This guide was made to be helpful for anyone who is in need of caregiving. These are only suggestions but probably ones you may not of thought of on your own.

Hiring, managing, and maintaining carestaff is an on-going process.

After thirty plus years of non-family caregivers,
I am still learning more EVERY DAY!

In the event you have any specific questions, please don’t hesitate to contact me:
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WHERE SHOULD A PERSON BEGIN?

Before you even begin to look for a caregiver ask yourself these questions:

**Why am I looking for a caregiver?**
- Is it to give relief to a family member?
- Is it to help me gain more independence from my family?
- Is it to replace a caregiver?

**What time of day would be the best time to incorporate a new caregiver?**
- To help me up in the morning?
- To help with my meals?
- To help me with my personal care (bathing, grooming)?
- To help me with errands?
- To help me in school or business?
- To help me get ready and into bed at night?
- To help me in the middle of the night (in the event my family caregiver is on vacation, ill etc.)

To help you with the above question, take a piece (or pieces) of paper and jot down your activities from morning til night - with approximate times and how long each task takes…realistically! This may seem trivial, but it will help you be more detailed when it comes to training a caregiver with your personal and lifestyle needs. Of course there's always room to change (say you usually get up at 7 am but choose to sleep in one morning. Communicate this need with your caregiver and have her/him either come in late (if possible) or have her/him work on other tasks while you get a few more minutes (or hours) of sleep. To jot your activities down this will help YOU assess your needs better too. If your morning seems busier than in the afternoon, it would probably help your family caregiver to have someone else help you with your morning schedule - giving your family caregiver a break or the ability to do something other task.

**When do I need the services of a caregiver?**
- Will this be a temporary or permanent position?
  - Maybe your family caregiver is going out of town or is unable to help you.
  - How many hours/days per week?

**How am I going to pay for my care?**
- The answer to this depends on many factors such as: Family finances, Insurance coverage, your State’s (or Country’s) programs to assist disabled individuals. Each State in the U.S. has a variety of programs able to help with some costs, however to understand what is available in your state, its best to contact your local Federal & State Social Services Agencies. Ask these Agencies about waivers (Medicaid and/or Medicare) that can be utilized for your care. It is highly likely that these ways of funding will only cover a portion of your care, depending on
your level of need, location, your age among other criteria. Here are a few websites that can help you understand more about this process:

www.familiesusa.org/issues/medicaid/other/waivers/waiver-tool-box.html

http://www.dpw.state.pa.us/Disable/HomeCommServices/003670176.htm

FINDING THE CAREGIVER

If you are looking for a caregiver, other than a family member, possibly to give your family caregiver a break, below I've listed some resources that I've had some success with along with a few tips about each one:

FAMILY MEMBERS: This of course is a good resource. most of your family members know you and your limitations. It may be possible for you to get help from your Mom or Dad, Sisters or Brothers. Remembering, however, they may have jobs or families of their own. If your dependence increases, how about asking an Aunt, Uncle or other relatives to give you a hand. Your primary family caregiver needs a break, just like you do from them, try to reach out to other relatives that may be receptive to the idea.

CHURCH/COMMUNITY MEMBERS: This is a resource nearly forgotten by most. If you or your family attend a church, this may be a way to introduce yourself to involving others helping you but being able to trust them because of your affiliation with church or community service group. Maybe they've see you come to church and have always wanted to meet you but were unsure how. If you request (usually through your Pastor/Clergy) that you'd like any volunteers to help you, it may surprise you that a new friendship will develop along with helping you with some of your care. Remember, however, that some people aren't qualified or experienced with personal tasks (such as lifting techniques, bathing, etc) If you feel comfortable enough with this person, have your family caregiver demonstrate how THEY help you. (Seeing someone else assist you is worth at least a thousand words!)

There are numerous community service groups that assist people as well. To name a few: Kiwanis, Lions, Rotary, Fraternities/Sororities. They most likely would be best at helping you get into the community, running errands with/for you. They also would be a good resource if you need assistance with home maintenance (painting your home, raking the yard, etc). Imagine if you can recruit some volunteers like this to ease up on your family members chores (since they may spend time caring for you and "putting off " those chores that need doing!)
**NURSING/COLLEGE STUDENTS:** If you live near a college campus, utilize the energy of young college students. If they are not nursing students do remember they will need to be trained at what their responsibilities will be. If you choose to train a college student remember that their studies and extracurricular activities may take priority over helping you so keep in mind they might not be as punctual as a professional care giver, ALWAYS have a "backup" careprovider "on-call" particularly when you have a college nearby.

