



SCRIPPS GERONTOLOGY CENTER



Our Family

Our Way

**A Communication and Care Coordination
Resource for Caregiving Families**

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Family Communication Problems

- Not seeing eye-to-eye about what's needed, wanted, and possible
- Failing to acknowledge that each family member's decisions affect other family members
- Doing things without talking or without actually deciding
- Excluding some family members from the process



Goals of *Our Family, Our Way*

- Improve communication between family members about care and support
- Ensure that the person with care needs is included in conversations and decisions about care and support
- Increase the involvement of family members and others so that one care partner is not responsible for all care and support

Our Family, Our Way Family Meeting Materials

- Individual Tools
- Family Meeting
- Shared Assessment
- Family Care and Support Plan
- Follow-up Plan



Individual Tools

Health Consideration	I'm not sure	No limitation	Some limitation	Major limitation
Hearing				
Vision				
Taste/Smell				

The home...	N/A	I'm not sure.	Yes	No	Notes
Has rooms and hallways clear of clutter.					
Has non-skid rugs.					
Has safe stairways (clutter free, handrails, clearly marked, well lit).					

Care or support activity	What PERSONAL help is required?					Who is helping now?			What DEVICES are used and needed?		
	N/A	I'm not sure	I require no help	I require some help	I require much help	I'm not sure	Who provides the help?	No one is helping, but I need help.	I'm not sure	What devices are USED?	What devices could be helpful?
How much personal help do you require with the following activities:											
Bathing or showering											
Dressing											

Shared Assessment

Health Consideration	No limitation	Some limitation	Major limitation	Can't agree
Hearing				X
Vision		X		
Taste/Smell	X			

The home...	N/A	Yes	No	Can't agree	Notes
Has rooms and hallways clear of clutter.				X	Mom does not feel "her papers" are a problem
Has adequate outdoor lighting.			X		front porch light is burned out
Has an emergency response system. (e.g., Lifeline)		X			

Care or support activity	N/A	What PERSONAL help is required?				Who is helping now?			What DEVICES are used and needed?		
		Requires no help	Requires some help	Requires much help	Can't agree	Who provides the help?	No one is helping, but help is needed.	Can't agree	What devices are USED?	What devices could be helpful?	Can't agree
Bathing or showering				X		Mom and Tonya - Tue, Thur, Sat	Mon, Wed, Fri, Sun			shower bench	
Dressing		X									

Family Care and Support Plan

Who will do what and when to address...	N/A	Steps we might take	Who will take the lead	Who else will be involved	When we will take these steps	Can't agree or Undecided
Hearing		hearing test for Dad				X
Bladder or bowel control		Dad wants a urinal next to his bed at night.	Mom will order a urinal from the pharmacy and make sure it's by Dad's bed at night.	Tonya will pick up the urinal from the pharmacy.	Mom will order the urinal this week and let Tonya know when it's ready for pick-up.	
Physical mobility		Physical therapy	Dad will talk to Dr. Mullins about therapy at his next appointment	Tonya will drive Dad to the therapy appointments	Dad's next appt. with Dr. Brown is August 2nd.	

Who else is available to provide care and support?			
Extended family or friends	What might they do?	Community Services	What might they do?
Neighbor Dean (Tim's dad)	mow lawn or shovel snow when Tim's not available	Meals on Wheels	provide lunch so mom doesn't have to cook during the day
Cousin Kathy	drive Dad to appointments when Becky isn't available	Home Care Agency	help with bathing Dad
Mom's friend Margie	take Mom out to lunch so she can get a break		

Self (Family)-guided Process



Readiness for Step Two

Step Two is working toward a **statement of goals for your family**. How ready do you feel to move on to Step Two? Do you need to stop and take a break.....a few minutes?a few days? Is it time to call in a professional counselor or mediator?

Additional Resources for Families

- Instructions and video for downloading and printing materials
- **Videos**
 - *What can a family meeting do for us?*
 - *How do we hold a family meeting?*
- **Tip sheets**
 - *Who should be included in our family meeting?*
 - *Should the person with care needs attend the family meeting?*
 - *Preparing for your family meeting*
 - *General communication tips for your family meeting*
 - *How do we deal with major differences in our family meeting?*
 - *How can I provide meaningful support from a distance?*
- Helpful Caregiving Resources booklet
- Sample agenda for follow-up meetings

Beyond the Physical



All About Me

Family members and friends may know each other well, but there are some questions that we typically don't ask each other. This resource is designed to help care partners get to know what's most important to the person with care needs and their preferences for certain aspects of care and support. Not only can this information be helpful in guiding family and friend care partners, but it can also be useful to paid care partners who may be part of your arrangement.

This resource is divided into two parts – The Big Picture and Daily Routine. Some people may be able to provide general insights about themselves, and others may be able to provide specific details about their preferences. Depending on what an individual is able to communicate, use the questions in each section to ensure the voice of the person with care needs is included in shaping the care and support arrangement.

The Big Picture

If you were meeting someone for the first time, what's the most important thing they should know about you?

What are your favorite things to do?

How do you like to spend your time?

Do you have any hobbies?



