

Caregivers

Joyce Roach McNeal of Altoona (center) relies on a team of caregivers to maintain her “in it to win it” attitude while battling ALS. Home Nursing Agency Occupational Therapist Ann Scheeler (right) assists McNeal with mobility exercises to reduce pain and improve her quality of life. Scheeler also teaches McNeal’s primary caregivers, including husband Joe and Julia Hemingway, a private duty caregiver whose support is funded by the Western PA ALS Association.

“In it to
WIN it”



Approach the Difficult Subject that Your Loved One May Need Help

Submitted by: Bill McManus, Vice-President of Home Nursing Agency, Home Health Resource,
Private Duty Home Care, Adult Day Services,
1-800-315-4360

How do you help your loved one, who at one time was completely independent, understand and accept that they now need assistance without being perceived as interfering in their life?

It's a fact that we will all be faced with these issues as we age. However, with some advance planning and straight-forward discussions, the problem-solving process can work well, but it will take some concentrated effort by you, other family members, and your loved one.

The first thing to know is that many of the conversations that you'll have will be emotionally laden and must be handled carefully. Here are some useful tips to consider when communicating with family members or a loved one when deciding whether or not to obtain assistance such as home care or other forms of care:

- Treat your loved one as an equal and involve them in making decisions (assuming that their mental capabilities exist).
- Have a clear topic for every discussion.
- If your loved one's health or safety are an issue, say so, and push the discussion forward.
- Voice your opinions using "when you".... "I feel".... "therefore I need you to" statements. For example, *"When I go to work, I'm nervous that you're going to fall and no one will be here to help you. I need you to really consider having someone help clean around the house, make sure you get meals, and at least check on you while I'm gone all day."*
- Be assertive about your thoughts and feelings.
- Be respectful of others' opinions.
- Don't blame others.
- Don't try to accomplish too much in one conversation.
.....and don't expect any of this to be easy.

Setting up a family meeting can be a great place to begin having these types of discussions. It may seem obvious, but remember that your loved one wants primary control for making choices about their own life, not you or one of your relatives (unless of course, there is a very serious health concern and your loved one is being quite unreasonable). Family meetings must be supportive, and this support alone may be enough to convince them that they should begin to consider some form of assistance before their health deteriorates further.

If your family determines that home care is the best option for your loved one, Home Nursing Agency Private Duty Home Care the very best in personal care, home support and respite care, and work closely with our colleagues throughout the Agency so that our clients - of all ages - may have access to the wide variety of services we offer including home health care, hospice, behavioral health and wellness services.

For more information on Private Duty Home Care, we encourage you to please call Home Nursing Agency at 1-800-315-4360 or visit www.homenursingagency.com.

