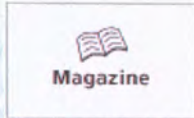


## More options for senior care



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Seniors and their adult children can find more and more care options to meet their needs.

With Americans living longer and getting sick later and later in life, Ellen Greenberg is part of a growing number of professionals who are helping to create customized plans that families can use to take care of their elderly parents, while also maintaining their sanity, sleeping soundly and living within their financial limits. Nursing homes and assisted living facilities aren't for everyone.

Greenberg is the director of information services at the Jewish Council for the Aging of Greater Washington in Rockville, which fields about 14,000 calls a year from family members who are trying to take care of their elderly parents. A free service, the JCA puts family members in touch with organizations such as Meals on Wheels, which can help the aged by providing food and social opportunities, Greenberg said.

For families who struggle to meet the transportation needs of their aged parents, she suggests looking for volunteer services that could provide one-way transportation, with the other trip paid by the family.

"We try to think creatively," said Greenberg, who has worked with the elderly for about 20 years. "The people who are calling, by the time they reach us are in a crisis, just got out of a crisis or are just about to have one."

In a family with more than one adult child, the children should share tasks, she suggests.

Adult day care services -- such as the Mislser Adult Day Center in Rockville -- are another option that Greenberg urges families to consider because they provide stimulating activities in a sheltered environment for frail seniors.

In-home care is yet another option, available through agencies, that provides the flexibility that meets the needs of some seniors. But, "not everyone can afford in-home care," said JCA's Greenberg.

When Gloria Weiss needed live-in care for her 86-year old husband Ernest, she contacted the Jewish Community Center of Greater Washington in Rockville for a list of approved agencies and also found organizations through the Yellow Pages. Following a number of interviews, she signed an agreement with an in-home care company that found her a nurse's aid that she likes and trusts.

"This woman is excellent at her job and very helpful," Weiss said, knowing that her husband of nearly 60 years is well cared for.

Bill Murray works for Options for Senior America Corp., located in Silver Spring.

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