

# Discover: Free E-Book for Age Care.



## How to Choose the Right Caregiver for Your Loved One

Practical tips and advice from Health Professionals on how to choose a quality carer. [Click here to download your free copy now.](#)



# Welcome

The stress of finding a caregiver that is a perfect fit for your loved one whether it be your nana, grandfather, mother, father, husband or wife can be exhausting. How can you have peace of mind that this person who has come into the home will know what to do or how to react to your loved one who may have special needs or requirements or do quirky things. How can you find someone for your own peace of mind to help you and your family take care of them when you can't be there, or when you need rest and respite.

I know that many of you are juggling and some people who are caring commitments and it feels like you are on a wheel getting no where. Many people who are caring for a family member still need to go to work and or look after other family members. It can be so stressful having to juggle all this. Trying to find that right fit is so important and that is where training, qualifications, experience comes in. Those trained, vetted and hand picked are specialists who understand different behaviour that some of those that they care for may have and they know how to handle it. This then makes life that much easier so you can be sure that you look after yourself first and foremost as no one cares for the carer right? To know you have chosen wisely and that the person you have entrusted is reliable, dedicated and passionate, and well as knowledgeable and well equipped in how to deal with different situations keeps you and your special person happy and content, and we all want that right?

This short ebook is written to assist you by people who have consulted from our experts who have worked in the health profession for many years both as nurses and clinical managers and experienced qualified carers as well as me a person who has both lived in a rest home from when I was 12 years old and used both in home carers for my mum and dad and I have also been in the “system” of the health care system in NZ when my parents had some issues both in retirement homes, hospitals and the like. I understand that respite care is far and few in between and staying in your own homes has lots of advantages. I now help out to provide clients with great staff and am passionate about helping you find the right carer for you.



**The person you choose firstly should be vetted and we talk about that more later. They should be professional and hold qualifications, genuine knowledge, experience and training.**

If you require an actual nurse then get a nurse, if you require someone who understands dementia again this is important. Too often you see companies advertising that they have carers and many have no qualifications, training, skills or experience which is pretty scary as it is a big responsibility to look after another human being who may have a range of different needs such as mobility issues, cognitive needs, behavioral and other needs. Then you may have other things to think about at the same time - food and medication, exercise, sunshine, going to appointments, and putting puddy cat out and feeding him. So someone who is there to really look after the show while you are not.

Reviews are very important too - find a company that has genuine reviews and ratings about the carer from other clients. Under their profile there should be a review and comments - otherwise how would you know how good they are. Unless of course they have just started and then you can read the profile and make sure you put your own review as it is really essential to rate people so if they are good others get to use their services; and if they are terrible well be fair but this is a great tool; just like in travel and accommodation reviews are important.

Read the profile of the carer before you choose them to see who is the best fit. If you like this person and feel that they were great; you can request them next time. Always go through an agency then there is a go between and any worries you have it is good to speak to the agency so that there is a middle person; rather than an awkward situation. A good company will always want to hear the good, the bad and the ugly about their contractors.



*A good caregiver for the vulnerable and elderly possesses a combination of qualities, skills, and attitudes that contribute to providing compassionate and effective care. Here are some key attributes that make a caregiver excel in their role:*

01 **Empathy and Compassion**

A good caregiver demonstrates genuine empathy and compassion toward their clients. They understand and empathise with the challenges and emotions that come with aging or vulnerability, treating each individual with kindness, respect, and dignity.



02 **Patience and Understanding**

Dealing with the elderly or vulnerable individuals often requires patience and understanding. A good caregiver is patient in their approach, taking the time to listen, communicate effectively, and address the needs and concerns of their clients with understanding and empathy. See below when we talk more about languages both English as a first language and English as a second language.



