

Trusted Solutions™

A division of  TRINITY HOME
HEALTH SERVICES

Trusted Solutions is dedicated to improving the quality of life for older adults and their families by connecting them to the resources, services and support that will enable them to remain safely in their homes.

Handling That First Crisis

In preparation for the first crisis, organize and list information such as the name and phone number of physicians, preferred hospital, homecare agency and pharmacy on a worksheet. If a care giving situation pushes you into a crisis or medical emergency, do not panic! Follow these steps.

1. Call immediately for emergency medical assistance.
2. Once your parent is in the hospital emergency room, contact your parent's physician. The physician will alert the emergency room staff to your parent's special needs and condition.
3. In any crisis situation, talk to people who have a personal relationship with your parent to help shed light on what led up to the crisis. Family members, close neighbors, parish staff, the physician, the local pharmacist or other healthcare professionals may be able to contribute to understanding why the crisis occurred, how to resolve it and how to prevent future events.
4. Help yourself help your parent. Reach out to family, close friends, and community services to help you through the crisis. The comfort of family and friends can help ease the pressure and relief stress during a crisis. Community services provide eldercare professional to guide and support you through an emergency. Once the crisis has stabilized, reevaluate your role, your options and your feelings about being a caregiver and decide if you really want to continue in this role.

Handling that Midnight Call

The way to handle an emergency is to be prepared. Having the list of information suggested above readily available will help you prioritize your concerns and handle the situation. Here are some questions that may also help.

1. Is loved one in the emergency room or is he being admitted to the hospital?
2. If he is being admitted to the hospital, who is the admitting doctor and what is the diagnosis?
3. If he is not being admitted, why not, and who will transport him home?
4. Does he need homecare and is it covered by insurance?
5. Does your loved one need private-duty nursing in the hospital?
6. Does the hospital provide extra care or do you have to call an agency?
7. Is the hospital aware of your loved one's medication and his primary physician? (If possible, you should plan to bring the medications to the hospital in their original containers to provide for the most accuracy.)
8. Ask the hospital staff to notify your loved one's primary care physician.
9. Don't be afraid to ask questions and if you are not getting the answers you need, ask to speak to a social worker or patient advocate.
10. Notify the rest of the family and get your support network going.

*Having a Geriatric Care Manager is a valuable option for older persons and their families. Having a personal advocate to provide ongoing support and education during times of crisis will give you peace of mind. **For more information please contact:** Carol A. Mills, BSN, CRRN, MHA, CSA at millsc@trinity-health.org or 248-305-7721.*