



HELP FOR CAREGIVERS

Holding a Family Meeting

Who should attend?

When planning a family meeting, it is important to include:

1. Everyone who is or will be part of the caregiving team (this may include a family friend, neighbor or paid caregiver)
2. An outside facilitator, such as a social worker or minister to help the family communicate about difficult subjects during the meeting
3. The ill family member

PROS

1. The care receiver can be involved in his/her own care decisions.
2. Can promote an open dialogue about what care receiver wants/expects.
3. Can help to settle differences in opinions (i.e. if family members are split between options, care receiver can be the “deciding vote.”)
4. Care receiver more likely to be cooperative if involved in decision making process

CONS

1. If care receiver has dementia, can cause further confusion.
2. Care receiver can become agitated or upset if the majority of family members do not see things their way.
3. Can cause care receiver to feel like they are not in control of their life (i.e. other family members have a say in the final outcome)

Consider holding two meetings: one with and one without ill person present. Bring recommendations to meeting with ill person.



How to prepare

1. Prepare an agenda and send it out to all the family members ahead of time.



POTENTIAL TOPICS:

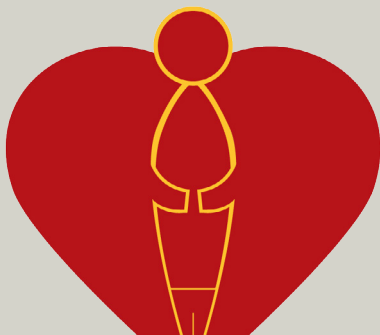
- Sharing of feelings
- Daily caregiving needs
- Financial concerns
- Who will make decisions
- What sort of support does the primary caregiver need
- Summary

It will probably be difficult to cover all these issues in one meeting, so additional meetings will be helpful. Be sure to stick to the time table.

2. Choose a neutral and distraction-free location.
3. Use technology to involve non-local relatives.

Goals of a successful meeting

- Agreement
- Compromise
- Improved communication
- A written agreement of decisions
- A calendar of important dates



**FAMILY CAREGIVER
SUPPORT CENTER**

THE FAMILY CAREGIVER SUPPORT CENTER
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