

# THE HOME CARE SOLUTION: *an Alternative* TO NURSING HOME CARE

*For more free resources for family caregivers, contact your local Home Instead Senior Care office.*

**HomeInstead.ie | 1890 930 847**



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# The Home Care Solution: An Introduction

Just because an older person is having more problems at home does not mean that it's time to recommend a move to a nursing home. Such a circumstance could, however, signal the need for more help at home.

The first step in determining if care is necessary is to take your ageing loved one's needs and desires into account. Sometimes these are difficult conversations to have with a parent who is convinced that he or she does not need help. The best argument for a family caregiver may be to acknowledge their desire to stay at home:

*“You know, Mum, I want you to stay at home, too, however that might be more difficult if you fall or get sick. A little extra help could keep you safe and independent at home for a longer time.”*

Home care might be ideal for an older parent who is recovering from an illness or surgery, such as a knee replacement, and needs help around the home. The need for assistance can be just as much emotional as physical. An older person who loses a spouse can become depressed and lonely to the point his or her own health suffers. Or a widower's increasing forgetfulness can put him at risk of forgetting to pay the bills, or worse, to take his medications.

## Where to Begin to Find Home Care Services

Talk to your local Home Instead Senior Care office to discuss your senior care needs and avail of a range of information and resources regarding ageing in Ireland. A trusted home care professional will also be able to explain the range of services provided, what you or your family require and the costs entailed.

You may also wish to discuss your needs with your family, a health care professional such as a GP, public health nurse or hospital discharge planner. The internet is also a valuable resource with a host of information on care options.



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**Home  
Instead**  
SENIOR CARE®  
*To us, it's personal.*

# What is Home Care?

While the definition is simple, the services that encompass professional home care are broad and varied. Simply put, home care is supportive care provided in an individual's home by professional CAREGivers.

The most common services that CAREGivers typically provide includes assistance with tasks such as meal preparation, light housekeeping, medication reminders, errands and shopping. These are designed to help an older person live a happy, healthy and independent life at home for longer than otherwise possible.

## When More Help is Needed

Family caregivers will often see signs that could signal that an older loved one needs more help or companionship at home than they are able to provide. These signs will trigger a call to Home Instead Senior Care.

- 1.) **Household bills piling up.** Older people can feel overwhelmed by the simple task of opening and responding to daily post, as well as balancing their spend.
- 2.) **Reluctance to leave the house.** Rather than ask for help, older people who are having trouble with functions such as walking, remembering and hearing will pull away from their community and isolate themselves.
- 3.) **Losing interest in meals.** Older people who suddenly find themselves alone, perhaps after the death of a spouse, can be easily discouraged by such tasks as cooking and tend not to eat properly.
- 4.) **Declining personal hygiene.** Changes in appearance, such as unkempt hair and body odour, failing to change clothes for days on end or clothes inappropriate for the weather, are among the most obvious signs that a loved one needs assistance.
- 5.) **Declining driving skills.** Look for evidence of parking or speeding tickets, fender-benders, dents and scratches on the car.
- 6.) **Scorched pots and pans.** Cookware left forgotten on top of an open flame may be a sign of short-term memory loss or even Alzheimer's disease.
- 7.) **Signs of depression.** Feelings of hopelessness and despair; listlessness, fewer visits with friends and family, a change of sleeping patterns and lack of interest in the usual hobbies and activities are indicators of depression.
- 8.) **Missed doctors' appointments and social engagements.** These can be signs of depression or forgetfulness. But they can also be the result of no longer having a driver's license and not knowing how to get alternative transportation.
- 9.) **Messy house.** Changes in housekeeping may come about because the individual is physically tired. Changes could also result from depression.
- 10.) **Losing track of medications.** Older people often take multiple prescriptions for various health conditions. Keeping track without reminders and assistance can be confusing.

# The Companionship Component

The companionship component of a CAREGiver's job can be just as vital as the physical assistance that is provided. People of all ages need conversation and one-on-one contact to keep their minds alert. Older people will thrive having someone to participate in their favourite activities such as gardening, baking, or whatever the activity may be.

