



A GUIDE FOR FAMILY **CAREGIVERS** IN PUERTO RICO

AARP Posibilidades a tu alcance en

Puerto Rico

A GUIDE FOR FAMILY CAREGIVERS IN PUERTO RICO

Providing home care to a friend or family member, whether physically present or at a distance, can be a positive and gratifying experience. However, the physical, emotional and economical demands can be stressful and overwhelming. This guide contains information about resources and programs to help you in providing the care and support your loved ones need.

EXPLANATORY NOTE:

The resources and services included in this guide were compiled according to their availability when the document was prepared. It is possible that some of these might have suffered changes or have been eliminated due to the actual fiscal crisis in Puerto Rico.



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**Caregiver
Resource Guide** visit: 
aarp.org/pr

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Taking care of another person could be one of the **most important and rewarding experiences of your life.**

Maybe you have a close family relation, like a parent, an uncle, or an adult sibling who suffers a disability and requires care and support at home or at a distance. No matter who it is or how you came to be the caregiver, the demands of the job will be easier if you have the right resources on hand when you start to plan, coordinate, and ultimately physically take charge of your loved one.

An informal or family caregiver is the person (or persons) who provides help and support to someone who is sick, frail, or has some sort of a physical or mental disability, without monetary remuneration.



- > These days, we see a growing diversity of caregivers:
 - Male or female
 - Any age, ranging from the elderly taking care of other adults to grandkids taking care of their elders
 - Any type of relationship: family or friends
 - Under the same roof, at a distance, or sporadic
 - Employed or unemployed

 - > **The characteristics of a caregiver include a heightened sense of responsibility and unconditional love for the person they look after. Basically, a caregiver helps, coordinates, or executes some or all of these tasks:**
 - Direct economic support
 - Administration of personal finances
 - Homemaking tasks (cooking, cleaning, shopping, laundry, and others)
 - Transportation
 - Medication administration
 - Provides company through personal visits, phone calls, or the coordination of external help

 - > **This guide was designed to help you find the right resources so you can navigate the confusing, but gratifying world of caregiving in a way that is dignified for both for you and your loved one. We understand dignity resides in every human being's right to be respected and valued as an individual and social entity, with his or her own particular conditions and/or characteristics.**
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- > The caregiver is first responsible for taking care of him/herself at all times. That is why we hope this informative guide will be of help in the following areas:
 - Finding support or assistance from the different governmental or private community programs within your reach.
 - Knowing the questions or doubts you could have prior to securing the services that are best for you and your family (you should meet with the social worker, ask questions, and check the guide.)
 - Knowing the criteria used to determine which of the existing services can help you (ask questions, compare.)
 - Reach out to the correct agencies when the right to a fulfilled life are not being upheld for every member of the family.
 - Maintaining a pleasant and healthy environment at home, for the caregiver as well as for the person who is taken care of (consult with the social worker, nutritionist, and such.)
 - Knowing which financial options are available and how to make a budget adjusted to your needs and financial situation (make a plan, ask questions.)

The caregiver (and, if possible, the family) needs to be evaluated to identify their resources, needs, strengths, and possible problems.

Also, the evaluation helps identify the caregiver's skills for helping and empowering the person who needs to be cared for.



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THE CAREGIVER AS A FACILITATOR

> **Your** role as caregiver can be very gratifying. However, as we said before, the physical, emotional and economical demands can be overwhelming, stressful and tiresome. The responsibility for a loved one's wellbeing is frequently delegated to one person without planning. It is important to recognize that it not only can, but should and has to be a job for the whole family. It must involve others. To that end, we recommend you:

Start a conversation

Don't wait for a crisis to start planning what the family and the relative who needs help would like, or prefer, to happen. Planning details as important as these at the last minute or by impulse could drive you to make the wrong decisions.

Gather your team and support network

When the conversation with the family takes place, the responsibilities of each member of the team must be clearly established.

Make a plan

Your health and wellbeing are very important and should be a priority. If you are not at your best, you will not be able to take care of somebody else. Therefore,



you must find a balance between your job, life and caregiving. The plan should include identifying which family members are available, who is going to do what, and each person's responsibilities. For example, if somebody is only cooperating financially, the quantity and frequency of the installments needs to be clear (e.g.: weekly, biweekly, monthly.)

Find you support group, you are not alone

It's important to know that if the family can not reach an agreement, the next step is to find professionals who can serve as mediators and evaluate the situation of the family group.

Examine the living conditions of your relative and/or yours

It's a good idea to check the housing and living conditions of the person in need of care, and to make the necessary repairs or modifications. This will ensure safety, a positive environment, comfortability, dignity, and quality of life for your loved one, and the opportunity to remain in his/her usual surroundings for the longest time possible.

Make a self-evaluation

You should know when you need to seek support because of stress, tiredness, or health related issues that come as a result of the caregiving.

