



# BRYN MAWR TERRACE

MAIN LINE SENIOR CARE ALLIANCE

A Healthy Tradition of Care and Wellness

## Expert Tips to Help Your Senior Loved One Downsize

Despite the many lifestyle advantages of senior living, such as freedom from home and property maintenance, an enriching lifestyle and personal independence with just the right amount of support, helping an older loved one downsize for a move to personal care or assisted living can present some challenges.

Downsizing experts say it is most important to keep the items that are most meaningful and which preserve pleasant memories for your senior loved one. These can usually be placed in their new space. Less important items identified during downsizing, such as furniture can be sold, given to other family members or donated to charitable organizations.

Some of the most valuable downsizing suggestions from experts include:

**Get organized** – Think about the size of the new space your senior loved one will be living in and plan your downsizing accordingly.

**Ditch the clutter** – Shred, toss or give away obvious items such as old cancelled checks, outdated food or medications, clothes, or extraneous household items that just take up space.

**Take it one step (or room) at a time** – Plan on going through one room at a time. Start with the easiest. Don't try to pack now, just sort items for downsizing.

**Divide and conquer** – Divide furniture and possessions into four categories:

- Definitely save (these are the most useful, most beloved, most meaningful items)
- Possibly save (you'll need to revisit these later, and continue paring down)
- Donate, sell or giving away to a friend
- Discard

**Locate and secure important documents** – Important documents should be located to either go with your loved one when they move or to be kept in a safe place with you until they are needed. Examples include deeds, wills, Durable Powers of Attorney, medical records, military records, diplomas and degrees, birth certificates, passports, etc.

**Secure prized possessions** – There are certain things your family member won't be willing to give up, whether because of sentimental reasons or monetary value. If your loved one needs time to think before putting something in a discard pile or a donate bin, provide a third "undecided" option. Sometimes this is a necessary step when downsizing. Keep compassion a priority above your need to get the process completed.

**Take time for cherished memories** – Packing for a move often means going through old photos and belongings that may evoke powerful memories. Allow your loved one plenty of time to reflect on the past, particularly if the memories are happy ones.

**Keep it upbeat** – While leaving behind a home full of old memories can be can be difficult for any senior, you can raise their spirits by focusing on the positives. Talk about the new adventures that await them, the many fun activities they will have available to enjoy, and the visits you and their friends will be making to socialize and have lunch with them.



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**Ease the move** – When it's time for your loved one to make the move to their new space, plan on spending the day with them. Help them to organize their new space and work as quickly as you can to make it feel like home for them. If they are moving to a senior living community, try to spend as much time with them as you can for a few weeks after the move to make sure they are comfortable, getting acclimated to their new environment and feeling supported.

## **A Healthy Tradition of Care and Wellness**

Located near Bryn Mawr Hospital, Bryn Mawr Terrace – part of [Main Line Senior Care Alliance](#) – has provided exceptional care and services to seniors and their families since 1966. It's a tradition we're proud to continue.

Today, Bryn Mawr Terrace serves as a Continuing Care Retirement Community (CCRC), offering a range of services – including [short-term rehabilitation](#), [traditional nursing care](#), [independent living](#), [personal care](#), [memory care](#), [restorative care](#) and [respite care](#) – all in a setting that is warm, welcoming and nurturing.

**For more information on Bryn Mawr Terrace and our variety of needs-based lifestyle services, please call us at 610.525.8300 or [contact us](#) online.**

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