

Family caregiving and financial planning:

Sources of external support

It can be tough when you feel unequipped to support a caregiving client yourself, but there are always other professionals with more specialized knowledge who can step in. Here are six sources of support that you should know and how to locate them in your area.

1. Local Aging Services or Senior Centers

Many local communities have aging services or senior centers that offer support and resources for caregivers of elderly individuals. These centers may provide information on support groups, respite care, educational programs, and other local professionals who may be able to help.

2. Counselors or Therapists

Mental health professionals, such as counselors or therapists, can offer emotional support and coping strategies for caregivers dealing with stress, anxiety, or depression related to their caregiving responsibilities. Local mental health clinics, community health centers, or online directories for therapists in your area can help locate these professionals.

3. Caregiver Support Groups

Support groups provide a platform for caregivers to share experiences, advice, and emotional support. Facilitated by professionals or experienced caregivers, these groups offer a sense of community and understanding. The groups may take place online or in-person. Local hospitals, community centers, or online platforms like Meetup or community forums may have information about caregiver support groups.

4. Home Health Aides or Respite Care Providers

Home health aides can offer temporary relief to caregivers by providing assistance with daily tasks and caregiving responsibilities. This allows caregivers to take a break and attend to their own needs.

5. Hospice Services

Hospice organizations specialize in providing care and support for individuals with life-limiting illnesses and their families. They often offer counseling, respite care, and bereavement support for caregivers. Ask your healthcare provider for information on local hospice services or search online for hospice organizations in your community.

6. Geriatric Care Managers

Geriatric care managers are professionals who specialize in assisting older adults and their families in managing the challenges of aging. They assess care needs, develop care plans, coordinate services, and provide emotional support to both seniors and their caregivers. You can find geriatric care managers through local senior centers, healthcare providers, or organizations specializing in elder care. Online directories and referrals from friends, family, or healthcare professionals are also valuable resources.

How can I find these resources in my community?

- See resource #1! Get familiar with your local council on aging, senior center, department of human services, etc. These service providers will be able to provide guidance on what resources are available to you and your clients.
- Online resources such as the U.S. Administration for Community Living's Eldercare Locator (<https://eldercare.acl.gov/>)