Take time for yourself

Sometimes you will need a respite, a support group, help, or just to connect to others, whether it be friends or people in your community you can count on (e.g.: your neighbors.)

➤ We want to remind you of what is most important: to promote our loved ones' independence. This means even though they may need help with basic day to day chores, they can, and must, continue to be in control of their lives and to participate in all decisions pertaining to their wellbeing.

You must be vigilant. Any action or omission could become mistreatment if it threatens the person's dignity. This could include abuse, physical or emotional maltreatment, negligence, financial exploitation, or even underestimating the person and restricting his or her power to make decisions.



Office of the Ombudsman for the Elderly (OPPEA by its Spanish acronym)

OPPEA's main purpose is to defend people who are 60 years of age or older, and to direct all efforts to public and private organizations, and persons or community groups in order to ensure a better quality of life for the elderly population in Puerto Rico. For more information about the following programs you should call the numbers listed below, the Central office -

Central office: (787) 721-6121 or toll free: 1-(877)-725-4300

State Health Insurance Assistance Program (SHIP in Spanish)

Oficina Central: (787) 721-6121 fuera del área metro al 1-(877)-725-4300

Caregivers Support Program - Region #1 (San Juan):

Central office: (787) 919-7930 or Region #2 (Ponce): (787) 841-1180/1181

Long-Term Care Housing Resident's Representative Program(Ombudsman CLD)

San Juan: (787) 725-1515 or Region #1: (787) 919-7930

Protection and Defense of the Rights of the Elderly

San Juan: (787) 721-6121 or Region #1: (787) 919-7930

Elderly Crime Victims Assistance Program

Central office: (787) 721-6121 or Region #1: (787) 919-7930

Medicare Fraud Alert, Puerto Rico Project

Central office: (787) 721-6121

Nutrition at Home Service

Contact 787-721-6121 and ask for the Planning and Sustainment Area, to verify eligibility and availability of this food delivery service in your area.

GOVERNMENT RESOURCES

Next you will find a description of the different programs and services offered by Puerto Rican government agencies which are responsible for the wellbeing of the elderly and their caregivers.

For quick access to the services, information and procedures that are offered by the agencies of the PR Commonwealth please visit: www.pr.gov.

3-1-1 Number:

Most agile mechanism to access most government services with just one call.

9-1-1 Number:

Number that centralizes all emergency response agencies through a single call or text message.

Department of Family Affairs (DF in Spanish)

The DF certifies the following establishments: multiple activity centers, daycare centers, substitute housing, and camps for the elderly. Within the DF exists the Services for the Elderly Program, under the Auxiliary Administration Office for the Services for the Elderly and Adults With Disabilities (ADFAN in Spanish.) This program offers social services in the following areas: social protection, counseling, housing, and others, to the elderly and/or adults with disabilities. For more information about the following programs you must call these phone numbers:

Central office: (787) 721-4747, or visit their website at www.adfan.pr.gov.

For the following programs or tasks, you must call this counseling line:

787-977-8022 or 1-888-359-7777



- Information and Referrals
- Counseling
- Substitute Housing Services
- Home Auxiliary Services
- Protection Services
- Substitute Caregiver Services
- Elderly or Adults With Disabilities Abuse Prevention Services

Social Emergencies Program (PES in Spanish) –

Call Center: 1-800-981-8333 (toll free) or 787-749-1333 (Metro area) and Counseling and Support Line for Families in Crisis at 1-888-359-7777 (toll free.)

Multiple Activity Center Services for the Elderly (CAMPEA in Spanish)

Bayamon: (787) 786-6268 or (787) 780-4057

Low Income Home Energy Assistance Program (LIHEAP)

San Juan: (787) 289-7600
Ext. 2386

Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (PAN in Spanish)

The food we eat provides the energy and nutrients that are needed

to be healthy. Nevertheless, due to lack of resources some older adults do not consume a healthy diet. This is why the Nutritional Assistance Program (PAN) of the Socioeconomic Development Administration of the PR Health Department (ADSEF) exhorts the community of older adults to inform themselves regarding the services provided by the PAN, in order to complement their food needs with the purchase of eligible nutritious foods. For information about the eligibility requirements or a pre-qualification by phone you may call the 3-1-1, from Monday to Friday, from 7:00 am to 7:00 pm. Also, you may visit your nearest local office of the Department of Family Affairs to receive a full orientation.

Child Support Administration (ASUME in Spanish)

The Elderly Support Program (PROSPERA in Spanish) is a sub-program of ASUME. Its goal is to promote social justice and dignified treatment for all people, but specifically for older adults (60 years or older) and young people age 21 and under. The most important duties in PROSPERA are to establish mediation services for the elder's family members who are the caregivers, and to coordinate their food pension plan between the parties or through the court, ensuring every person 60 years of age or older has a food pension plan. Also, PROSPERA coordinates referrals to other agencies, and free counseling and legal representation.

