

Internet Sites for Caregivers

Looking for information on the internet – on any topic – can be a frustrating and time-consuming experience. In the last 5 to 10 years a number of websites focused on providing resources and information for caregivers have come on the scene. Looking at a few of these websites may be a good way to start your internet research related to caregiver issues and needs. They will offer a more narrow focus than a broader internet search and may be more likely to yield information that is relevant to your situation.

This article offers a brief summary of several key websites. This list is by no mean exhaustive – there are many, many worthy websites out there with good information!

Let's start with our website – Family Caregivers Online (www.familycaregiversonline.net). Development and maintenance of this website is funded by the Area Agencies on Aging in the DFW metro area. Here you will find a wealth of information for caregivers including tip sheets, checklists and even online versions of our caregiver education seminars. Additionally you can find the archive of all the newsletter articles which have covered a wide variety of topics over time.

To find information from your location area agency on aging click the logo for the county at the bottom. For counties outside Dallas or Tarrant Counties and surrounding the Metroplex go to the logo labeled Area Agency on Aging of North Central Texas.

Several federal and state government websites can be a great resource for information for caregivers. Key ones include:

- <http://www.dads.state.tx.us/> - Find information and services for older adults and people with disabilities and family caregivers.
- Medicare – www.medicare.gov – this website provides a wealth of information about Medicare. If you have not explored this website, it is worth a visit. One of the more interesting areas to explore is the Resource Locator section. This website also has a Nursing Home Compare section and a Hospital Compare section. Check it out!
- Senior Citizen Resources – www.USA.gov/Topics/Seniors.shtml - offers links to a range of information and services including caregiver resources, consumer protection for seniors, end of life issues, and grandparents raising grandchildren.
- U.S. Administration on Aging – www.aoa.gov - Brief fact sheets on aging and links to outside resources for an assortment of caregiving issues, including financial planning, residential options, in-home services, case management and the law.
- Government Benefits – www.benefits.gov – a tool to help you determine eligibility for a variety of government programs.

If you are seeking information on legal and financial issues related to elder care, check out some of these websites:

- Benefits Checkup – www.benefitscheckup.org – this website offers A search tool developed by the National Council on Aging to determine eligibility for 1,300 benefit programs that help pay for medications, health care, utilities and so forth.
- National Academy of Elder Law Attorneys – www.naela.org – you can search by location for members of the association. This website also provides questions to ask lawyers about qualifications and areas of expertise, and a wide-ranging resource list for the elderly.

There are many sites focusing on education and support for caregivers. Here are a few of them:

- Family Caregiver Alliance – www.fca.org – this website offers tips on a wide range of topics, including how to hire help, hold a family meeting, balance work and caregiving, find important papers, and decide whether parents should move in with an adult child.
- National Family Caregivers Association – www.nfcacares.org – the NFCA website provides statistics, research and policy reports, tip sheets, first-person accounts, a newsletter and an exhaustive resource list.
- Children of Aging Parents – www.caps4caregivers.org – organization has a newsletter that focuses on interpersonal matters like stress among siblings, caregiver depression and getting through the holidays.

Other websites that have good information related to aging include American Association of Retired Persons (www.aarp.org) and WebMd (www.webmd.com).

Of course when you are searching on the internet, you also can encounter information that may be incorrect, out-of-date, misleading or even designed to victimize elders and caregivers. When dealing with medical or legal issues or issues related to benefits, doing your own research can be helpful, but you should always consult with a professional regarding major decisions.

Happy surfing!