Many older people need help to get their day started with assistance showering, preparing breakfast and taking their medications. Help before bedtime can be an important safety net for older people who often are more apprehensive at nighttime. A reputable home care organisation such as Home Instead Senior Care will provide professional CAREGivers that can meet all of these needs.

## Companionship Services

Companionship services are those that stimulate, encourage, and assist an individual. Primary responsibilities include:

- Providing companionship and conversation
- Providing stabilisation and assistance with walking
- Preparing meals and cleaning up meal-related items
- Providing medication and appointment reminders

Other services generally involve light housekeeping, errands or incidental transportation. Primary responsibilities include:

- Performing light housekeeping tasks such as dusting, vacuuming, making beds, changing linen, cleaning bathrooms and kitchens, etc.
- Laundry, washing and ironing
- Running errands
- Accompanying clients to appointments



# Dementia Care

Home care is most often the first choice for families caring for a parent with dementia as they prefer to keep their parents at home. Home Instead Senior Care enables people living with dementia to remain at home for as long as possible, providing them with that sense of familiarity that is crucial to providing expert dementia care. Home care offers less disruption than if they were being cared for in a care facility or nursing home. It also helps families eliminate worry, reduce stress and re-establish a degree of personal freedom which makes home care an attractive option for families caring for loved ones with dementia.

Interestingly, a report published in the UK reveals people with dementia stay longer in hospital than other patients and leave in a worse condition. As a result the UK Alzheimer's Society is urging hospitals to discharge people with dementia in hospital a week earlier. The society also conducted a survey revealing half of all carers believed that a period in hospital had "a significant negative effect" on the health of a loved one suffering from dementia, and, additionally, worsened their dementia. If you are caring for a loved one living with Alzheimer's disease or other dementia, why not register for a **FREE** Dementia Care Education Workshop. To learn more about home care and how it can help your family contact your local Home Instead Senior Care office.

## Professional Dementia CAREGivers

Professional CAREGivers are trained to:

- Create social interaction
- Maintain a safe environment
- Manage changing behaviours
- Provide meaningful activities
- Provide nutritious meals
- Supervise daily activities

Professional CAREGivers can also provide assistance with enhancing and restoring the simple pleasures of life, such as a walk in the park, a ride in the car to get ice cream or spending time in the garden. These elder care activities are proven to maximise abilities and independence.

The best place for a person with memory loss is in familiar surroundings, and almost 2,000 families have trusted Home Instead Senior Care to provide one-on-one home care for loved ones with Alzheimer's disease and related dementias.

# Home Care Myth Busters

**Despite increasing health problems, Dad wants to stay at home. He won't budge. One mention of the local nursing home and the conversation ends. But his home of 45 years is just too big for him to clean and you can't always get there to help when he needs it. Or perhaps it's your Mother who just isn't interested in cooking anymore and even getting out of the house, for that matter. Talk of hiring extra help, though, falls on deaf ears.**

The simple fact is that most older people want to stay at home but some seniors seem leery of home care. Perhaps you are too. That may be because there are a few misconceptions that often surround care for the elderly at home. Check them out to learn if you know all you should about home care.

## Myth 1: Home care is only for the very ill

Home Instead Senior Care provides non-medical home care such as personal care, medication reminders and companionship. The support provided usually revolves around the basic activities of daily living such as eating, dressing and bathing. The home care service provided by Home Instead Senior Care is tailored to meet the needs of your ageing loved one so they can live a happy, healthy and independent life at home.

## Myth 2: Home care costs too much.

Some families seem intimidated by the costs of home care. In reality, home care is one of the most affordable options, partly because of the tax relief that is available and home care grants.



## Myth 3: I have no say about who comes into my home

At Home Instead Senior Care, we put relationship before task and match caregivers with older people of similar interests. For instance, many Home Instead CAREGivers are 65+ themselves who share the same hobbies and histories as their clients. All Home Instead CAREGivers are also Garda **screened, trained, bonded and insured.**

## Myth 4: Home care will take away my independence

Unfortunately, it can be difficult to convince some loved ones that the opposite is true. However, experience has shown that older people who stay home alone run the risk of falls and other problems. A Home Instead CAREgiver can serve as a second set of eyes and ears to help keep ageing loved ones safer at home. A CAREgiver also can transport ageing loved ones to special events or even just the grocery store, which can help decrease isolation. Home Instead CAREGivers also often enjoy activities with older parents such as gardening and concerts.

