

Save Money with Eldercare By Not Doing It Yourself

Long-term care services are complicated and expensive. Unfortunately, for the majority of Americans, eldercare is a do-it-yourself process. This approach is wrong. Using a geriatric care specialist or manager is the most cost effective and efficient way to provide help for a loved one.

Hiring professional advisers to help with long term care is no different from using a professional to help with other complex issues. Does do-it-yourself make sense in the following examples?

- Sam has a 2003 SUV. He decides to purchase the \$600 service manual and invest thousands of dollars in test equipment and in special tools to repair the vehicle himself. He feels he will save money by doing this instead of paying for dealer repair services.
- Sally is involved in a complicated court proceeding. She decides to represent herself and invests countless hours in researching legal documents and reading books on how to represent herself in court.
- Jim runs a business with 100 employees. He has no experience in accounting or taxes but he decides his accountant and tax person is too expensive and he will invest the time and money in software to do it himself.
- Grace is a successful and busy professional who has little personal time. She doesn't like the idea of paying an investment adviser to manage her \$1 million portfolio. She decides to manage it herself.

There is no doubt that given enough time and money a person could repair his own car, handle a court process alone, research tax laws or spend countless hours doing his own investment research. But most people are smart enough to recognize that the time and the stress involved are not worth it and they hire an expert to help them.

The same is true of using a professional geriatric care manager. Even if a do-it-yourselfer has enough time for research on funding and finding the best care options, that person is unlikely to have the experience in understanding care situations that a professional care manager would have.

Experience only comes from dealing with countless hands-on, caregiving challenges.

A professional care manager should always be involved when the time for long term care comes. The use of this expert is crucially important in any long term care plan.

Other useful professionals to consider are an elder law attorney, a long-term care and financial planning specialist and an elder mediator. These experts help design the initial plan and can be just as valuable as a care manager in certain situations when the time for care comes.

Using the expertise of a long term care professional is likely to result in dollar savings many times larger than the cost of hiring the expert.

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