



BRYN MAWR TERRACE

MAIN LINE SENIOR CARE ALLIANCE

A Healthy Tradition of Care and Wellness

5 Tips for Creating a Plan of Care Before a Crisis Happens

Although it is something that none of us likes to ponder, the passage of time and the effects of aging place our parents and other loved ones at increased risk of rapid changes to their health status and capabilities. A sudden illness, a fall or other unexpected event can turn their life – and yours – upside down in an instant.

Elizabeth Cupitt, R.N., Director of Nursing at Bryn Mawr Terrace, says, “The best advice I can give to families with older loved ones is to prepare for life’s unexpected events ahead of time. By doing so, you can significantly reduce the amount of stress, confusion and disruption to your personal life and career if something unfortunate actually does happen.”

In her article, “**Elder Care Needs Can Change in an Instant,**” noted columnist and eldercare consultant, **Carol Bradley Bursack**, recommends the following key steps to help you prepare for any potential challenges ahead:

- **Create a Plan with Your Loved One for Their Future Care Needs** – Plan ahead with your loved one about their preferences in case a life-changing emergency should occur. Let them know that you want to know their preferences for care under different health-related scenarios. Also, assure them that you will make the best decisions for their health, safety and well-being based on the circumstances at the time.
- **Establish Power of Attorney for Healthcare Decisions** – Work with your loved one to make sure that you – or another trusted, responsible family member – have Power of Attorney for their healthcare. Their wishes and preferences for care are often called their “advanced directives.” Be sure that your loved one’s doctor and their preferred hospital have a copy of this document. With it, you can make the decisions necessary to continue caring for them if they are unable to speak for themselves.
- **Consider a Personal Emergency System** – If your loved one lives on their own, even if there are two of them, it is wise to arrange for a personal alarm or some type of monitoring system so they can request help if they are not able to use the phone.
- **Organize a List of Essential Information** – Help them to prepare a list of vital information in case of an emergency. The list should include emergency phone numbers, medications, allergies, and known illnesses. Keep this in a visible location such as on their refrigerator so that emergency personnel can locate it easily.
- **Keep Their Medicare and Other Insurance Information Handy** – Keep copies of your loved one’s Medicare and other insurance cards in their wallets, but keep the originals with you. This way, should an emergency occur, you can take care of the paperwork while medical personnel are caring for them.



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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, 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.