Department of Health (DS in Spanish)

The DS is responsible for regulating, inspecting and certifying all health facilities, which provide direct medical care. For more information about the following programs you must call these phone numbers:

Central office: (787) 765-2929, or visit their website at www.salud.gov.pr

- Senior ID for discounts and expedited services, for people who are 60 years of age or older (787) 765-2929 Ext. 4131
- Adult Inoculations Program (787) 765-2929 Ext. 3338, 3337 or Client Services at Ext. 3330, 3332, 3339, 3328, 3341
- Crime Victims Support and Services Program – San Juan: (787) 765-2285, (787) 765-2412, (787) 756-2412 or Help Line: (787) 765-2285

Mental Health and Addiction Services Administration (ASSMCA in Spanish)

The Department of Health is the agency in charge of the creation and implementation of all mental health and addiction prevention and rehabilitation programs (alcohol, tobacco, and substance abuse.) Therefore, the Secretary of Health and the Department of Health are the ones who can execute constitutional orders and laws

governing all issues related to mental and physical health on the island or Puerto Rico.

ASSMCA is responsible for the categories of substitute homes and long-term mental health care. It offers ambulatory and intensive ambulatory services for mental health and/or controlled substances abuse problems. It also promotes community participation. Its hospitalization treatments are focused on the bio-sociological concept. For more information about the following programs, you must call the numbers listed below, the Central office:

(787) 763-7575,
or visit ASSMCA's website at
www.assmca.pr.gov.

PAS Help Line (ASSMCA)
1-800-981-0023

- Mental Health Community Center in Mayaguez (CSMCM in Spanish)
(787) 833-0663
- Mental Health Center in San Patricio –
(787) 793-1828 or (787) 793-1553
- Residential Treatment Center for Adult Women with Controlled Substances Addictions
(787) 763-7575 (787) 763-7575
- Río Piedras Psychiatric Hospital Dr. Ramón Fernández Marina
(787) 766-4646
- Residences for Adult Men with Controlled Substances Addictions in San Juan and Ponce
San Juan: (787) 274-1633 or
Ponce: (787) 840-6835 and
(787) 840-7872

Department of Housing

The Department of Housing is responsible for two types of facilities: Auspices and Assisted Living Housing. The Housing Rent And Improvements Program for the Elderly helps people with low incomes 60 and older, and guarantees access to independent living as stated in the Housing and Urban Development (HUD) guides for the Section 8 Voucher Program. This sections of the guides regulates all Auspices. Also, the Office of the representative for the Elderly (OPPEA) establishes who can qualify as residents in these facilities. For more information about the following programs, you must call the numbers listed below, the Central

office: 787-480-5500,
or visit their website at
www.vivienda.pr.gov.

- Independent Living: Auspices
1-888-852-2272
- Assisted Living - Central office:
(787) 274-2527
Ext. 5137, 5154, 5168
- Home Improvements Program (Rule #7233 of 2006) -
(787) 274-2527
Ext. 2436, 2435, 5270, 5251
- Section 8 Voucher Program (Subsidy and rent for the elderly)
Law #173 of 1996
(787) 274-2527
- My Own House –Housing Finance Authority (AFV in Spanish)
(787) 765-7577

Electric Power Authority (EPA)

Credit for Energy Consumption Of Life Preserving Electrical Equipment

The Federal Energy Subsidy Program of the Electric Power Authority is based on Law #152 of July 19th, 1998 which awards an electricity bill credit for persons who depend on electronic appliances to save their lives.

Beneficiaries can apply for the credit at any EPA commercial office, where they will fill out the application for credit under Law #152. Certifications from the Department of Family Affairs and the Department of Health are required for final approval.

Qualified Residential Customer Subsidy for Fuel Adjustment

As ordered in the EPA's Rule #4370 and in conformance with Law #170 of August 12th, 1988 (amended), EPA's clients 65 years or older can request a subsidy be applied to the fuel adjustment line item of their electricity bill. To qualify, the monthly consumption cannot exceed 425 kilowatts/hr. EPA calculates the subsidy based on the current cost per barrel of oil, with a top limit of \$30 per barrel.

Customers can request the subsidy at any of EPA's commercial client services offices, and must fill out the subsidy application. Customers will need their account number and a copy of their birth certificate as proof of age.

For more information about credits and/or subsidies you can call the Customer Service Center: (787) 521-3434 or (787) 521-3050 for the hearing impaired.

PR Telecommunications Board

Telephone Subsidy for Low Income People

Lifeline

The Lifeline program provides a discount on phone service for qualifying low-income consumers beneficiaries of the Supplemental Nutritional Assistance Programs (PAN in Spanish) and the PR Government Health Insurance (Reforma in Spanish) to ensure that everybody has the opportunities and security that phone service brings, including being able to connect to jobs, family and emergency services. Lifeline discounts is now available to qualifying low-income consumers on pre-paid wireless service plans in addition to traditional landline service. Lifeline is part of the Universal Service Fund.

