

## Geriatric consultant can help families as parents age

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As the population ages and particularly our parents age, it is appropriate and helpful to use the services of a geriatric consultant. A number of companies offer a large variety of services depending on your family's needs. These firms are part patient advocate and part mediators with the family when required.

For instance, on many occasions it is necessary to determine whether mom or dad are able to live independently in their own home. While you might determine that mom or dad are not able to live by themselves anymore, a geriatric consultant may be able to step in, talk with your parent, evaluate the parent's health as well as their home and surroundings. They also attempt to involve the parent in the decision, which, is a huge step for aging parents to take.



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Sometimes, it is appropriate to have that parent live in assisted care. Many times, however, with the addition of a part-time care assistant and modifying the home environment to include items that would extend the time that the senior parent may be able to live in his or her own home semi-independently. This may involve a structural change to the residence, such as an elevator or chair to allow the senior to go to the second floor or remodel the first floor to accommodate another bedroom or making sure that the proper on-site caretaker is there to assist with chores around the home.

The geriatric consultant also can help to mediate between siblings, many of whom may have a different idea of how to help their parent. One sibling may feel that the parent would be better off in a nursing home or assisted care, while another may determine that the parent should stay in his or her home. Senior parents normally have enough of their own fears to deal with and tend to react negatively toward the conflicts between their children over what will happen with their lives.

If the parent has had extensive medical bills that need to be sorted or reimbursement needs to be applied for, many geriatric consultants may supply this need. The bottom line is that using a geriatric consultant will give your family piece of mind, as many of my clients can attest to.

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