

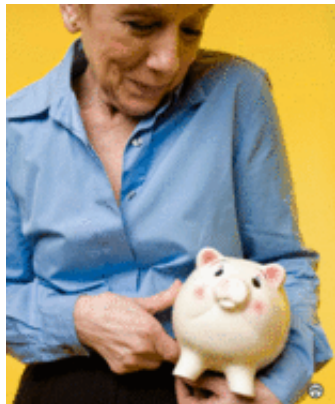


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Women Find A Way To Pay For Care At Home

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While often thought of as a service for the elderly, as many women have discovered, the reality is that a person may need long-term care at any age.

(NAPSI)-There's good news for those looking for a way to fund long-term care services at home: There's an insurance product that may make it possible.

Long-term care includes medical and nonmedical care for people with a chronic illness or disability. It provides such support services as helping with dressing and bathing. These services can be provided at home, in the community, in assisted living or in nursing homes. While often thought of as a service for the elderly, the reality is that you may need long-term care at any age.

Some see the need for such care as particularly strong among women, since women live longer than men and tend to have higher rates of disability and chronic health problems. More than 70 percent of nursing home residents are women, and over three-fourths of residents in assisted-living communities are women. In addition, most caregivers are women. When their husbands need long-term care, wives are generally there. Unfortunately, because many women are divorced or widowed, the husband is unable to do the same. Almost 70 percent of women age 75 or older are widowed, divorced or never married, compared to about 30 percent of men.

Long-term health care is generally not covered by medical insurance, Medicare supplement plans or group insurance. For seniors on Medicare, the long-term care benefits are quite limited--especially compared to the potential cost of a debilitating disease like Alzheimer's or just the greater need for care that comes with age.

An alternative for a growing number of Americans is long-term care insurance. It will pay for home care, for assisted living or for care in a nursing home. Some 8.2 million Americans have this protection either on their own or through a plan offered by their employer, a group or association.

For many, a major benefit is the ability to be cared for at home. Almost half of long-term care insurance benefits pay for home care.

According to the National Association of Insurance and Financial Advisors, there are some 7.6 million individuals currently receiving care at home, and 43 percent of all individual long-term care insurance policy benefits went for home care.

When it comes to buying a policy, it's important to remember that this is the kind of purchase that a person will usually make only once. Since costs and discounts can vary among insurers, consumers find they can often benefit from speaking with an experienced and knowledgeable professional who stays current and can help them get the best coverage for the best price.

Find a professional near you at **www.naifa.org/consumer**.

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