**HEALTH DEPARTMENT AIDES:** Almost all counties across the U.S. have Health Departments servicing the county in which you live. They are federally funded and generally accept Medicare/Medicaid as ways in which they get paid. To be able to get assistance from a Health Department, you usually need a Doctors prescription for care/bathing/treatment from the Health Department. Hopefully you have an understanding doctor that will write a prescription for you. This usually IS an excellent resource for personal care. They have qualified, trained staff that will meet your needs. One consideration, however, is that with the Health Department there is Medicare/Medicaid limits on the duration of their services to you. The Health Department will keep you "case" open for as long as possible but usually they have to abide by Medicare/ Medicaid laws (unless you are able to pay privately).

**HOME CARE AGENCIES:** This source of assistance can be found in the yellow pages of your phone book, through the hospital or other service agency (Department of Social Services, Senoir Citizen Projects, etc) They come and access your needs and "match" you up with someone they have on staff. Private agencies usually have minimum hours per day they will send someone into your home (usually 2-4 hours). These agencies can be rather costly but some times it may seem worth it. The care provider they send you after your initial accessment should meet with you PRIOR to her/his starting date. Most agencies have qualified, certified, bonded caregivers. However if you don't feel comfortable with whom you meet YOU have the right to tell the agency you want to try someone else, or another agency. The agency may have you sign a "contract" with you on your initial assessment, be careful on WHAT you sign - making sure you realize what it means. (For example it may say "Client cannot look elsewhere for caregivers unless authorized by this agency"- this is rather unusual but if you sign it and are unhappy with the agency, it could be even harder to find help.) When you approach an agency be up front with them and say you would prefer a "trial period" with them so they know THEY are the ones that are who are being put through an "orientation" period.
HELP WANTED ADVERTISEMENTS IN THE LOCAL PAPER:
If you don't have any of the above mentioned avenues available to you, another option is through your local newspaper in the form of a classified, help wanted ad. Depending on what kind of person you're looking for, and how many hours you are in need of someone, generally you will get response from an ad of this nature. Prior to placing the ad, you should be familiar with what your needs are, how long they take, what time of day is your care required. (As we've previously mentioned.)

WRITING THE CLASSIFIED AD:
This can be as specific as you want to be, but describe the duties in general terms. A good example might be:
PART-TIME PERSONAL CARE ATTENDANT needed for disabled man/woman looking for a dependable, qualified person. Knowledge in lifting techniques/personal care beneficial but will train right person. Pleasant home, flexible hours. Call between the hours 4-8pm.

RESPONDING TO THE APPLICANTS
When your telephone starts ringing you can do a preliminary interview on this initial call. You can ask them specific questions that is described on the PHONE INTERVIEW page. These questions and their answers will give you a good indication if they may be someone you might want to follow up on and meet. I:or example if there is need for someone to help you with transfers or lifting you would obviously not want to hire someone with a history of back problems or injury.

PERSONAL INTERVIEWS
When it has been established that the applicant may fit your criteria, you would most likely set up a mutually convenient time for both of you to meet and talk in further details about your care. It would be beneficial during this interview if an already experienced care attendant be with you to possibly "demonstrate" some of the particulars concerning your care. This helps to ensure safety, along with brief contact with the applicant to see if your care duties would be possible with the applicant. (Please refer to the PERSONAL INTERVIEW QUESTIONAIRE.) One of the most important things to remember is don't hire the first person that comes to your door. Even if this person seems "to good to be true" you'll want to give yourself a couple opportunities to see if there are others just as capable and possibly more compatible with your personality and lifestyle. Another important fact to remember is to KEEP all possible applicants on file in the event the person you hire doesn't work out. (That way you'll always have a way to find someone without having to rerun the ad.)
HIRING A PERSONAL CARE ATTENDANT

Once you've made your decision on who you'll hire, you'll of course want to notify them within a few days of their personal interview (it's not a real good idea to leave anybody hangin'!) When you inform the person of your decision, you can then set up a time for a training shift, if you think that one would be necessary. A lot of times a training shift helps you and your new attendant ease into the transfer of a new situation. This also cuts down on verbal instructions (you've heard "a picture paints a thousand words"? well, demonstration cuts down instruction PLUS it eliminates ALOT of frustration!!) During the first few shifts you'll want to be fairly descriptive of your needs, your routine and any points that will make your environment flow smoothly. (Refer to the DAILY TASK SHEET)