For more information call your telephone or mobile provider or the PR Telecommunications Board at 787-756-0804.

You can also access their webpage at www.jrtrpr.gobierno.pr.

Social Security Administration

Benefit: monthly checks. The amount you receive will depend

on the time you have worked, how much money you earned, where you worked, and your age at the moment when you begin to receive the benefits. Who can request it: People that are retired and are 62+ years, people with handicaps or the spouse and children (under age or handicapped children under 22 years) of a dead or handicapped worker who contributed to the Social Security system. To request this benefit, you must have a personal or telephone interview with your local Social Security office. You may locate your nearest Social Security office by contacting 1-800-772-1213 (free of charge,) and let the operator know you where you live to make an appointment. Also, you may visit their web page: www.socialsecurity.gov, and select “Applying Online for Retirement Benefits” or “Applying for Disability Benefits.”

MEDICAL ASSISTANCE

It is highly probable that a loved one or a friend will need some sort of assistance or medical insurance to address their health conditions at some point. That is why it is very important to know Medicare’s different coverage options and which benefits can help you or your loved one.



Medicare:

Is a federal health insurance program for persons with 65 years or older, and anyone (young or old) who suffers disabilities or chronic conditions, like End Stage Renal Decease (ESRD), where the patient needs dialysis or a transplant to survive. Medicare has different components and each part takes care of specific services. There is a Medicare Part A, Part B, Part C, and Part D. Please remember that every year between October and December your loved one can review the registration and change plans.

- This is a link where you can make searches for available Medicare plans by area code, so you can compare and choose the right one for your loved one: www.medicare.gov

Medicare Part A (hospitalization insurance).

This insurance covers hospitalizations, stays in nursing

centers, auspice care, and other home medical assistance services for terminal patients. This coverage is automatic for contributors to Social Security. You can see if you have Part A right on your Medicare card. If you want to know about specific fees you can call 1-(800)-633-4227 or visit their website at www.medicare.gov.

Medicare Part B (health insurance) : This part covers medical services, invoicing, equipment, ambulatory care, home health care, prevention services and laboratory tests. In Puerto Rico, even if you contributed to Social Security and have Part A, you need to register for Part B at the Social Security Administration offices within the three months prior, or after, your 65th birthday. If you don't do it within that time frame there are penalties involved. The services covered can be used more frequently than usual when they are needed for a diagnosis. You can see if you have Part B right on your Medicare card. If you want to know about specific fees

you can call 1-(800)-633-4227 or visit their website at www.medicare.gov/coverage or www.medicare.gov/publications.

There are costs related to these services, and they can vary depending on whether your doctor accepts the assigned rates.

*Parts A and B do not include dental care, eye exams, dentures, plastic surgery, acupuncture, hearing aids, hearing aid exams, or long term care.

Medicare Part C:

This is a complementary health plan (Medicare Advantage), also known as "MA PLANS," that is offered by private insurance companies under contract with Medicare to offer all the benefits of Medicare Part A and Part B (the original Medicare.) It sometimes covers additional benefits. Most, but not all, cover prescriptions. To have Part C you must have Part A and Part B already.

Medicare Part D: In 2003 the Law for Prescriptions, Improvements and Modernizing of Medicare added a new benefit: Part D. This part is also offered by private companies. It covers prescriptions for home use (e.g.: insulin, heparin, among others.) Each plan offers coverage for specific medicines. You must find out which prescribed medication is used by your loved one to ensure that your plan covers them before enrolling. In addition to the Part B fees, you will have a monthly fee for Part D.

If you or your loved one wants to be enrolled for Medicare Parts C & D for the first time, we recommend you call 1-(800)-772-1213 or visit: www.medicare.gov.



Medicaid - REFORMA/MI SALUD:

Medicare Platinum: Is a supplementary coverage for a Medicare Advantage plan, contracted by the Health Insurance Administration (ASES in Spanish). It guarantees the same benefits of the Government Health Insurance (REFORMA/MI SALUD in Spanish) to those beneficiaries with dual eligibility.

To qualify for the Platinum Medicare plan the person must be subscribed to Parts A and B of traditional Medicare and also qualify for Government Health Insurance (REFORMA/MI SALUD). These are known as patients with dual eligibility. Participation in this plan is voluntary and the benefits received by the patient under the REFORMA/MI SALUD plan are not affected if they choose not to participate in the Platinum plan.

If you are a REFORMA/MI SALUD beneficiary and want an evaluation of your or a relative's eligibility for the Medicare Platinum plan, you can call 787-641-4224. If you wish to receive information about the benefits of this plan you can call:

PROBENE: 1-(800)-981-2737
Puerto Rico's Health Services Administration (ASES): Main switchboard: (787) 474-3300

Long-Term Care Insurance (LTC)

Long-term care insurance offers tax-free weekly stipends. These only apply if the patient requires help in two or more activities of daily



living (ADLs) as a result of a lesion, accident, or illness. Some example of these activities are: bathing, dressing, eating, and going to the bathroom. Medicare does not cover these assistance services. Coverage must be acquired through private health insurance companies.

