

PRACTISING SELF-CARE WITH RESPITE CARE

By Agency for Integrated Care

Caregiving is a long journey that is highly demanding, and many put their loved ones' needs ahead of theirs. You may have patients who are caregivers, and are showing signs of caregiver burnout. As their doctor, you are in a privileged position to remind them to take periodic breaks and practise self-care for their own well-being, so that they are able to continue supporting their loved ones to age in place. Respite care options are available to assist, providing short-term professional care in a safe environment so that caregivers can take a much needed break or get aid when their helper goes on home leave.

Today, there are two respite options:

A

Respite option at a senior care centre



This is suitable if respite is only required during the day. Seniors can take part in activities ranging from simple exercises, art and craft, karaoke sessions, and tabletop games. Care staff will take care of seniors' custodial and medication needs, meals, and assistance with daily living activities such as dressing, toileting and feeding (including tube feeding). Seniors can make use of this option on an ad hoc basis, even for a day.

B

Respite option at a nursing home



This is a stay-in service and suitable for seniors who have high level of care needs e.g. round-the-clock assistance for most of their daily living activities. This is also for seniors who have daily nursing care needs such as wound dressing, tube feeding, and stoma management. This option is available for a minimum of seven days per stay, and up to 30 days per year.

Pre-enrolment for respite: Faster access to respite care for caregivers

There are many considerations and administrative processes caregivers go through before they can use a respite option, and it can take up to a month to get things sorted out. To reduce the amount of time required to activate respite options when needed, caregivers should be encouraged to pre-enrol, plan for respite, identify preferred providers and settings, and complete administrative processes beforehand.

Why pre-enrolment?

1



Shorter time needed to get respite care when needed

2



Direct access to a service provider who understands the caregiver and senior's needs

3



Reduced hassle for caregiver

4



Minimised care disruption if caregiver is temporarily unavailable to care for the care recipient

How can caregivers pre-enrol?

Caregivers can visit any AICare Links located in restructured hospitals or log on to www.silverpages.sg/gettingrespite to obtain the pre-enrolment form and the list of centres and nursing homes offering pre-enrolment for respite care. Household means-test form is also available for seniors who are eligible and wish to utilise government subsidies for respite care.