03 **Reliability and Dependability**

Dependability is crucial in caregiving, as clients often rely on caregivers for essential tasks and support. A good caregiver shows up on time, follows through with commitments, and can be counted on to provide consistent and reliable care. Sadly there are some agencies that send carers out who sit there and look at their phone, or don't turn up at all. A good agency will phone you to see how your experience was and that includes turning up on time ready for work.

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### **Flexibility and Adaptability**

Each client has unique needs and preferences, and situations can change rapidly in caregiving. A good caregiver is flexible and adaptable, able to adjust their approach and routines to accommodate the changing needs and circumstances of their clients. Like in teaching if something isn't working and the person is getting bored or agitated change the activity. Get up and stretch, have a glass of water.

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### **Communication Skills**

Effective communication is essential in caregiving to build trust, understanding, and rapport with clients and their families. A good caregiver communicates clearly, listens attentively, and can convey information in a way that is easily understood and appreciated by their clients.

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### **Professionalism and Integrity**

A good caregiver conducts themselves with professionalism and integrity, adhering to ethical standards and respecting the privacy and confidentiality of their clients. They maintain boundaries while building trusting relationships and always act in the best interests of their clients.

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### **Attention to Detail**

Paying attention to detail is vital in caregiving to ensure the safety, well-being, and comfort of clients. A good caregiver is observant and attentive, noticing changes in behavior or health status and addressing any concerns promptly and appropriately. Making notes during the visit so that the family member or the person who has organised the carer is informed how the day was, what problems arose and anything else that they need to know.

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### **Empowerment and Support**

A good caregiver empowers their clients to maintain their independence and autonomy to the greatest extent possible while providing support and assistance when needed. They encourage clients to participate in decision-making and engage in activities that promote their physical, emotional, and social well-being. This is so so important. There is nothing worse when you see carers talking to the older person as if they are stupid. Everyone should be spoken to and given the chance to have choices about different things and be treated as an important contributor in life otherwise what have we got left. Dignity is always key.

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### **Skills and Training**

While compassion and empathy are essential qualities, caregivers also need practical skills and training to provide effective care. This includes knowledge of basic caregiving tasks such as personal care, medication management, mobility assistance, and first aid, as well as specialized training in areas such as dementia care or specific medical conditions.

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### **Positive Attitude and Enthusiasm**

A good caregiver approaches their work with a positive attitude and enthusiasm, bringing joy, encouragement, and a sense of purpose to their interactions with clients. They find fulfillment in making a difference in the lives of others and approach each day with enthusiasm and dedication.

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### **Experience in Caregiving**

Experience is invaluable in caregiving, as it provides caregivers with the practical skills, knowledge, and insights gained from working with a diverse range of clients and situations. Experienced caregivers are familiar with common challenges and how to address them effectively, whether it's managing medications, handling emergencies, or providing emotional support. They have honed their caregiving techniques over time, allowing them to anticipate needs, navigate complexities, and provide high-quality care with confidence and competence.

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### **Expertise in Specific Conditions**

Caregivers with experience often specialise in specific conditions or areas of care, such as dementia, Parkinson's disease, or post-surgery recovery. This expertise enables them to provide specialised support tailored to the unique needs and challenges of clients with these conditions. They understand the symptoms, progression, and management strategies associated with various health conditions, allowing them to deliver targeted care that promotes optimal health and well-being.

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## Training and Certification

Formal training and certification in caregiving are essential for ensuring that caregivers possess the necessary skills and knowledge to provide safe and effective care. Training programs cover a wide range of topics, including personal care, infection control, communication techniques, and safety protocols. Certified caregivers have undergone rigorous training and assessment, demonstrating their commitment to professionalism and competence in their role.

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## Importance of Vetting Caregivers

Vetting caregivers is a critical step in the caregiving process, as it ensures that clients receive care from qualified, trustworthy individuals who are capable of meeting their needs. Vetting involves conducting background checks, verifying credentials and certifications, and assessing relevant experience and references. By thoroughly vetting caregivers, families can have peace of mind knowing that their loved ones are in capable and trustworthy hands, reducing the risk of neglect, abuse, or other harmful outcomes. Additionally, vetting caregivers allows families to match their loved one's needs and preferences with caregivers who possess the appropriate skills, experience, and personality traits to provide personalized and compassionate care.