## Myth 5: All caregiving services are the same

"Let the buyer beware" has never been more true than with home care. Not all caregivers or caregiving companies are the same. Home care is an unregulated industry and only members of Home Care and Community Ireland, the Trade Association representing private homecare providers, such as Home Instead Senior Care, provide a guaranteed quality of home care services.

# Home Care Case Study



**Frances Hurley**, 94, lives in Clontarf and is a client of Home Instead Senior Care in Fairview. With five children, 11 grandchildren and 15 great-grandchildren, Frances' zest for good conversation and debate is infectious. Admitting to thinking she would never see 70 or "three score and ten" as she put it, Frances is happy to live at home and has never been tempted to move anywhere else.

*"This is my home and this is where I will stay. I had a fall and spent nearly three months in hospital and I knew I needed someone to support me when I returned home. I am a perfectly ordinary woman and as a perfectly ordinary woman I want to live in my own home. Ilona [Home Instead CAREGiver] helps me to make this happen."*

Home Instead CAREGiver **Ilona Neparte** enjoys working with Frances. Having worked in nursing homes prior to her role at Home Instead, Ilona sees a real difference in how care is provided in the home compared to in nursing homes.

*"You don't have the time to talk to a person when they live in a nursing home. With Home Instead, the relationship is much more personal. Frances and I are comfortable with each other because we have had time to get to know each other. We even share common interests such as knitting. I am so happy Home Instead matched Frances and I. It is such a personal and fulfilling relationship. We have become a great team!"*

## Importance of Home Care

According to the Health and Retirement Study, as men and women age, they need more help with the activities of daily living. By the time we reach 85, 32 per cent of men and 66 per cent of women are no longer driving, and many either have limitations in what they can do, or require regular assistance.

The same study looked at the mental health of seniors. Seniors in Ireland suffer higher depression rates as they become unable to do the most basic daily activities, like driving. 15 per cent of seniors under the age of 85 have problems with depression, while 20 per cent of seniors 85 and older have depression issues. The study also showed that seniors with more severe depression usually suffered from a new illness within the next two years.

Seniors can get depressed at the thought of losing their mobility and independence. After so many years of being on their own, taking care of themselves, they now have difficulty performing even the simplest tasks. However, home care services make it possible for people to take care of their ageing loved ones and help them maintain their independence.

# Your Local Home Instead Senior Care Office

## **Carlow / Kilkenny**

056 7800 508

## **Clare**

Tel: 065 679 7507

## **Cork**

### **South City, East Cork, & South Cork**

Tel: 021 500 2190

### **North City & North Cork**

Tel: 021 4307907

## **West Cork**

Tel: 027 300 97

## **Donegal**

Tel: 074 911 3050

## **Galway**

Tel: 091 384 160

## **Dublin 2, 4, 6, 8**

Tel: 01 667 0911

### **Dublin 6W, 10, 12, 16, 24, Dublin West**

Tel: 01 424 1945

## **Dublin 14, 18**

### **and South County Dublin**

Tel: 01 206 8022

## **Dublin 1, 3, 5, 7, 13, 15**

Tel: 01 853 5048

## **Dublin 9, 11, 17**

### **and North County Dublin**

Tel: 01 895 0010

## **Kerry**

Tel: 066 719 3350

## **Kildare**

Tel: 045 484 623

## **Laois**

Tel: 045 484 623

## **Leitrim**

Tel: 071 914 1511

## **Limerick**

Tel: 061 462 070

## **Longford**

Tel: 044 938 5260

## **Louth**

Tel: 041 213 2322

## **Mayo**

Tel: 091 384 160

## **Meath**

Tel: 046 948 3338

## **Offaly**

Tel: 057 932 3838

## **Roscommon**

Tel: 091 384 160

## **Sligo**

Tel: 071 914 1511

## **Tipperary**

Tel: 0504 91100

## **Waterford**

Tel: 051 333 966

## **Westmeath**

Tel: 044 938 5260

## **Wicklow**

Tel: 01 276 8122

## **Wexford**

Tel: 053 918 4042