For more information you can call the Office of the Insurance Commissioner (787) 304-8686 or visit their website at www.ocs.gobierno.pr.

330 Centers (Primary and Preventive Health Centers)

These are community based, nonprofit corporations that offer primary and preventive healthcare to vulnerable communities, those without insurance, and those with limited health insurance. Among the services provided are: gynecology, internal medicine, general medicine, dental, pharmacy, laboratories, x rays, nutrition, immunization, and diagnostic reviews.

- There are 20 corporations, operating 46 centers in 44 municipalities in Puerto Rico. To know where they are you can call (787) 758-3411, or you can visit their website at: www.saludprimariapr.org.

CREDITS AND BENEFITS

1. Tax Credits

Section 1052.02 of the Internal Revenue Code grants two types of tax credits for people 65 years or older:

- **Personal Compensatory Credit** of \$200 for those with an individual gross income of \$15,000 or less. For married taxpayers, each one can claim the credit separately if they both qualify for it. This credit may be claimed using the pre-established form chosen by the Secretary, which



as transportation provided by government entities, are offered for people 60 years or older. A 50% discount is offered to people 65 years or older, but only from 5% of the total tickets available and only 72 hours in advance of the performance.

b. Urban Train Tickets Discounts

The Department of Transportation and Public Works (DTOP in Spanish) guarantees a 50% discount for people between 60 and 74 years of age. People 75 years or older can get a special ID that guarantees free use of the train. The ID itself is also free. Medicare participants and people with disabilities have other special discounts.

For more information you can call (787) 625-0325 or (787) 620-1099.

has to be filed between the 1st of July and the 15th of October the year after the one you are soliciting the credit for.

• **Compensatory Credit for Low-Income Retirees** - Any retiree whose only source of income is a pension from the Government Employee Retirement System Administration, Puerto Rico Court System, Teacher’s Retirement Plan, University of Puerto Rico, Electric Power Authority, or the private sector will be entitled to a reimbursable personal compensatory credit of \$300 per year if the total amount of that pension does not exceed \$4,800.00 per tax year. For married

taxpayers, each one can claim this credit separately if they both qualify for it.

For more information you can call the Department of Finance or visit their website at www.hacienda.gobierno.pr.

2. Discounts and Deductions:

a. Tickets for Cultural and Sports Activities

Special discounts on tickets for cultural or sports activities at government facilities, as well

c. Bus Tickets Discounts for the Metropolitan Bus Authority, Metrobus (AMA in Spanish)

The Metropolitan Bus Authority offers the Gold Plan (Plan Dorado). People 75 years old or older who show their Gold ID card can use the buses for free. Adults between 60 and 74 years of age, as well as anybody with a disability ID, can obtain a discount program at any AMA office after showing evidence of their age or disability status and two 2x2 pictures. Discount cards are not transferable.

For more information you can call (787) 294-0500, (787) 294-6064, (787) 977-2200 (DTOP.)

For our online Caregiver Resource Guide

visit: aarp.org/pr



3. Discount Card and Express Service Line for Adults 60 years or older

All Puerto Rico government agencies and corporations offering direct services to the constituents must have an express service line to benefit people with disabilities (as certified by the Department of Health) and adults 60 years or older. These persons must present a valid ID. Puerto Rico's Department of Health is the only agency that can issue these cards.

To obtain a card, you can fill out the application at www.salud.gov.pr.

Then you have to send it to: Departamento de Salud, Secretaría Auxiliar para la Promoción de la Salud, Programa de Geriatría, P. O. Box 70184 San Juan, Puerto Rico 00936-8184. If you have questions, please call 787-765-2929, Ext. 4430, 4131.

HOUSING ALTERNATIVES AND LONG-TERM CARE

Support Services: Programs and Resources Available for Caregivers and their Loved One

As our loved one loses abilities, there becomes an increasing need of a support system for the caregiver. In Puerto Rico, the long-term care system has different facilities that cater to the level

of capabilities or lack thereof of the person taken care of. The following are descriptions of the types of facilities available in Puerto Rico, according to functionality and your loved one's situation.

1. Independent Living / (Égidas)

Individual apartments or townhouses for adults who can live independently but who do not have the monetary resources to obtain their own house.

Rent fees inside the auspices depend on a lot of factors: whether the housing unit is private or public, the renter's characteristics and the attention he or she requires, the quality of the rooms, and the financial capabilities of the renter. Generally speaking, the rent is a

percentage of the renter's income based on the subsidy laws governing the Department of Housing. For more information you can call 1-888-852-2272.

