

Planning Ahead For Senior Care Costs in the New Year



Many people don't really think about needing long-term care services until they are a necessity. This new year, take the chance to get ahead. In America, someone who is 65 years old has a 70% chance of needing some type of long-term care. This can include assistance with performing everyday tasks such as eating or bathing, medication management, palliative care, and skilled nursing. There are many ways for you and your loved ones to prepare for potential costs of senior care, which will provide you and your loved ones with peace of mind down the road.



Things to Consider When Planning

When planning out the cost of senior care, it's impossible to plan your future down to the last little detail. However, it is crucial to have at least some plans that you or your loved ones want to achieve. It's normal to think that you or your loved one can plan alone without assistance throughout aging, but that is rare. Almost everyone at one point needs some guidance.

Here are some options to think about when planning:

1. *Advance Directive*

If you or your loved one loses the ability to speak, you or your loved ones need to have a trusted person who can carry out you or your loved ones' wishes. If not, your healthcare proxy can step in to advocate for you with healthcare professionals.

2. *Rehabilitation*

It's a short-stay community that is designed to help you or your loved ones recover from an illness or accident.

3. *Housing Options*

Many people never think about having to leave their home at some point, but sometimes it's their only option. This could be when the home becomes overwhelming to manage, or when in-home care becomes too expensive or private duty may be unreliable or untrustworthy.

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Planning for the Future

The best route to prepare for senior living care costs is to start saving. Medicare does not cover long-term nursing care. Saving for your future needs will provide you with greater flexibility when you or a loved one needs assisted living. Other plans that can cover senior care:

1. *Long-Term Care Insurance* - is designed specifically to cover all or some of the long-term costs. Depending on the policy you or your loved ones buy, it can cover for an assisted living facility, care at home or in a nursing home.
2. *Life Insurance* - may provide cash to pay for long-term care. Some policies may allow you to borrow or withdraw money or provide those with a terminal illness access to some of their death benefits early.

Medicaid and Government Programs

Without long-term-care insurance, the cost of receiving assisted living and nursing care is self-pay. There are ways to cover your long-term care costs through government programs. One example is Medicaid. Medicaid is the largest payer toward long-term care services which assists individuals who have depleted their assets or those with limited assets to pay their medical and long-term care bills.

Finding a Financial Professional

It is never too early to plan for long-term care and it is important to find a financial professional you can trust. There are several organizations that are willing to assist in connecting you and your loved ones with appropriate resources.

Here is a list of some professionals who can help you develop that perfect long-term care plan.

1. *Financial Planners*

Financial planners assess every aspect of you and your loved ones' finances. This can include investments, savings, retirement, and estate planning.

2. *Investment Advisers*

Investment Advisers focus heavily on managing you or your loved one's investments.

3. *Insurance Agents*

These agents help you or your loved ones go through options for life insurance, annuities, and long-term care insurance.

Planning ahead for senior care may seem like a challenge. Following these simple steps will guide you or your loved ones to a healthy and financially stable future this new year.