Engagement Calendar

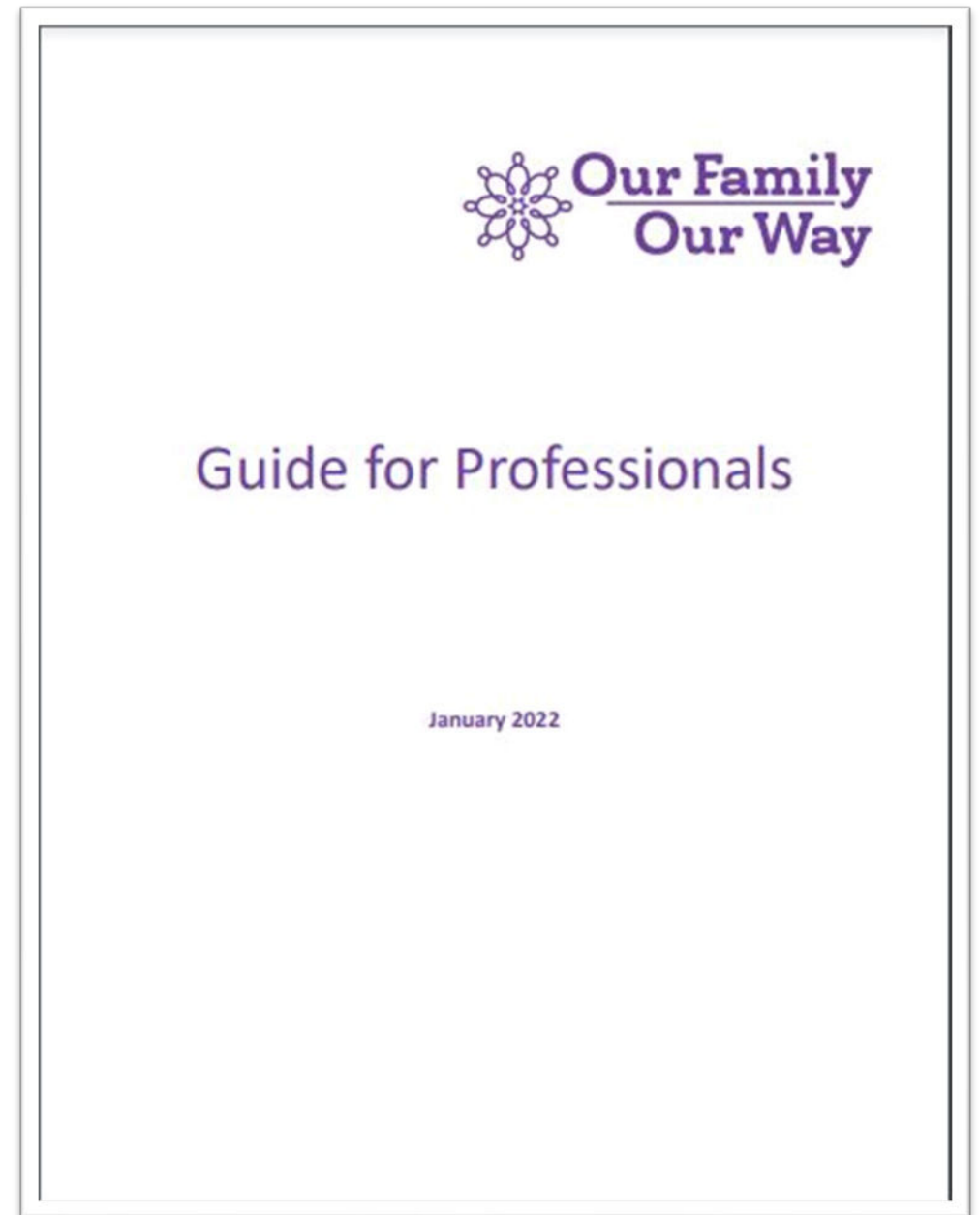
Regardless of whether someone lives close or far away, "engagement" can come in many forms: telephone calls, emails, visits (in-person or virtual), family or friend gatherings, sharing meals, and sending cards or flowers. It could also include outings such as restaurants, worship services, meetings for social clubs or civic groups, and other events. Completing this calendar should involve a conversation with the person with care needs and the primary care partner to help families include engagement opportunities that preserve their interests. Review this document from time-to-time as interests and schedules change.

Use this calendar to record engagement that happens routinely (daily, weekly, and monthly). This will help you see the "gaps" where more engagement might be needed to help ensure that the person with care needs and/or the primary care partner is staying connected.

	Morning	Afternoon	Evening
MONDAY			
TUESDAY			
WEDNESDAY			
THURSDAY			
FRIDAY			
SATURDAY			
SUNDAY			

OFOW Guide for Professionals

- » Families who do not have access to a computer, Wi-Fi, and/or printer.
- » Families who can use OFOW as a self-guided resource
- » Families who are skeptical about the helpfulness or usefulness of holding a family meeting
- » Families who are not sure how to get started
- » Families who need coaching to stay accountable
- » Families who need facilitation during their family meeting



Our Family, Our Way

*FREE Communication and Care Coordination
Resource for Caregiving Families*

What's Our Family, Our Way?

When we need care and support, family is usually first to help. However, arrangements are often made without any discussion about what works best for everyone involved. Our Family, Our Way provides carefully designed materials to walk your family through the process of holding a family meeting where you can talk about what kinds of care and support are needed and wanted, and how you can work together to make it happen.



Our Family, Our Way can help your family:

- Talk to each other about who will do what, where, when, and how.
- Create a family plan for how to address care needs now and in the future.

*To access our free family meeting materials,
videos, tip sheets, and other resources, visit:*

www.MiamiOH.edu/ScrippsAging/ofow





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Give us your feedback!

The OFOW materials are freely available for download and printing from the OFOW website.

- » If you or your organization chooses to print and download materials, please note that under the OFOW Creative Commons licensing, you may recoup printing and binding costs, but the OFOW materials may not be used for any commercial purposes, and no family should be charged for access to the materials or to use them.

Our Family, Our Way was made possible with support from:

RRF Foundation for Aging

and

The Ohio Long-Term Care Research Project

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Thank you!

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References

Our Family, Our Way – Heston-Mullins, J., McGrew, K. B., & Helsing, A. (2021). Communication and care coordination resource for caregiving families. Accessible at www.MiamiOH.edu/ScrippsAging/OFOW