2. Multiple Activity Centers

These are profit or nonprofit establishments that provide social and recreational services to groups of 7 people or more to maintain and maximize their independence for a portion of the day. The centers in Puerto Rico include: CAMPEA centers, under the Department of Family Affairs (www.adfan.pr.gov), private centers like the "Centros Esperanza para la Vejez" (HOPE centers) located in Mayagüez, San Germán and Ponce (Luis Biaggi) (www.esperanzaparalavejez.com) and the centers provided by your municipality, usually through their Office for Constituent's Services.



3. Home Aids

The home aids service provides basic assistance in the personal care of people with disabilities, or protection and supervision of mental health patients. The tasks performed help those with chronic conditions to compensate for their limitations by living independently. The Home Helpers' maximum time of service, whether from the municipality or the Department of Family Affairs, is 20 hours per week, or 4 hours five days a week. There are many private companies offering this type of service depending on the needs of the person in care and his or her level of fragility.

For more information please call
787-977-8022 or
1-888-359-7777



4. Home Healthcare Services

These nonprofit agencies are certified by the Department of Health and provide healthcare at home, on a part-time basis, or intermittently. They serve those who are sick and have a private health insurance plan or Medicare. They all evaluate potential beneficiaries. These service providers also must be Medicare-certified and comply with federal, state, and local laws regulating domiciliary care services. Some of the services offered are: registered nursing, speech therapy, social work, nutrition, medical supplies, and auxiliary home services part-time or intermittently. They do not cover: 24-hour nurse, prescription drugs, cleaning, cooking, or transportation for medical appointments.

For more information, like requisites and eligibility and what to do before applying, call (787) 765-2929 Ext. 4716, 4718.

5. Board and Care Institutions

This signifies any residential institution dedicated to 24-hour care of the elderly. They are classified by their capacity: "big" - 50 residents or more, "medium" - 21 to 49 residents, and "small" - no more than 20 residents. These facilities must have a series of permits from the Department of Family Affairs, Fire Department, and Department of Health, even though they are licensed by the Department of Family Affairs alone. For a list of licensed facilities, you can call 787-977-8022 or 1-888-359-7777

There are two nonprofit organizations for long-term care institutions that can provide information about places near you:

- **Asociación de Hogares (ADCCLD)-**

info@adccl.com
www.adccl.com

- **Federación de Hogares de Cuido Prolongado (FICPRO)-**

<http://ficpro.homestead.com/>

6. Hospice

This is a home, or substitute home-based healthcare program offered by an institution. It offers nurses and other therapeutic and support services for patients with acute,

chronic, or terminal conditions. These services are covered by Medicare.

You can call 1-800-MEDICARE (1-800-633-4227; o TTY/TDD: 1-877-486-2048, or visit their website at http://www.hospicedirectory.org/cm/about/state_hospice.

7. Transportation

There are public and private agencies that offer transportation to the elderly, mostly to promote access to services paid through Medicare. Some small companies under development are already providing transportation for errands that are not health related. The following is one of the government programs:

Transportation Program SENDA through some municipalities. For more information call (787) 721-6121

Llame y Viaje Program:

This is a transportation service available for people with physical or mental disabilities offered by the Metropolitan Bus Authority. It is free for any errands that start and end within the service area.

For more information call (787) 294-0500 Ext. 529. Coordinators' extensions: 526, 528, 530, 533, 534, 537

The parking permit for people with disabilities can also be obtained through DTOP:

(787) 294-0500 o (787) 294-0500 Ext. 514 o 524.

COMMUNITY ORGANIZATIONS AND SERVICES

In Puerto Rico there are nonprofit, community-based organizations offering services and support to elderly adults who have some type of vulnerability and need help to live independently and with dignity, as well as services and support for their family and caregivers. The goal is to positively impact and promote their quality of life.

These organizations are:

AARP

AARP is a nonprofit, non-partisan membership organization with a social mission to help adults 50 years or older see their goals and desires become real possibilities within their reach. AARP also aims to strengthen their communities, and to fight for what is most important for them and their families.

Their website, www.aarp.org, offers valuable information, tools, and advice for family caregivers.

Visit www.aarp.org/CuidadoresPR and look for the following printable resources:

- Prepare to Care Planning Guide
- Guide to select a long term care institution
- HomeFit guide to evaluate your home, so it is secure and suitable to age with Independence.



Puerto Rico Alzheimer's and Related Disorders Association (AADRRP in Spanish),

Offers information and has over 20 support groups for people with Alzheimer's, their families, and caregivers.

Call (787) 268-6818

or visit www.alzheimerpr.org

Puerto Rico Alzheimer's Federation (FAPRI in Spanish)

Offers counseling and support for people with Alzheimer's, their families, caregivers, health professionals, and communities at large.

