

Senator Liz Krueger's



Assessing Your Loved One's Needs

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- Overarching Questions:
 - 1. Is your loved one safe?
 - 2. Is she/he functioning maximally?
 - 3. Is she/he sufficiently stimulated?
 - 4. Is she/he socially engaged?

Specific Questions to Pose:

- Can your relative:
 - dress and undress without help?
 - use public transportation/drive on own?
 - shop for groceries/clothing on own?
 - Prepare meals?

Specific Questions, continued:

- Can your relative:
 - Take bath/shower without help?
 - Manage oral care?
 - Get in/out of bed without help?
 - Be left alone during the day?
 - Pay bills/manage finances on own?

Specific Questions, continued:

- Can your relative:
 - Clean apartment/house?
 - Manage household duties (including laundry)?
 - Live alone comfortably and confidently?
 - Remain active/interested (hobbies, activities)?

Specific Questions, continued

- Can your relative:
 - Maintain a positive attitude?
 - Maintain mobility inside home, climb stairs if necessary?
 - Care about personal health and well-being?

Specific Questions, continued

- Can your relative:
 - Manage own medications?
 - Maintain a healthy weight?
 - In general, take care of themselves?

If you answered “no” to any question.....

- Monitor that activity more closely to see if help is needed.
- Discuss concerns with loved one:
 - Have they noted changes in functioning?
 - What kind of help/support do they want/need?
 - Will they give permission for you to speak with physician/other service providers?
 - Good time to also raise broader questions of what kind of care they want in future, designation of a health care proxy

Starting the Conversation

- The sooner, the better; do not wait to be in crisis situation.
- Normalize needing additional support as expectable as one ages.
- Who should be there to have older adult feel supported? Spouse, all children, favorite niece, specific professional?

Starting the Conversation, continued

- Meet with this potential caregiving team ahead of time to discuss concerns and what each person could do.
- What is the best time/place to meet? When and where will older adult feel most comfortable and therefore be most receptive?

Starting the Conversation, continued

- Be specific about what your concerns are- focus on wanting older adult to be and feel safe, engaged, happy, connected.
- Older adult might share concerns and be relieved to address them.
- Acknowledge that any change is difficult.
- Plan small steps; invite older adult's input so he/she feels invested in solution.

Potential Interventions to Consider

- Will depend on level of impairment, resources available
- Likely to change over time

Levels of Care

- Home modifications (e.g. grab bars)
- Greater reliance on informal caregivers (relatives, friends); “Share the care” model
- Home health care: paid assistance of an aide, nurse, therapist in the home

Levels of Care, continued

- Adult Day Care- provides activities and care for older adults residing in the community during day while caregivers work or complete other tasks.
- Independent Living Facilities-condo or apartment in community setting for seniors, with some oversight.

Levels of Care, continued

- Assisted Living Facilities- receive help with daily living activities like toileting, eating; some medical care, but residents don't require constant medical supervision.
- Skilled Nursing Homes- residential facility for older adult with medical condition requiring close supervision.

Levels of Care, continued

- Acute Care Facilities- provide highest level of care for seniors unable to care for themselves.

Help is available!

- See handout for examples of local resources.