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## Consideration for Pets

For many elderly individuals, pets are cherished companions that bring joy, comfort, and companionship to their lives. If your loved one has a pet, whether it's a cat, dog, bird, or another animal, it's essential to consider their needs and preferences when selecting a caregiver.



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## Allergies and Preferences

Some caregivers may have allergies to certain animals or may have personal preferences regarding pets. It's crucial to discuss this during the vetting process to ensure compatibility between the caregiver and the household pets. This ensures that the caregiver can provide care without discomfort or allergic reactions.

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## Understanding Pet Care Requirements

Caregivers should be knowledgeable about the care requirements of the household pets, including feeding schedules, exercise needs, and any specific medical conditions they may have. For example, if the family dog needs to be let out into the yard at specific times for bathroom breaks, the caregiver should be aware of this routine and be able to accommodate it.

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## Comfort and Companionship

Pets can play a significant role in the emotional well-being of elderly individuals, providing companionship, reducing loneliness, and offering unconditional love. A caregiver who is comfortable with and appreciates pets can help facilitate this bond, supporting both the client and their furry friend in maintaining a positive and fulfilling relationship.

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## Coordination with Pet Care Services

In some cases, additional support from pet care services may be necessary to ensure the well-being of the household pets. Caregivers can coordinate with pet sitters, dog walkers, or veterinarians as needed to ensure that the pets receive the care and attention they require, especially if the caregiver's duties extend beyond pet care.



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## **Open Communication**

Open communication between the caregiver, the client, and the family members is essential when it comes to pet care. Any specific instructions or concerns regarding the pets should be clearly communicated to the caregiver to ensure that they can provide appropriate care and support.

By considering the needs and preferences of both the elderly individual and their pets, families can ensure that the caregiver selected is a good fit for the household dynamics, promoting a harmonious and supportive environment for all members of the family, including the furry ones.

*Having a caregiver who is an animal lover and understands the importance of pets to your loved one can offer numerous benefits:*

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## **Enhanced Emotional Well-being**

An animal-loving caregiver recognises the deep emotional bond between your loved one and their pets. They understand that pets provide companionship, comfort, and unconditional love, which can significantly improve the emotional well-being of elderly individuals. The caregiver's appreciation for this bond enables them to support and nurture the relationship between your loved one and their pets, fostering a sense of joy, companionship, and purpose.

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## **Companionship and Social Interaction**

Pets can serve as loyal companions and social facilitators, particularly for elderly individuals who may experience loneliness or social isolation. An animal-loving caregiver recognises the value of this companionship and encourages positive interactions between your loved one and their pets. Whether it's engaging in playful activities, going for walks together, or simply sharing quiet moments of affection, the caregiver facilitates meaningful connections that promote social interaction and emotional support.

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## **Stress Reduction and Relaxation**

Interacting with pets has been shown to reduce stress, anxiety, and depression levels in elderly individuals. An animal-loving caregiver encourages your loved one to engage in activities such as petting, grooming, or playing with their pets, which can promote relaxation and a sense of calmness. The presence of pets can create a soothing and comforting environment that enhances overall well-being and quality of life for your loved one.

## Strengthened Family Connections

Pets are often considered beloved members of the family, and their well-being is a priority for many elderly individuals and their loved ones. An animal-loving caregiver respects and honors this bond, collaborating with family members to ensure that the pets receive the care, attention, and affection they deserve. By fostering positive relationships between your loved one, their pets, and the family, the caregiver strengthens family connections and promotes a sense of unity, love, and belonging.