Call 787-756-6843 or visit www.federaciondealzheimer.org/

Organization to Pro Attention to People with Alzheimer's (OPAPA in Spanish)

OPAPA was founded to educate and to develop therapeutic alternatives for the patient and his or her family and caregivers. It offers direct services for people with first and second stage Alzheimer's, and their families.

Call (787) 696-1159

or find them in

Facebook: OPAPAPR.

Mente Activa

An organization that help persons with some type of dementia or Alzheimer through cognitive stimulation. Cognitive stimulation is a nonpharmacologic treatment which focuses on strengthening cognitive capabilities through

exercises, activities and general tasks, to reduce deterioration and maintain functionality.

787-677-0503

E-mail: contacto@menteactiva.org

Web: www.menteactiva.com

Aging in Harmony (Aibonito - "Envejecer en Armonía, Inc.")

This organization offers training and certification for informal caregivers. A lot of the caregivers find jobs through this organization, or on their own. Aging in Harmony provides the tools they need to serve their fellow citizens.

Their telephone numbers are:

(787) 735-2126 y

(787) 319-5740.

Los siguientes son los números telefónicos:

(787) 735-2126 y (787) 319-5740



Technical Assistance Program, University of Puerto Rico

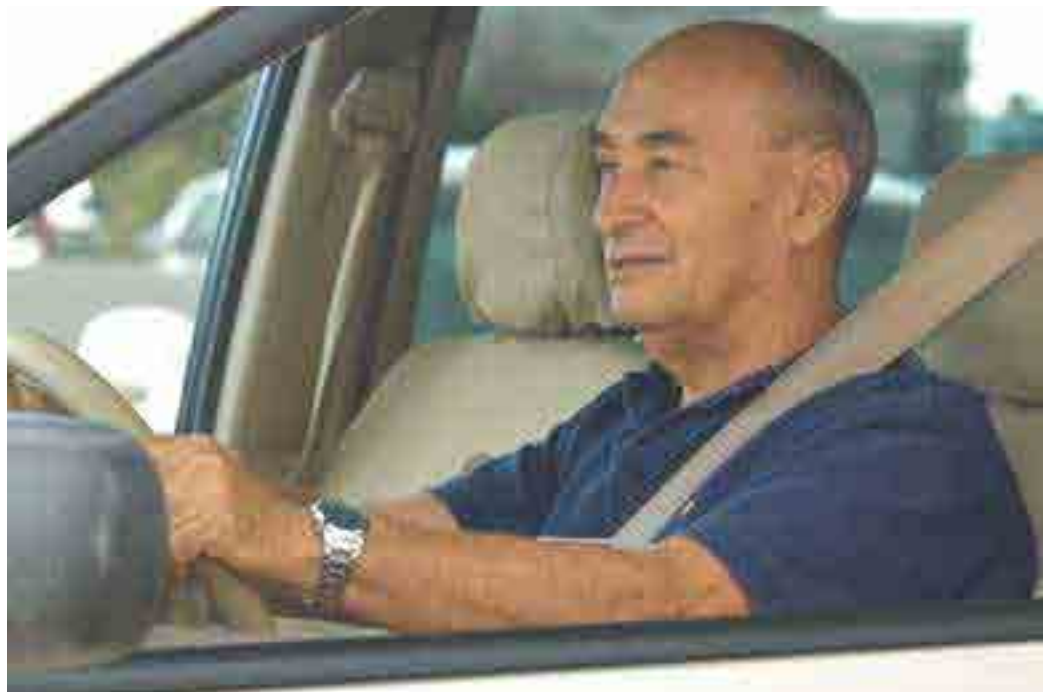
A nonprofit organization dedicated to promoting access to technological assistance for handicapped people. PRATP has the necessary tools that are essential to help people with limitations to be able to learn, develop, and be productive in their environment.

787-474-9999
1-855-449-2999
www.pratp.upr.edu

LEGAL ASPECTS AND SERVICES

When a family member, whether because of age or disability, starts to show physical or mental deterioration, the question arises of what should be done from a legal standpoint when that loved one cannot take care of his or herself, or make his or her own decisions.

First thing is to get organized: put everything in place. A lot of times the offspring (who eventually become our parents', siblings', or relatives' caregivers) lack the vital information that should be at hand to take care of a situation. We suggest you start by seeking legal counsel to produce the following documents:



Durable Power of Attorney:

A legal document allowing a person [the grantor] to give another person the power to represent him or her. The person receiving the power of attorney can make general or specific errands like: manage bank accounts, pay bills, make purchases, sell properties, and a variety of other legal matters for a period of time that may be specific or unlimited. The durable power of attorney is current and valid even after the grantor is incapacitated or declared non-capable by the court.

