

## TALKING TO YOUR LOVED ONES ABOUT A NEW LIVING ENVIRONMENT

*Talking to your parents about a new living environment can be overwhelming and stressful for everyone. Many parents feel like they are being forced out of their homes and losing their independence. Like any major life decision, it is the manner of how you talk to your loved one that can lead to a healthy discussion and minimize frustration and anger. The key is to have the conversation proactively rather than reactively in a time of crisis.*

### START THE DISCUSSION

This may seem like an obvious first step but it is a slow process to discuss the future living needs with your parent(s) or loved one. Select a time when you can talk uninterrupted and face-to-face. You are just planting the seed and hearing from them about their thoughts on future living arrangements. Let them know that you are interested in their wishes. Perhaps start by asking, "Where do you see yourself living in 3-5 years?"

### MAKE IT A TWO WAY CONVERSATION

Be careful to not let the discussion take an argumentative or loud tone. Highlight the positive aspects to a new living community like the social activities rather than the skilled nursing care. Make sure you listen and validate their feelings and concerns. Support them and realize that your parent or loved one ultimately makes the final decision.

### IDENTIFY ALTERNATE PLANS

It may be necessary to identify different plans for the situation when both parents are living and if one parent dies. Listen to what your parents want for each other together and separately.

### STAYING IN THEIR HOMES

If your parents or loved one is adamant about staying in their own home, discuss supports, resources and services that can help keep them safe. Many seniors feel that if they make a move, it is a move to go die. Stress again the social activities and personal care support that a continuing care retirement community (CCRC) provides.

### KNOW YOUR OPTIONS

It is a complicated process to learn all the different living environments and the financial responsibilities of each community. Research the options and visit the communities with your parents if possible. Seek professional guidance from a geriatric case manager. A professional can identify realistic living communities and serve as an invaluable resource as well as a buffer between the parents and children.

### MEMORY CARE OPTIONS

When your parent has been diagnosed with Dementia, it is important to understand the progression of the disease and the impact it could have on staying in their own home. A move is emotional and a second move should be avoided if possible.



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SAGE Care Advisors LLC is a senior care planning and consulting service located in Wayne, PA. Principals, Aimee Lynn Curry, MSW and Debbie Thomas, MSW, are experienced medical social workers with extensive knowledge of senior needs and services along the Main Line. "We started SAGE Care Advisors LLC because we saw first-hand how difficult it can be picking the right living and care environment for your loved ones. We help you make informed decisions that are best for your unique situation, resulting in a better experience for you and your loved ones. The result is less stress for you and your family, along with the peace of mind of knowing you have an advocate listening to your needs and helping guide you along the way."