Overall, having an animal-loving caregiver who understands the importance of pets to your loved one can enrich their lives in numerous ways, promoting emotional well-being, social interaction, physical health, and a sense of purpose and connection. By nurturing and supporting the bond between your loved one and their pets, the caregiver creates a nurturing and harmonious environment that enhances the quality of life for all involved.

*Selecting the right caregiver for your elderly loved one is a deeply personal journey, rooted in understanding their unique personality, preferences, and needs. In this guide, we'll embark on a journey of discovery, exploring the intricate details that define your loved one's daily life and how to find a caregiver who can embrace and enhance these qualities with compassion and dedication.*



## 1. Crafting a Personal Profile

We will go through a range of questions to help the caregiver to understand their client. By creating a detailed profile it goes beyond listing basic needs—it's about capturing the essence of who your loved one is and what brings them joy and comfort each day. Creating a comprehensive profile provides invaluable insights into your loved one's daily life, preferences, and medical requirements, enabling the caregiver to deliver tailored care effectively.

- **Daily Routine:** In addition to meal times and preferred activities, document other aspects of their daily routine, such as shower times and grooming preferences. For example, Mr. Johnson prefers to have his shower in the morning using unscented body wash and shampoo.
- **Mobility and Assistance:** Detail specific mobility needs and assistance requirements, including any aids used for mobility or toileting. Mr. Patel requires assistance with dressing and uses a cane for support when walking.
- **Medication Management:** Specify the types of medication, dosage, and administration times. Provide clear instructions on medication storage and any special considerations, such as taking pills with food. Mrs. Lee takes her medication with breakfast and dinner, and her pills are stored in a labeled pill organizer.
- **Health Conditions and Disabilities:** Describe any health conditions or disabilities, along with strategies for managing them. For instance, Mrs. Rodriguez has diabetes and requires regular blood sugar monitoring and insulin injections.
- **Personal Grooming Preferences:** Include details about personal grooming preferences, such as hair styling and shaving routines. Mr. Smith prefers to shave with an electric razor every morning and uses aftershave lotion for sensitive skin.
- **Entertainment and Activities:** Note any favorite pastimes or activities that bring joy and engagement. Mrs. Chang enjoys playing Sudoku puzzles in the afternoon and listening to classical music on her favorite radio station.
- **Dementia Care Considerations:** If your loved one has dementia, provide guidance on communication strategies and minimizing stress. Avoid asking questions that rely on short-term memory, and focus on engaging in activities that promote comfort and familiarity.

## Example Profile:

- Mrs. Thompson enjoys her shower at 9 a.m. using lavender-scented body wash and shampoo. She prefers to have her meals at the dining table and enjoys reading the newspaper while eating breakfast.
- Mrs. Thompson takes her medication after breakfast and before bedtime, stored in a locked cabinet. She has mild arthritis in her hands and appreciates gentle assistance with dressing and grooming.
- Mrs. Thompson likes to have her hair parted on the left side and enjoys having it styled with a comb. She enjoys watching game shows on television in the afternoon and appreciates being read to from her favorite novels in the evening.

Language is a fundamental aspect of communication, and its importance in caregiving cannot be overstated. When selecting a caregiver for your elderly loved one, it's crucial to consider language proficiency to ensure effective communication and minimize unnecessary stress and misunderstandings.

1. Understanding Accents and Cultural Backgrounds: Strong accents or language barriers can pose significant challenges in communication, especially for elderly individuals who may have difficulty understanding unfamiliar accents or languages. Caregivers who are not proficient in the language spoken by the elderly person may struggle to convey important information, leading to frustration and misunderstandings.

2. Reducing Stress and Anxiety: Effective communication is essential for building trust, rapport, and a sense of security between the caregiver and the elderly person. Language barriers can increase feelings of stress and anxiety for both parties, making it difficult to express needs, preferences, and concerns. By selecting a caregiver who is fluent in the language spoken by the elderly person, you can help create a supportive and comforting environment where communication flows smoothly, reducing stress and promoting well-being.

