

## Preparing To Care

### Setting Up for Success as a Caregiver

According to the National Alliance for Caregiving and AARP, nearly 48 million people have provided unpaid care to an adult or child in the last 12 months.<sup>1</sup> These people may be spouses, partners, adult children, parents, other relatives, friends or even neighbors. And, many of these people may not even realize that they have taken on a new role as a caregiver.

In some cases, the need for caregiving is triggered by a medical crisis, such as a heart attack, stroke or serious accident. In other situations, caregiving creeps up on you as the health of a loved one declines. If you were called on to be a caregiver, would you be ready to take on the responsibility?

#### Getting Ready To Assume the Role of Caregiver

None of us want to think about a time when we might not be able to take care of ourselves. But, having that conversation is critical for making sure that everyone in the family is on the same page when it comes to the goals of caregiving. Here are some questions you might want to discuss as a family:

- What are the wishes of your loved one who will require care? Where will they live when they can no longer live independently?
- Who will take on the responsibilities of caregiving? How will that affect their ability to work?
- Who will pay the cost of caregiving?
- Does your loved one have an estate plan in place?

Remember that caregiving covers a full spectrum of responsibilities, from performing personal and household tasks to being a companion, handling financial and legal matters, and advocating for the care receiver. The learning curve may be steep, but having a plan in place helps ensure that your loved one is cared for in a manner that aligns with their wishes.



#### CARING FOR YOURSELF

Caregiving can take a toll on your financial and psychological wellbeing. Balancing caregiving with your other personal and professional obligations can be stressful, and making time to take care of yourself is a critical part of providing the best possible care for your loved one.

16%

of working caregivers have turned down a promotion

67%

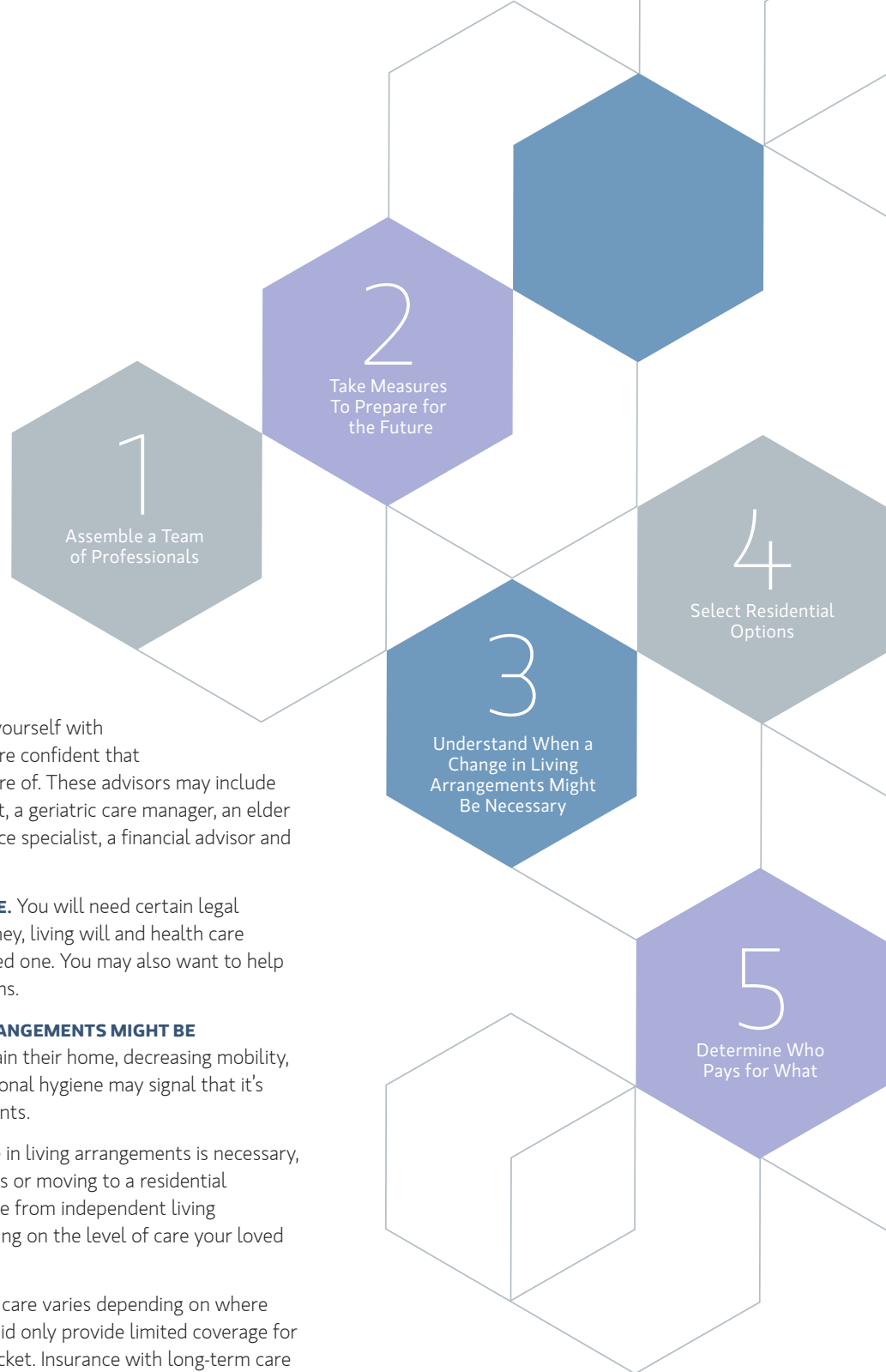
of caregivers report difficulty balancing their jobs with caregiving duties

