

Community Education – Spring Quarter 2026

Course Title: Assisting Aging Parents or Partners

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Course Details

- Wednesdays, 04/8 -04/29
- 6:30pm to 8:30pm
- Remote class via Zoom

Course Description

Do you have an aging parent or partner with declining health? Each person has a unique situation, and navigating the journey to the end of life is challenging. Explore the complex issues you may encounter when assisting the elderly and discover strategies and resources to manage successfully. Understand the key legal and financial issues and documents relevant to elder care. Learn about the differences in medical insurance, and the different types of housing/medical assistance available to the elderly. Learn how to provide support to an elderly person with medical visits, medications, and gain basic knowledge of common medical issues of the elderly. Compare the potential role of hospice or palliative care. Develop an understanding of the challenges of caregiving, emotional impacts, and family dynamics that can occur.

Other info: A few days prior to each class you will receive an email from me with a PDF file attached and the Zoom info. This file will contain the materials that will be covered in class that week.

Learning Outcomes

By the end of this course, students will:

- Be able to describe the key legal and financial issues and documents relevant to elder care, and better understand financial implications and options.
 - Understand the key types of medical insurance, and the different options of housing/medical assistance available to the elderly
 - Better understand how to provide support to an elderly person with medical visits, medications, basic knowledge of common medical issues of the elderly, and an understanding of the potential role of hospice or palliative care
 - Identify and develop strategies to mitigate the challenges of caregiving, emotional impacts and family dynamics that can occur
 - Develop a basic knowledge of dementia, including knowing the signs that signal dementia.
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Course Schedule

Week 1 – Medical/Insurance

Introductions, overview and review of the syllabus

Context setting – modern elder care

- ***How can I support my loved one with their medical needs?***
 - How to prepare ... the basic info required
 - Medications, Common medical challenges for the elderly
 - Doctor visits and hospital stays
- ***How will my loved one pay for all this medical care?***
 - What type of insurance coverage exists?
 - What are the options, and what is covered?
 - How do I learn more?

Week 2 – Legal/Financial

- ***What are the critical documents for a good legal situation?***
 - Identification of key legal documents
 - Why are they important? What makes a good document?
 - Role of POA
- ***Assessing the Financial Situation – Will the money last?***
 - Identification of funds and assets
 - Current and anticipated expenses
 - Tax implications
 - Other potential resources/sources of funds

Week 3 – Housing/care Options, Caregiving, Family Dynamics/End of Life

- ***The Housing Situation***
 - Is it time to move from the current home?
 - Home care – what does it take?
 - Review of housing options such as assisted living, group homes, etc.
- ***Working through the emotions***
 - Becoming or supporting a caregiver/care partner
 - Family Dynamics, communications
 - End of life, hospice and Palliative care

Week 4 – Dementia Basics

One in three seniors pass with dementia (Material provided by the Alzheimer's Assoc)

- **Dementia – Know the 10 signs**
 - Normal aging vs dementia
 - Getting a diagnosis
 - After diagnosis

 - **Basics of Dementia**
 - Impact to the brain
 - Treatments, risk factors
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Resources

Recommended references for further study:

Given the range of topics covered, the class draws on many resources. At the end of each class section, relevant resources will be identified. A few excellent websites which cover multiple issues related to aging are:

- <http://www.helpingelders.org>
- <https://www.payingforseniorcare.com> <http://www.aplaceformom.com/senior-care-resources>
- <https://www.alz.org>

Excellent books

- Being Mortal by Atul Gawande
 - Eldercare 101 by Mary Jo Saavedra
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Class Evaluation

- Class evaluations are sent by email.
 - If you don't see it right away, check your **junk/spam folder**.
 - Evaluations are **anonymous** and come directly from Clark College.
 - If you don't receive one, contact:
 - Email: continuingeducation@clark.edu
 - Phone: 360-992-2939
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Incident Weather

- If the college closes due to weather, updates will appear at www.clark.edu
 - Community Education may also cancel classes independently if travel is unsafe.
 - If canceled, you will be notified by both phone and email.
 - Please check that your contact information is correct on the class roster.
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More Classes

Looking for more Community Education courses? Visit: www.clark.edu/cce/