about the older adult's condition and take time to fully share information on issues such as:

- doctor's notes

- diagnosis
- treatments, including medications
- doctor/specialists' appointments and what happened during these appointments
- test results
- home care

It is also best to do this in a calm, nonjudgmental way.

Denial is a powerful emotion. Acknowledge it.

Often, when a family member is unwell or expected to be in need of care for a long time, loved ones can refuse to accept the thought of losing them enter into a state of denial about how serious an illness is. Denial is powerful and can be a coping tool for some people, and it can put family members on different footings. Being a support for one another and acknowledging this emotion will help everyone. Respecting this emotion is important. In time, the person or persons will accept the reality.

Handling advice and criticism.

If communication is strong with family members, unwanted advice and criticism is unlikely to happen. However, there may be times when misunderstandings can lead to such which will not make the job any easier.

For example, family members may not have not have kept up with the information you are sharing. They may not have the complete picture of what is going on if they have not been in your communication loop.

Criticism for things done or not done really are not meant as a personal criticism. It is often a person's reaction to things not understood or they are feeling not heard. One way to handle criticism is for you to acknowledge their concern and then ask them for any advice/suggestions they might have.

People are not mind readers.

If you are the primary caregiver, you need to communicate exactly what is needed and when. **The easiest way to gain help is to ask for it.** This includes service providers as well as family.

When you and your family work together, stay informed and communicate everything, good or bad, it makes for a much better caregiving experience for all.