3. Cultural Sensitivity and Comfort: Language is often deeply intertwined with culture, and speaking a person's native language can foster a sense of cultural connection, understanding, and comfort. For elderly individuals who primarily speak a language other than English, having a caregiver who can communicate in their mother tongue can be incredibly soothing and reassuring. It allows for more meaningful interactions, facilitates cultural exchange, and honors the individual's cultural identity and heritage.

4. Enhancing Quality of Care: Effective communication is vital for providing high-quality care that meets the unique needs and preferences of the elderly person. Caregivers who can communicate fluently in the elderly person's language are better equipped to understand their needs, preferences, and medical history, enabling them to provide personalized and tailored care. This leads to better outcomes, improved satisfaction, and a higher quality of life for the elderly person.

5. Choosing a Language-Friendly Care Provider: When selecting a caregiving agency or provider, it's essential to inquire about their language capabilities and policies regarding language proficiency among their staff. Some companies, like NurseMaster, provide information about the languages spoken by their caregivers and nurses, making it easier for families to find a language-friendly care provider. By choosing a provider that prioritizes language proficiency and cultural sensitivity, you can ensure that your elderly loved one receives the communication support they need for a positive caregiving experience.

In conclusion, language proficiency is a critical factor in caregiving, as it directly impacts communication, understanding, and the overall quality of care provided to elderly individuals. By prioritising language compatibility and selecting caregivers who can communicate effectively in the elderly person's language, you can create a supportive and nurturing environment where communication barriers are minimised, and the elderly person's needs are met with compassion, dignity, and respect.

- If you speak English and can't understand some accents ie the person may not have grown up in a time when culturally New Zealand was not a multicultural place or they have not travelled extensively or lived overseas then trying to understand a strong accent may be almost impossible. Some companies provide staff that can't communicate effectively with the elderly person that they are supposed to be looking after. This can create a huge amount of unnecessary stress and the day can end up being a disaster. So look for a company that talks languages for instance. If you are an Chinese family or Indian family and your mother, father, grandfather, grandmother speaks mostly in that language and English is a second language try to get a carer who can speak their mother tongue. Culturally this may be very soothing for your family member who is being looked after. If you are needing a very Kiwi speaking carer make sure you get a Kiwi born speaker or someone who is fluent in English so that communication is easy. This is really important. Some companies such as NurseMaster lists what languages the carer and nurses are fluent in which is really helpful.

Daily Rituals and Routines: Delve into the rituals and routines that shape your loved one's day. From the first sip of morning coffee to the evening ritual of watching their favorite TV show, these moments are integral to their sense of well-being.

Example: Nana's mornings are sacred to her. She savors a strong white plunger coffee while working on her crossword puzzle between 10 and 11 in the conservatory and basking in the warmth of the morning sun streaming through that window. Just have it open a little if it gets too hot.

- **Personal Care Preferences:** All carers should be paying attention to the small details that contribute to your loved one's sense of dignity and self-care. Whether it's the way they like their hair styled or the soothing scent of their favorite lotion, these preferences matter deeply. It used to drive me nuts when my dad's parting was put on the wrong side and when he went to the optometrist and they didn't ask him to choose the frames but chose a very old fashioned type for him. He was very into style and not impressed and neither was I. This sort of behaviour is demoralising.
- **Example:** You can make notes such as Dad takes pride in his appearance, meticulously shaving with his electric razor each morning around 9am after his shower. Then he likes a hint of his light aftershave which you will find in the bathroom cabinet. He has his hair combed to the right hand side and has a bit of brill cream (top draw of bathroom comb and brill cream).
- **Medication and Health Needs:** Provide thorough information about your loved one's medication schedule and health conditions. Clear instructions ensure that the caregiver can administer medication safely and monitor their health effectively and of course they are trained in medication administration.
- **Example:** Aunt Lily manages her diabetes with precision, carefully monitoring her blood sugar levels throughout the day. She takes her medication with meals and relies on her caregiver to remind her of her daily routine.
- **Special Interests and Hobbies:** Explore the activities that bring joy and fulfillment to your loved one's life. Whether it's gardening in the backyard or attending a weekly book club, these pursuits are essential for their emotional well-being.
- **Example:** Uncle Bob finds solace in his weekly game of bridge with friends who attend his home every Wednesday between 1 and 3pm. He relishes in the camaraderie and competition. He enjoys unwinding in the evenings with a glass of wine and his favorite jazz records. He has one glass of pinot noir after dinner. Bottom of pantry..