In any situation, you'll want to be assured that your needs are being taken care of. The routine that develops between you and your care giver is one that you'll want to maintain for as long as your relationship lasts with this person. Always keep in mind that YOU are the person in charge - YOU are the boss, be sure to set this posture upon initial training of your new caregiver. Keep in mind however that your caregiver is a person too, THEY don't appreciate a dictator and they won't last long if you don't treat THEM with respect and appreciation.

THE IMPORTANCE OF BACK UP CARE ATTENDANTS

If you depend on any persons, whether it's a family member or outside help, it is very important to have an alternative care attendant in the event your primary attendant gets sick, injured or just needs a break or vacation. You may need to find this person even though at the present time you don't require their services but since your life may depend on them, it's worth lining up a back up person - just in case. It will not only help you in the event of your primary attendant can't make it, but it will ease your primary attendant's mind to know you do have a "plan of attack" in the event they get sick, etc. (Wouldn't you prefer calling in your "back up" if your primary attendant had the flu and risk you being exposed?) Back up attendants prove to be valuable as well in the event that your primary attendant leaves you to pursue a different job. At least then you'll have on person that can fill in until someone new is found.
PHONE INTERVIEW

The questions/conversation on this page is a guide for you to follow when you get inquiries from a newspaper ad or other inquiries that can lead you to finding you careproviders. Keep in mind this is just a sample, please feel free to use or add to the questions below to fit your particular needs.

RING! RING!

YOU: Hello?

CALLER: Hi, I'm calling about being a personal care attendant.

YOU: Yes, I'm looking for someone to help with [personal care, errands, light housekeeping]. (Here describe a little bit about your needs, hours per week. - its best to not talk about rate of pay until 'I the personal interview.) End your part of your description with a question like "Can you tell me a little abit about you and your work experience?"

CALLER: Here is where they would tell you about themselves.

During their conversation they should be briefly informative about their work history with care providing. If not, ask them specifically:

"Do you have any previous experience?"

If not, you might want to be specific in some of the tasks involved. (showering, dressing, etc.)

You may have certain criteria that appeals to you, such as:

- Does this person smoke? Does this person live close by? Does this person have children (and a babysitter in the event you hire them)? Does this person have dependable transportation? Does this person sound friendly?

If this brief conversation seems to interest vou in this person, arrange a time when you can meet and I spend more time talking and possibly demonstrating your needs. It would be recommended that you take their name and telephone number in the event you can't meet them at the designated time.

If this conversation leads you to think this person wouldn't quite suit your needs, kindly take their name and phone number and say, something like "I'll keep your name and number handy in the event I need someone with your experience or if they definately wouldn't work say something like "Well, thank you for your time but considering you [have a back- problem, smoke etc. My needs require someone that doesn't have these problems."
DAILY TASK SHEET

MORNING RESPONSIBILITIES
Unlocking entry door.
Sprinkle walkway with salt & shovel when needed in winter.
Making coffee (full pot).
Showering when requested.
Assist with washing up in bathroom.
Cleaning up the bathroom counters, putting towels away or hanging to dry.
(Please don't put wet towels in basket!)
Dressing.
Breakfast
Making the bed. (change sheets as needed)
Putting away night table and setting it up for day use.
Starting/maintaining afire.
Need instructions? ASK
Getting the mail.

OTHER TASKS WHEN REQUESTED

AFTERNOON RESPONSIBILITIES
Lunch preparation.
Setting and serving lunch.
Clearing and washing of dishes.
Putting leftover in appropriate containers for storage.
Wiping off counters/tables.
Run dishwasher when full.
To conserve energy please use NORMAL CYCLE and ENERGY SAVING DRYING
Putting clean dishes away.
Empty trash and place it in designated cans in garage.
Sweeping the floor.
Check/fill humidifier as needed

Any free time .... Ask what needs to be done!