Advance Health Directives:

Also known as a “Living Will”, in Puerto Rico the correct name is “Advance Declaration of Choice about Medical Treatment in a Terminal Health Case or Permanent Vegetative State”. This document recognizes the right of any person of legal age in total control of their mental faculties to declare their choices about medical treatment should they suffer a terminal health

condition or persistent vegetative state which renders him or her unable to consent in a medical emergency. This document is used and implemented only when the patient can no longer communicate in any way their wish to consent or deny treatments or medical interventions. Also, it allows the person to designate another person to represent him or her and make decisions in their name. This means if the person loses the ability to make or communicate his or her decisions about their own health care, even after becoming incapacitated that person can control those decisions using this document. The Health Directives can be as general or specific as the person wishes. It can contain instructions about specific medical treatments, and the person's wishes on how to dispose of the body and organs at time of death.

Will:

A will is the document that allows people to leave their wishes about the distribution of their belongings

after their death in writing. Also, in a will the person can cover important family affairs, like the custody of minors or people with disabilities under his or her care. Puerto Rico law establishes the granting of wills and the way in which belongings are to be distributed when there isn't a signed will.

For legal counseling please call:

Puerto Rico Legal Services

Puerto Rico Legal Services (SLPR in Spanish) is a private, nonprofit corporation with 17 centers throughout the island that provide free legal counsel and representation for qualifying low income citizens in civil cases.

Call 1(800) 981-5342 or visit www.servicioslegales.org.

Pro Bono

This is a Bar Association's nonprofit corporation that offers free legal services to poor people in civil and administrative cases.

Call 1-800-981-5801 or visit www.probonopr.org.

Legal Assistance Clinic for Elders, University of Puerto Rico Law School

787-999-9570

LAWS PROMOTED BY AARP THAT PROTECT CAREGIVERS

1. Caregiver's Rights at the Hospital

CARE Law - Law #227 of December 17th, 2015 for the Training, Counseling, and Register of Family Caregivers (CARE) establishes the caregiver's rights when taking care of hospitalized patients. The law establishes that the caregiver has the right to: (1) Be registered as the patient's caregiver on medical records; (2) Be notified when the patient will be released; (3) Receive training and counseling from the hospital's healthcare professionals about the basic follow-up tasks to be performed at the home once the patient is released. This important law recognizes the role of the caregiver in post-hospital care



and prevents further unnecessary hospitalization by providing the caregiver some basic tools for home-based care. This law does not grant the caregiver any rights over those of a legal tutor.

2. Caregiver's Rights at the Job

Law #251 of December 31st, 2015 amended Minimum Wages Law #180 to allow private sector employees the same five days per year as public sector employees, to be taken from their accumulated sick leave to care for children, parents, or spouses. The Law does not expand the current sickness licenses, but allows the employee the flexibility to care for a loved one using up to five days from their accumulated sick leave.

3. Caregiver's Rights to Guardianship Among Different Jurisdictions

Law #296 of October 5th, 2012, or the Uniform Adult Guardianship and Protective Proceedings Jurisdiction Act of Puerto Rico, promotes communication and cooperation between courts of different jurisdictions within the United States to avoid jurisdictional conflicts in adult guardianship cases. The law establishes the proceedings

for guardianship transfers between participating states and Puerto Rico, with a guardianship record that facilitates the assignment of tutors or protection between states.

Because of the high traffic of Puerto Ricans within different jurisdictions, if a loved one needs to have an assigned legal tutor this law makes it possible to transfer or validate the guardianship rights among jurisdictions with ease.

VETERAN'S SUPPORT

Veteran's Administration (VA)

This agency offers veterans access to the variety of benefits and services provided in different environments by the Department of Veteran Affairs. These services offer the more vulnerable veterans health improvements, better quality of life, independence, wellbeing, and better ambulatory care.

Their website is at <http://www.benefits.va.gov/sanjuan>.

VA VetLink Program
(787) 721-6121 Ext.256

Caregiver's Support Program
Central office (Region I, San Juan): (787) 919-7930

Geriatrics and Extended Care Program (GEC)
1 (727) 398-6661, Ext. 15391

VA Blind Rehabilitation Center Program
(787) 641-7582,
Ext. 21140,21141, 21143

Healthcare in Auspices for the Elderly
1-(800)-333-4636

Geriatric Patient Aligned Care Team (Geri-PACT)
1 (610)-384-7711 Ext.6082

Health Care Benefits for Dependents CHAMPVA
1-800-733-8387

For our online
**Caregiver
Resource Guide**
visit: aarp.org/pr





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Posibilidades a tu alcance en

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ABOUT AARP

- > AARP is a nonprofit, nonpartisan member organization that is in Puerto Rico to help you turn your goals and dreams into 'Real Possibilities', regardless of age. We foster an agenda of social transformation where older adults represent a social asset to improve our society and community through their work, experience and volunteering. Additionally, we represent your voice on the legislative and government front to defend your rights and advocate for public policy that promotes dignity and empowerment. Our strength lies in our 100,000 experienced and socially committed members and volunteers.
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CREDITS:

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Puerto Rico

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