41%

of caregivers report low overall wellbeing

## Being an Effective Caregiver

Once you have identified your caregiving goals, there are five key steps involved in developing an effective caregiving plan.



**ASSEMBLE A CAREGIVING TEAM.** Surrounding yourself with a circle of trusted advisors can help you feel more confident that every aspect of your loved one's care is taken care of. These advisors may include a home care aide, a social worker or psychologist, a geriatric care manager, an elder mediator, an attorney, an accountant, an insurance specialist, a financial advisor and your loved one's physicians.

**TAKE MEASURES TO PREPARE FOR THE FUTURE.** You will need certain legal instruments—such as a durable power of attorney, living will and health care proxy—to make decisions on behalf of your loved one. You may also want to help your loved ones create or refine their estate plans.

**UNDERSTAND WHEN A CHANGE IN LIVING ARRANGEMENTS MIGHT BE NECESSARY.** Declining health, inability to maintain their home, decreasing mobility, increasing social isolation and deteriorating personal hygiene may signal that it's time to think about a change in living arrangements.

**SELECT RESIDENTIAL OPTIONS.** When a change in living arrangements is necessary, residential options include combining households or moving to a residential community. Residential community options range from independent living communities to skilled nursing facilities, depending on the level of care your loved one needs.

**DETERMINE WHO PAYS FOR WHAT.** The cost of care varies depending on where you live. Keep in mind that Medicare and Medicaid only provide limited coverage for long-term care and most costs will be out of pocket. Insurance with long-term care benefits is one option that may help to pay for the costs associated with disabilities caused by age, injury or illness.

<sup>1</sup> AARP. New U.S. Workforce Report: Nearly 70% of Family Caregivers Report Difficulty Balancing Career and Caregiving Responsibilities, Spurring Long-Term Impacts to U.S. Economy, May 16, 2024. Available at <https://press.aarp.org/2024-5-16-US-Workforce-Report-70-Caregivers-Difficulty-Balancing-Career-Caregiving-Responsibilities>.

<sup>2</sup> Guardian. 2023 Study - Caregiving in America. Available at <https://www.guardianlife.com/reports/caregiving-in-america>.

Morgan Stanley Smith Barney LLC ("Morgan Stanley"), its affiliates and Morgan Stanley Financial Advisors and Private Wealth Advisors do not provide tax or legal advice. Clients should consult their tax advisor for matters involving taxation and tax planning, and their attorney for matters involving trust and estate planning and other legal matters.

Insurance products are offered in conjunction with Morgan Stanley Smith Barney LLC's licensed insurance agency affiliates.

Since long-term care insurance is medically underwritten, you should not cancel your current policy until your new policy is in force. A change to your current policy may incur charges, fees and costs. A new policy may require a medical exam. Actual premiums may vary from any initial quotation.

Morgan Stanley Smith Barney LLC is not implying an affiliation, sponsorship, endorsement with/of the third party or that any monitoring is being done by Morgan Stanley Smith Barney LLC ("Morgan Stanley") of any information contained within the website. Morgan Stanley is not responsible for the information contained on the third-party website or the use of or inability to use such site. Nor do we guarantee their accuracy or completeness.