NIGHT RESPONSIBILITIES
Preparing a light meal/snack.
Cleaning up the counters, dishes, kitchen area.
Empty trash and place it in designated cans in garage.
Showering when requested.
Hottub assistance when requested. Straightening up the bath/hottub area. Hang wet towels to dry, tossing dry used ones in basket.
Close and lock all doors and windows.
Prepare bed and bedside table.
Assist in wash-up.
Check and fill humidifier when needed.
Put thawing meat in fridge.
Shut down woodstove.
Turn out lights prior to leaving.
Specific tasks when requested.

ANY FREE TIME .... ASK WHAT NEEDS TO BE DONE!
SCHEDULE

NANCY SANDO 347-1833. It would be greatly appreciated and necessary to get at least a 48 hour notice from you in the event you can not work the designated hours you are scheduled to work. If you need to be off because of illness, please advise me as soon as possible so I can find a substitute for you. In other words, please don't wait until the last minute before you call and say you're sick. THANK YOU!

I use a calendar that I can hang on the fridge. This gives anyone a chance to glance at the schedule. I even color code the different gals’ names with markers so its easy to see who is working when. (and it adds abit of color too!) The calendar also contains everyone’s phone numbers on it so its an easy find in the event I need to call them. Also, this calendar is kept from year to year so I can keep track of who has worked which holidays, etc.
EXPECTATIONS

YOU WILL BE PROVIDED WITH:

COMPENSATION for your services, paid at the end of your work cycle.

* INSERVICE TRAINING with the assistance of existing staff, you will be guided through various procedures that warrant demonstration (lifting, hottub lift, meal prep with foodprocessor, transportation devices, medical treatments) This gives you the opportunity to ask questions and learn from an experienced caregiver. Those that assist you with this are asked to guide you through these different areas so within a reasonable time you can manage independently. If you ever feel uncomfortable during this time, discuss this with me so any difficulties can be dealt with and corrected.

* MEALS One meal will be provided for you if you shift is longer than seven hours. You are more than welcome to bring your own food at any given time. Space will be provided in a cupboard or fridge if need be.

* BREAK TIME There will be a short break time for you. This is the time for you to read, talk on the phone (locally only) or possibly run a short errand. Before taking your break, please check with me to see if your assistance is required during the next few minutes. Smoking is allowed outside in the designated area only. When you use the ashtray provided, please clean it at the end of your shift and return it to under the sink. It is requested that you don't pitch your cigarette butts into the yard or trees in the yard.

PERSONAL ITEM AREA You will be provided with an area to keep your personal belongings. This would include your purse, gloves, a change of clothes for showering, books, etc. If you hang your shower clothes to dry on the bathroom hook after assisting me, please be sure the get deposited in your "cubby" at the end of your shift. It is requested you don't store any valuable items as other people do have access to this closet. This closet will also be where you can hang your coats, please don't leave them on the door knobs as this interferes with access to this closet.
JOB DESCRIPTION

I have and will strive to remain flexible and accommodating to those who provide services to me. I appreciate everyone's work and loyalty, this is in no way meant to make any one feel they are doing an inadequate job, but I do feel a few things should be understood and followed by everyone, whether you were just hired on or have been with me a while. Any suggestions you have would be valuable.

If you see something that needs to be put away, hung up, cleaned up, please don't wait for someone else to do it.

If you are requested to do something, I would appreciate a positive response. Remember one of your responsibilities is to do the physical tasks I cannot accomplish on our own or find too physically demanding without your assistance.

This is my home, yet your work environment, please treat my home like yours with respect. You are a valuable team member to me - my arms and legs that allow me to function to the best of my ability.

WAGE CONSIDERATIONS

Prior to hiring someone privately (not health care agencies or other health department attendants) investigate in your area what the going rate is for a person handling similar responsibilities ... Either through a local care facility, hospital or a social services agency. Rates will vary from an experienced certified attendant to a LPN or RN, depending upon your level of care required. How you handle your caregiver, whether they are a contract person or house-hold employee should be discussed with a qualified authority in your area. Below briefly describes the difference between the two:

CONTRACT CAREGIVER They basically would have the same hands on experience, however they would be responsible for withholding and reporting their income to the state and federal government. They would also be responsible for any disability/liability insurance while providing services.

HOUSE-HOLD EMPLOYEE Again, they have the same experience but YOU would be responsible to withhold any local, state or federal taxes, along with taking out a Workman's Compensation Policy. You would be required to submit quarterly and yearly tax reports to those tax agencies.

