



Caring With Passion

Cummings Care Management, Inc.

New Survey of Aging Experts Gives Top 5 Tips for Avoiding Family Feud when Caring for Aging Parents

Lorraine Cummings, LCSW, C-ASWCM participated in a survey conducted by the Aging Life Care Association (ALCA) of 335 Aging Life Care™ Managers across the country on this question--Looking for tips on how to avoid a major family feud when dealing with the sensitive issue of caring for your aging parent?

Here are the top 5 tips identified by these aging experts in the survey (along with the percentage of survey respondents selecting each option):

1. Give each family member opportunity to voice their concerns, questions and ideas. (81.5%).
2. Hold a family meeting (either in person, on Skype or by phone) to plan for emergencies or the future. Using an objective facilitator can be helpful. (78.3%).
3. Identify areas of agreement (i.e. areas of common concerns, desire for parent to age in place, safety) and disagreement (i.e., need for caregivers, who will be the caregivers, staying at home or moving to a care facility) among family members. (75.6%).
4. Keep lines of communication open. (71.4%).
5. Identify the roles each family member will play (i.e., driving, cooking, live-in, financial support, spokesperson, errands, housecleaning, gardening, outings, etc.). (69.6%).

ALCA conducted the survey of their members from May 16-20, 2013 as part of National Aging Life Care™ Professionals Month – an effort designed to educate the public about the issues facing older adults and the role of caregivers in supporting them.

“Aging Life Care™ Managers work with older adults and their families on a daily basis. A top issue we see is family tensions that develop, and then intensify, when there is a lack open and regular communication within the family,” said ALCA President Jullie Gray. “It is really important to keep the lines of communication open – when it stops many problems develop for aging family members and those they love”, she added.

“It is also very helpful for adult children to establish clear division of responsibilities – Who is going to take Mom to the doctor? When will we visit her? Who can regularly buy food? Or should we rotate that responsibility? – for all the areas an aging family member will need support”, Ms. Gray also said.

About ALCA

The Aging Life Care™ Association (ALCA) was formed in 1985 to advance dignified care for older adults and their families. Aging Life Care™ Managers are professionals who have extensive training and experience working with older people, people with disabilities and families who need assistance with caregiving issues. They assist older adults who wish to remain in their homes, or can help families in the search for a suitable nursing home placement or extended care if the need occurs. The practice of Aging Life Care™ management and the role of care providers have captured a national spotlight, as generations of Baby Boomers age in the United States and abroad.