

Care Continuity & Backup Care Plan

Make the next day of care understandable if the usual caregiver cannot be there.

A great deal of caregiving can live in one person's memory. That works—until the usual caregiver becomes sick, delayed, exhausted, needs respite, or is unexpectedly unavailable. This pack gathers the information another responsible person would need to understand the next day of care.

THINK IN TERMS OF THE NEXT 24 HOURS

A backup caregiver does not need the entire history before stepping in. They do need the essentials: current routines, medications and where the verified list is kept, mobility and personal-care help, communication needs, meals, equipment, appointments or services, contacts, and important preferences.

MAKE INSTRUCTIONS USABLE

Write what another person would actually need to know. “Help with medications” is less useful than identifying where the current medication list is kept, what assistance is normally provided, and whom to contact with a question.

PLAN ACCESS WITHOUT GIVING AWAY PRIVATE INFORMATION

A backup may need to enter the home, find supplies, reach providers or services, or locate important information. Arrange access appropriately, but do not put passwords, alarm codes, PINs, or unnecessary sensitive information in this pack.

A BACKUP CAREGIVER IS NOT AUTOMATICALLY A DECISION-MAKER

Helping with daily care does not by itself create legal authority to make healthcare, financial, or other decisions. Keep legal or authorization documents where the appropriate person can locate them.

UPDATE THE PLAN WHEN CARE CHANGES

Review after a hospitalization, medication change, new equipment, meaningful change in mobility or supervision, move, new service, or change in the backup person.

WHAT THIS PACK COVERS

- ☐ Who can step in and how to reach them
- ☐ Daily routine and personal preferences
- ☐ Assistance, supervision, mobility and communication needs
- ☐ Medications, appointments, equipment and current priorities
- ☐ Where essential information and supplies can be found
- ☐ Gaps that still need to be fixed

Who Can Step In?

Identify people who have agreed to help. A name on a page is not enough—confirm what each person is actually willing and able to do.

Person / Service	Relationship or Role	Best Contact	What They Can Cover

Primary backup caregiver:

If that person is unavailable, who is next?

Who can help with only one part of care—transportation, meals, errands, visits, or another task?

ACCESS

How would an authorized backup enter the home and locate essential information? (Do not write security codes here.)

The Next 24 Hours — Daily Routine

Write the parts of an ordinary day that a new helper could easily miss.

Time / Part of Day	What Usually Happens	Help, Reminder or Supervision Needed	Important Preference / Detail
Morning			
Breakfast / morning medicines			
Midday			
Lunch / hydration			
Afternoon			
Dinner / evening medicines			
Evening			
Bedtime / overnight			

One routine that is especially important to preserve:

Assistance, Safety & Communication

Describe the support another caregiver needs to provide. Use instructions already established by the person, healthcare team, therapist, or other appropriate professional.

Area	What the Person Can Do	Help / Supervision Needed	Important Instructions or Preferences
Walking / mobility			
Transfers			
Toileting			
Bathing / personal care			
Dressing			
Eating / drinking			
Communication			
Memory / reminders			
Other			

Something a new helper could misunderstand if it is not explained:

Medications, Equipment & Current Care

This page points to current instructions; it is not a substitute for the verified medication list, equipment instructions, or professional guidance.

Current medication list is kept:

Medication assistance normally provided:

Pharmacy / medication question contact:

Equipment used and where it is kept:

Equipment instructions / supplier contact are kept:

Current treatments, home-health services, therapy, or other scheduled care:

Important supplies and where they are kept:

POWER OR EQUIPMENT DEPENDENCE

If essential equipment depends on electricity, oxygen, refrigeration, or another service, record where the established backup instructions and supplier or professional contact information are kept.

Backup instructions / contact location:

Appointments, Contacts & Current Priorities

Primary healthcare contact:

Other important healthcare / service contact:

Upcoming appointment, visit, treatment, delivery, or service:

Transportation arrangement, if needed:

Recent change another caregiver needs to know about:

Question or follow-up currently in progress:

Anything time-sensitive in the next 24–48 hours:

IF SOMETHING CHANGES

Follow the person's existing healthcare instructions for whom to call and when. If emergency services are needed, call 911 or the local emergency number.

What Only I Know

Caregiving often includes small details that have never been written down because the usual caregiver simply knows them. These are exactly the details a backup may need.

Information that currently exists only in my memory:

A routine another person would not know:

A preference that helps the day go better:

A contact, instruction, supply, or document another person might not find:

Something the person can do independently that a new helper should not automatically take over:

What I will document or explain first:

Backup Care Readiness Check

Use this quick check before respite, travel, a planned absence, or simply as a periodic test of the care system.

- ☐ At least one backup person has agreed to help.
- ☐ The backup knows how to reach the person receiving care and enter appropriately.
- ☐ The current medication list can be found.
- ☐ Daily routines and important preferences are understandable.
- ☐ Mobility, transfer, personal-care and supervision needs are explained.
- ☐ Communication or memory needs are explained.
- ☐ Necessary equipment and supplies can be found.
- ☐ Appointments, services and time-sensitive tasks are visible.
- ☐ Healthcare, pharmacy and other essential contacts can be found.
- ☐ Important documents and authorized-access information can be located.
- ☐ The backup knows whom to contact with questions.
- ☐ There is a second option if the first backup cannot help.

THE RESULT

- ☐ Ready — another responsible person could probably step in for the next day.
- ☐ Almost ready — a few important gaps need attention.
- ☐ Not ready yet — too much essential information or responsibility still depends on one person.

The most important gap to fix first:

Who will help fix it?

Review date: _____ Next planned review: _____