

## Tip Sheet # 26



## Finding Care for the Stroke Survivor While I am Away

You as the caregiver will need to be away from home for different reasons. You may need to be at work. You will need to run errands and do some of the things you like to do. You may even need a short vacation. **Give yourself permission to get away from the survivor from time to time.**

### What about finding care when I am away?

Make a list of the types of help the stroke survivor needs.

- ☐ Needs help with medications
- ☐ Needs help walking or moving about
- ☐ Needs help with getting to the bathroom
- ☐ Needs help with personal care (e.g., bathing, grooming)
- ☐ Needs help with household tasks (e.g., cleaning, sweeping, laundry)
- ☐ Needs help with preparing meals, or needs meals delivered
- ☐ Needs help getting to appointments
- ☐ Needs help with finances and bills
- ☐ Needs help communicating with others
- ☐ Needs someone to visit or socialize with
- ☐ Other \_\_\_\_\_
- ☐ Other \_\_\_\_\_
- ☐ Other \_\_\_\_\_

Going through this list will help you to figure out who can help the survivor while you are away. This list will also help you to prepare instructions for whoever stays with the survivor while you are away. **Prepare or teach the person who will stay with the survivor how to provide care.** Friends and family will be more likely to help if they feel like they are prepared. Going through this list will also let a hired person know what is expected while you are gone.

**Be sure to give the person who stays with the survivor emergency numbers.** You also want to tell them about the warning signs of stroke (***Tip Sheet #1 The Warning Signs of Stroke***).

| Who to contact in an emergency                       | Telephone |
|------------------------------------------------------|-----------|
| If any warning signs of stroke, or another emergency | 911       |
| Doctor                                               |           |
| Nurse                                                |           |
| Therapist                                            |           |
| Caregiver                                            |           |
| Other family member                                  |           |
| Friend or neighbor                                   |           |
| Other                                                |           |

- For tips on how to ask friends and family for help, see **Tip Sheet #29 Finding the best way to ask family and friends for help.**
- For tips on where to find outside help, see **Tip Sheet #8 Where to find resources.** Some important resources on this tip sheet include:
  - Eldercare locator: 1-800-677-1116
  - CICOA: The Access Network: 1-317-254-5465
  - Council on Aging (COA) for Southwest Ohio (800) 252-0155
- There is help available on a regular basis for a cost.
  - Companion helpers can come to your home. They usually can't give medicine, but they can fix a meal, do light laundry or housekeeping, help with grooming and dressing, or provide recreational activities. This is called non-medical homecare.
  - A nursing assistant who stood out to you at the rehabilitation center may be willing to work during off hours.





- Some families have found that adult day care settings can provide social activities and new friends. Day care programs may surprise you. One daughter caregiver said this:

*“I wasn’t going to have my mother in day care, but we went over to see it and we went through the lunchroom and there were a bunch of little old ladies just like her... so, we started out 3 days there and now she is up to 5 days, and she gets PT/OT there.”*

You won’t know how well the survivor will like day care or respite care programs unless you visit them to see what they are like. It worked well for this daughter caregiver!

- For those times when you have to be out of town, respite care may be available.
  - Call local assisted living homes or nursing care centers for short-term stays.

Fill out the table on the next page to explore options in finding care for the survivor. **Whoever you hire to take care of the survivor, be sure to check references on them.**

- You may want to do a background check or criminal history. You can ask the police department how this can be done.
- Ask for references. Call and check them out. Finding someone by word of mouth is sometimes better than going with a stranger. Ask other caregivers and survivors whom they have used. **See Tip Sheet #8 Where to find resources** for stroke support groups where you can find other caregivers and survivors to ask.
- Secure all valuables while you are gone. Do not leave expensive jewelry or belongings out where they may be stolen.

- Pay outside help with a check. That way, you can track payment and will always have your returned check or bank statement as a receipt.

| <b>Possible care options while away</b>                                                                                       | <b>Name and phone</b> |
|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------|
| Family members who can help                                                                                                   | Name:<br>Phone:       |
| Close friends or neighbors                                                                                                    | Name:<br>Phone:       |
| Companion helpers (check with home care agencies in the yellow pages. Senior citizen organizations in your area can help too) | Name:<br>Phone:       |
| Nursing assistants                                                                                                            | Name:<br>Phone:       |
| Adult day care centers (check the yellow pages, or ask home care agencies or a social worker)                                 | Name:<br>Phone:       |
| Respite care programs (Check yellow pages for local nursing homes or assisted living facilities)                              | Name:<br>Phone:       |

### **When do I need to contact a professional about being away?**

- Home healthcare companies will want information from the doctor.
- Adult day care or assisted living homes may also have forms that a doctor needs to fill out. They will want information on medical history, allergies, TB skin testing, chest x-rays, emergency information, among other things.

## Where do I find more information about finding care for my stroke survivor?

- Check **Tip Sheet #8 Where to find Resources** for a number of places that you can call or visit on the internet to find respite care while you are away.



### If you live in the Southwestern Ohio area:

- Council on Aging of Southwestern Ohio. **National Toll Free: (800) 252-0155. Website: <http://www.help4seniors.org/>.**
- Serves Butler, Clermont, Clinton, Hamilton and Warren counties in Southwest Ohio. Includes Cincinnati, OH.

### If you live in the Northern Kentucky area:

- Northern Kentucky Area Development District (NKADD), an aging disability and resource center. **Main office phone: (859) 283-1885. Website: <http://www.nkadd.org/adrc>.**
- NKADD services Boone, Campbell, Carroll, Gallatin, Grant, Kenton, Owen, and Pendleton counties.

### If you live in the Southeastern Indiana area:

- Lifetime Aging and Disability Resource Center. **Helpline connection: 877-234-3641. Website: <https://www.lifetime-resources.org/>.**
- Lifetime serves Ripley, Jefferson, Dearborn, Ohio, Switzerland, and Decatur counties in Southeastern Indiana.

### If you live in the Central Indiana area:

- CICOA: Aging and In-Home Solutions. **National Toll Free: (800) 489-9550. Website: <http://www.cicoa.org/>.**
- CICOA serves Boone, Hamilton, Hancock, Hendricks, Johnson, Marion, Morgan and Shelby Counties in Central Indiana. Includes Indianapolis, IN.

### If you live elsewhere:

- Eldercare Locator. **Phone: (800) 677-1116. Website: <https://eldercare.acl.gov>.**