NOTE. If you do choose this method of private paying your caregivers, make sure you get some assistance from a qualified accountant or someone with similar experience. The bookkeeping that is required is not difficult but you should be aware of all requirements of becoming an employer.
PERSONAL INTERVIEW

This interview will help you meet your prospective care provider. At this time you might want to chat about your likes dislikes, routine, expectations, and possibly demonstrate some of the things you would require help with. During this time you'd want to talk about hours per week, rate of pay, or other wage arrangements. (If it were a live-in arrangement part of their pay would be their housing costs, meals?)

There is an application in this package that you should have everyone who applies with you fill out. This way you have information available from them on file and references from various people you should check with. It would be to your best interest to inquire about this person with any past employer when at all possible.

If this person seems like someone whom you could trust and get along with, you might want to set up a trial work period and see how it goes. Explaining that this trial period would be re-evaluated by you (and them) to assure you're compatible.
APPLICATION FOR PERSONAL CARE ATTENDANT

PERSONAL INFORMATION

NAME ___________________________________________ DATE __________

ADDRESS ___________________________________________ 

TELEPHONE NO. _______________ HOW LONG AT ABOVE ADDRESS? __________

ARE YOU 18 YEARS OR OLDER? _______ S.S. ____________________________

WORK EXPERIENCE

ARE YOU EMPLOYED NOW? _______ IF SO, CAN I INQUIRE ABOUT YOU? _______

DATE YOU CAN START _______ WAGE DESIRED _______

HOW DID YOU FIND OUT ABOUT THE POSITION?

EDUCATION NAME OF SCHOOL NO OF
GRAD? SUBJECT YEARS
HIGH SCHOOL ___________________________________________

COLLEGE ___________________________________________

TRADE/BUSINESS

OTHER SCHOOLING ________________________________________

GENERAL

DESCRIBE HERE OTHER STUDIES/EDUCATION THAT HELPS IN YOU KNOWLEDGE OF
PERSONAL CARE ATTENDANCE.

HAVE YOU EVER BEEN CONVICTED WITH A FELONY OR OTHER CRIMINAL ACTS?

YES NO

HAVE YOU EVER HAD ANY PREVIOUS HEALTH CONDITIONS THAT PREVENT YOU
FROM WORKING?

REFERENCES

GIVE THE NAMES OF THREE PERSONS NOT RELATED TO YOU, WHOM YOU'VE KNOWN FOR AT LEAST ONE
YEAR:

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FORMER EMPLOYERS / EXPERIENCE
LIST BELOW THE LAST THREE EMPLOYERS, STARTING WITH THE LAST ONE FIRST

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DO YOU HAVE ANY OTHER OBLIGATIONS (CLASSES, ANOTHER JOB) OR RESTRICTIONS (DAYCARE FOR YOUR KIDS, ETC) THAT WOULD PREVENT YOU FROM WORKING CERTAIN HOURS?

EMERGENCY INFORMATION
IN CASE OF EMERGENCY, PLEASE NOTIFY:
NAME_________________________________________________________
RELATIONSHIP___________________________HOMEPHONE_________________
ADDRESS______________________________BUSINESS PHONE_________________

"I CERTIFY THAT THE FACTS CONTAINED IN THIS APPLICATION ARE TRUE AND COMPLETE TO THE BEST OF MY KNOWLEDGE AND UNDERSTAND THAT, IF EMPLOYED, FALSIFIED STATEMENTS ON THIS APPLICATION SHALL BE GROUNDS OF DISMISSAL.

I AUTHORIZE INVESTIGATION OF ALL STATEMENTS CONTAINED HEREIN AND THE REFERENCES LISTED ABOVE GIVE YOU ANY AND ALL INFORMATION CONCERNING MY PREVIOUS EMPLOYMENT AND ANY PERTINENT INFORMATION THEY MAY HAVE, AND RELEASE ALL PARTIES FROM ALL LIABILITY FOR ANY DAMAGE THAT MAY RESULT FROM FURNISHING SAME TO YOU.

I UNDERSTAND AND AGREE THAT, IF HIRED, MY EMPLOYMENT IS FOR NO DEFINITE PERIOD AND MAY, REGARDLESS OF THE DATE OF PAYMENT OF MY WAGES AND SALARY, BE TERMINATED AT ANY TIME WITHOUT PRIOR NOTICE AND WITHOUT CAUSE."

DATE ___________________________ SIGNATURE ___________________________