MCM PRIVATE CARE

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Alzheimer's Care *Checklist*

There are generally five main diseases that cause dementia (Alzheimer's disease, LBD, Vascular Dementia, Frontotemporal Dementia, and Mixed Dementia).

p.2 Make the plans early

p.3 Get the story, write down the facts

p.4 Gather your village

p.3 Do not be afraid to ask

p.3 Identify your goals and communicate your plan





Andrea Kohn, RN, CRNP & Steve Kohn
MCM Private Care

AT A GLANCE

1
A complete medical and neurological workup

2
Medications should be reviewed

3
The power of denial is very strong

4
This disease is not willful

5
Discuss your desires, write down your desires

6
Don't wait till this is a disaster

7
These can all be a part of your care team

8
Caregiver stress in a family member is real.

Make the plans *early*

Part 1

Before assuming what their medical condition is

1

A complete medical and neurological workup

It is important to ensure the medical provider does a complete medical and neurological workup before assuming what their medical condition is.

✓ **Labs, scans, and a complete physical examination**

2

Medications should be reviewed

Medications should be reviewed to make sure they are not contributing to the cognitive decline of an individual.

✓ **Ask about the efficacy of medications and about options.**

3

The power of denial is very strong

They think that if they have a good hour or two and or maybe a good afternoon, that actually this is not the proper diagnosis.

✓ **They could be just enjoying their loved ones.**

4

This disease is not willful

It is irrational to think that an individual with cognitive impairment can rationalize and accept what is happening to them.

✓ **Accept that your loved one is not willfully trying to upset you**

Part 2

Identify your goals and communicate your plan

5

Discuss your desires, write down your desires

The earlier these conversations are started, the less chance of missing the window of opportunity to discuss.

✓ **A Living Will and Medical/Legal Power of Attorney**

6

Don't wait till this is a disaster

The main recommendation that we give families about when to get your loved one assistance in the home is when things become unsafe.

✓ **Bring somebody in maybe a few hours a day**

7

These can all be a part of your care team

Some resources that are available for families with loved ones with dementia are community resources like day programs, geriatric case managers.

✓ **Geriatric psychiatrists and nurse practitioners can be very helpful.**

8

Caregiver stress in a family member is real.

My biggest suggestion is to get into a support group and reach out to people who have experienced this.

✓ **It is OK to step outside and collect yourself**

Asking questions *pays off*

Do not be afraid to ask

you want to have the facts

- [ ] A complete medical and neurological workup
- [ ] Medications should be reviewed
- [ ] The timing of when symptoms first began
- [ ] Get a copy of your test results
- [ ] Labs, scans, and a complete physical examination
- [ ] A history of head injury or trauma
- [ ] Ask about the efficacy of medications and about options.
- [ ] Accompany patients on doctor visits, take detailed notes

Get the story, write down the facts

Date	What happened	Notes

Identify your goals and communicate your plan

show them where the documents are kept

Last Will and Testament _____

Living Will _____

Medical/Legal Power of Attorney _____

Long term care policies _____

Your chosen advocate _____

Where the documents are kept _____

Who gets notified if there is an emergency? _____

> *"Having assistance to deal with them in the present is the way to go to get you to feeling at peace when they have left you."* **— Andrea Kohn, RN, CRNP, *Return to Sender***

Notes

Gather your *village*

Doctor visits

- [ ] Accompany patients on doctor visits
- [ ] Take detailed notes
- [ ] Follow up as needed with physicians
- [ ] Ask for a copy of your labs or studies

Care team

- [ ] Geriatric case managers
- [ ] Nurse case managers and home health agencies
- [ ] Geriatric psychiatrists and nurse practitioners
- [ ] Community resources like day programs

Daily life

- [ ] Get them involved in exercise and socializing
- [ ] Encourage music, dancing, or art projects.
- [ ] Use the talents and abilities that they still possess
- [ ] Brain stimulation with conversations or activities

For you

- [ ] Sign up for a course or a support group
- [ ] Education is the best tool for you.
- [ ] Reach out to people who have experienced this
- [ ] Use their village as support

Things that didn't strike you at the time

- ⚠ **Getting harder and harder to make decisions**
- ⚠ **Inability to remember to take their medications on time**
- ⚠ **Not following along with the conversations**
- ⚠ **They struggle for words**
- ⚠ **Their loved one's memory failing**
- ⚠ **Mom took the car and was lost for hours**
- ⚠ **Their loved one looks tired or thin**
- ⚠ **They can't operate the phone**

Typically, I get a call before any major issue has occurred, but such issues are oftentimes right around the corner.

Reach out early

In my own case, I was able to bring in two wonderful caregivers for my mother... it allowed me to be the daughter and to be able to just really enjoy my mother.

Call (240) 789-4890



★★★★★ *"Both of my parents had dementia and we started using MCM about nine years ago, and we started very slow with just an aid a couple times a week, and then it kept increasing as the needs were increasing"* — Karen W.



Return to Sender
by Andrea S. Kohn