



As a caregiver, it is important to plan ahead in case of an unexpected event or crisis. There could also be events that prevent you from continuing your caregiving role. A detailed plan can help others in case you are unavailable. You might be wondering:

## What are the first steps for creating a back-up plan?

1. Identify someone you trust who could step in if needed (your support system).
2. Communicate with your support system on an ongoing basis.
3. Create a weekly or monthly schedule to keep track of appointments.
4. Create a physical or digital file with important information. Tell your support system where it is and how to access it:
  - Write out the person with dementia's typical daily routine.
  - List contact information (Family Doctor, Dentist, Lawyer, Accountant, Landlord, Dementia Care Coach, etc.).
  - List important medication information (description, dosage, etc.).
  - List health care conditions and allergies. Make a copy of their health card.
5. Keep a physical copy on the fridge. First-responders will check the fridge for this information in an emergency.

## What should I be adding to the plan?

Make sure to update the file on an ongoing basis to include health information like:

- Symptoms, behaviours, or common triggers that an outsider would need to know in an emergency. For example: “he often experiences paranoia in the evening”
- Any special health care needs. For example: “needs a walker”, “is blind in right eye”.

## What documents should I keep handy?

Make sure a trusted person knows the location of the following documents:

- Advanced planning information: E.g., Will and Testament; Power of Attorney document
- Names of companies and contact information. E.g., for water, electricity, heat, cable, and telephone.
- Banking information and insurance policies.
- Titles and deeds to property and vehicles.
- Care plan for pets. E.g., Name of kennel, people who can care for the pet, important care instructions. For dog care assistance, visit <http://www.elderdog.ca/>

## When might someone need this information?

- The primary caregiver experiences burnout or becomes ill.
- Changes in the person’s dementia occur suddenly and more support is needed.
- A break is needed from caregiving for other reasons.
- Reaching the person with dementia is not possible for reasons beyond your control (e.g., bad weather, car trouble).

## Are there resources available to help get organized?

- **Senior Emergency Kit** - For a complete kit with worksheets and checklists: <https://www.caregiverstress.com/wp-content/uploads/2013/04/Senior-Emergency-Kit2.pdf>
- **Careteam**: A secure portal for storing instructions, appointments, documents, and connecting with everyone involved: <https://careteam.me/start?code=jyTHYZ-xwG99b>
- **Workbook on advance care planning**: <https://www.speakupontario.ca/resource/acp-workbook-en/>
- **Fact sheets on managing finances and maximizing income and benefits**: <https://dementiahelp.ca/understanding-dementia/resources-factsheets/>

**Ottawa:** 613-523-4004 **Renfrew-County:** 1-888-411-2067 | [info@dsorc.org](mailto:info@dsorc.org) | [DementiaHelp.ca](http://DementiaHelp.ca)

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