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Dementia Specialists

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# HOW TO TALK TO PARENTS ABOUT CARE

Find out the way to talk to parents that WORKS!

THE SUCCESSFUL  
APPROACH THAT WORKS

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Talking to parents about care can be a difficult subject to broach.

**You're not alone.** 95% of people we talk to are having difficulty talking to parents about care.

First let's consider the different reasons why parents may be reluctant to have support. You may identify with 1 or more of them.

1. They may view you as the child. Because of the parent/child relationship, they may be uncomfortable with you advising them what to do.
2. They may be worried that they will become a burden.
3. They may be **worried about the cost** and that this will have an impact on how much they are able to leave for their family.
4. They may see support as a **loss of their control** and of their independence.
5. They may be **worried about getting older** and the obstacles which come with ageing.

So how to prepare for a conversation about care and support?

**“THE ONLY WAY TO WIN AN ARGUMENT IS TO NOT HAVE ONE.” DALE CARNEGIE**

**1. Reassure** - There may be feelings such as anxiety, fear of losing independence, dignity and also feelings of reluctance about care and support.

**IF YOU LISTEN AND ACCEPT THEN PEOPLE COME ROUND TO YOUR WAY OF THINKING MUCH QUICKER**

**IF YOU ARGUE THEY NEVER DO**

**Be empathic and understanding;** acknowledge and reflect back what they are saying and listen. Avoid any arguments, the more understanding you are the more likely they will come round to your way of thinking.

**2. Plan the conversation** - Which Magazine recommends, for an increased chance of a positive response, considering what you're going to say, how you're going to say it and (very importantly) when the best time for the chat will be.

Choose a place and time where distractions will be at a minimum - perhaps not when Corrie or Eastenders is on!

**3. How to start?** - Try open-ended questions that will enable a discussion.

Which magazine has some useful sentence/conversation starters...

'I would like to talk about .... so that we can work out if there's anything we can do to make your life easier/more comfortable.'

'Is there anything that is worrying you or that you are having difficulty with?'

Focus on the positives... How are you finding ... at the moment?

'We'd like to make sure that you are happy with ... If not, there might be things that we can do together to help.'

If you the support is for one half of a couple. Perhaps you could ask the partner what they'd like to do? What could they do if there was some support to give a little respite?

**4. Support for yourself** - Who can support you during the conversation. Could a family member or a professional such as a **GP, social worker** or other **professional** support you?

Could you arrange a Local Authority care needs assessment which is free. We're also here for support to listen if you'd like to call or send over an email.

**5. Take time** - Don't expect parents to accept or be co-operative in a conversation the 1st time.

Give them time. Show and demonstrate that you want the best for them.

**6. Start with a meeting and a trial** - Maybe suggest a slow or soft start to the support and gently build up.

We asked **Malcolm**, a **GP** with over 30 years' experience and part of the CareChooser team for his thoughts.

Malcolm recommends having **consistent carers** the same person each day. And having a carer **visit for a chat**, at CareChooser we do this with every carer and family or possibly even with the family waiting in a different room to make them feel more in control.

This may give them time and space to get used to the idea and to meet the person and chat without any pressure.

Another idea is to call the carer by a **different name**. An assistant or just some practical help or introduce them as a friend of the family.

He also recommends **building up the support** starting with small amounts of time to build up confidence and a strong relationship.

When you're ready for some help and support with any specific issues you are having give us a call on 07792939454 or drop a message at [hello@carechooser.com](mailto:hello@carechooser.com)

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