



Ask Medicare: Where Caregivers Can Turn with Medicare Questions

If you're one of the 66 million Americans who care for an aging, disabled or seriously-ill family member or friend, you're probably doing everything from running errands, to coordinating doctors' appointments, to helping find long-term care.

Fortunately, caregivers have resources they can turn to for help and support. And they can find out about them through [Ask Medicare](#), a service developed by the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS). [Ask Medicare](#) offers tips online at www.medicare.gov/caregivers to help caregivers address numerous challenges, including:

- Enrolling in Medicare and comparing prescription drug plans.
- Coping with chronic illnesses and understanding the ways Medicare can support care and treatment.
- Finding the best nursing home or assisted living arrangement.
- Managing health care transitions, such as when someone is discharged from the hospital.
- Finding local organizations that can provide additional support for caregivers and their loved ones.

"Caregivers are part of a nationwide community of people who sacrifice a lot for others," says Susie Butler, director of Medicare's Division of Provider Affairs. "We want caregivers to know they're not alone."

The [Ask Medicare](#) site highlights the challenges caregivers face each day; offers a free quarterly e-newsletter with Medicare program updates, and links to state and local organizations that help with meals, transportation, and caregiver training.

"[Ask Medicare](#) is an online one-stop shop where caregivers can get all the support they need," says Ms. Butler, "It has interactive tools that help caregivers to compare doctors, hospitals and nursing homes, find local home health agencies and dialysis facilities, and learn which services are covered by Medicare."

Caregivers for older Americans can also link to additional resources through CMS's sister agency, the [Administration on Aging](#) (AoA). On the AoA site they'll find the Eldercare Locator, which can point them to services in their own communities as well as national organizations, such as the [American Association of Retired Persons \(AARP\)](#), the [Alzheimer's Association](#), and the [Family Caregiver Alliance](#). [Ask Medicare](#) has links to their caregiving resources, too.

To find out more about [Ask Medicare](#) visit www.medicare.gov/caregivers.