- **Dementia Care Considerations:** If your loved one is living with dementia, understanding their unique needs and triggers is crucial for providing compassionate care. Focus on creating a supportive environment that promotes familiarity and reduces stress.
- **Example:** Auntie June's Alzheimer's diagnosis has led to moments of confusion and anxiety. Her caregiver gently guides her through familiar routines, such as looking through old photo albums or listening to her favorite songs, to provide comfort and reassurance. She doesn't like the radio or tv on at all or loud noises so please make sure that the house is kept quiet. Sometimes she forgets she has had food or cups of tea - just short term memory loss. Can play card games like fish and old maid. Cards in kitchen pantry at the top.

## **2.Utilising the Personal Profile**

Once the profile is created, it becomes a roadmap for the caregiver, guiding them through each day with your loved one.

- **Daily Reference:** The profile serves as a daily reference point for the caregiver, ensuring they are attuned to your loved one's needs and preferences from morning until night.
- There is also a menu info ie about what they like to eat and drink, hydration and other points to note.
- **Adaptability and Flexibility:** Caregivers can use the profile to adapt their approach based on your loved one's mood, energy levels, and health status. It provides a framework for flexibility and responsiveness to changing needs.
- **Open Communication:** Regular discussions between the caregiver and family members allow for updates and adjustments to the profile as needed. Additional notes or observations can be added to enhance the caregiver's understanding and support.
- **Enhanced Quality of Care:** By using the profile as a guide, caregivers can provide personalized and attentive care that enhances your loved one's quality of life. It fosters a sense of familiarity, comfort, and trust between the caregiver and your loved one.

# Conclusion

Crafting a personalised profile for your elderly loved one is not only about documenting their preferences and routines—it's about creating a roadmap for compassionate and tailored care. By using the profile chart as a daily reference point and fostering open communication between the caregiver and family members, you ensure that your loved one receives the highest quality of care that honors their individuality. Together, you can create a nurturing environment where your loved one feels valued, respected, and supported, fostering meaningful connections and enriching their journey of aging with grace and dignity.

I hope you enjoyed some ideas in this short ebook - if you need to get a carer in to help you and your family whether it be inside your home, escorting them to an outing or an appointment or going in to visit them and assist them in the retirement home where they live these are all really good things to know.

**Did you know at NurseMaster we screen all our applicants and have our health professional do a thorough interview. We take providing you staff very seriously and don't just take anyone on our books. Not only do we have a recent (up to 8 months) Police Clearance Certificate, MOJ (Ministry of Justice) clearance but also a credit check.**

We don't apologise for being very strict who we supply to our clients. All our staff have NZQA qualifications and/or experience working as a carer otherwise we don't take them. They must speak fluent English for our clients who require easy communication in English but we also have a range of speakers of other languages so can cater for the whole community. If your loved one has English as a second language simply let us know when you are listing your job. We can then help you choose what person you would like, one that speaks your loved ones mother tongue. It is listed under their profile Languages. We have a review system and we will go through the personal profile so that we are all on the same page. You can save money using NurseMaster and book people yourself we will show you how. Just so easy give us a call/email/text or download our NurseMaster App and upload a job yourself it is so easy and help is literally ready.

# Talk to us

Safety, security and satisfaction are important to us.

Either email us or give us a call and we will discuss how we can assist you either in person or on the phone. We operate Auckland-wide.



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