

MERCY CARE

for the Adirondacks

REFERRAL GUIDE

REFERRAL GUIDE PURPOSE:

To further raise awareness among our Referral Sources about Mercy Care's capacity to collaborate with health care and social care providers, human service, and aging services organizations to empower elders to live well as they grow older, and age in place for as long as possible.

INTRODUCTION:

Love of God and love of neighbor inspired the Sisters of Mercy in 2007 to establish and operate Mercy Care for the Adirondacks as a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization to help relieve isolation and loneliness many elders experience living in our Tri-Lakes Communities. Mercy Care is governed by a local Board of Directors. Our mission to enhance the fullness of life of elders living independently in their communities is implemented through three interrelated strategies: 1. Direct Social Care Services of Informal Supports; 2. Community Empowerment; and 3. Education and Advocacy.

SERVICES:

Mercy Care's services are offered, on a non-denominational basis, in collaboration with family members and in partnership with community organizations, social service agencies, healthcare providers, and faith communities. Volunteers provide friendship, companionship, spiritual care, health care education and counseling, access to health care, technology assistance, serve as their advocates, and help them stay connected to their communities. We serve any older adult in need within our capacity.



VOLUNTEER PROGRAMS

FRIENDSHIP VOLUNTEER

- Friendly home visits
- Transportation to appointments/events
- Friendly phone conversations
- Assistance with technology
- Recreational activities—board games, cards, physical fitness
- Art/music/literature enjoyment
- Assistance with shopping or errands
- Outings together

SPIRITUAL CARE COMPANION (SCC)

A SCC Volunteer is a compassionate person who accompanies an elder on their spiritual journey.

- Offered in accordance with each elder's personal desires, values, and faith, and in collaboration with the elder's choice of a faith community, or absence of a specific faith community.
- Serving as a compassionate listener, being fully present to the elder's experience of loneliness, pain, struggle or joy in telling their story.
- Connecting elders and loved ones to the faith community of their choice, or other spiritually nourishing resources such as prayer, music, relaxation and visualization, nature walks, journaling, reminiscing, or storytelling.

HEALTH CARE COMPANION (HCC)

The HCC Volunteer helps to strengthen the social safety network by assisting older adults navigate complex social care and healthcare systems.

- Serves as a listening presence and a compassionate friend, they help their elder friends access community, health, aging, and services, and comply with and more fully understand their health care.
- Facilitate informal social care supports, including transportation to medical, therapy, and lab appointments, as well as to pick up their prescriptions, and other “errands of mercy.”
- Accompany an elder to medical appointments (with their permission) to be another set of ears, and help schedule and facilitate medical & therapy appointments.

FAITH COMMUNITY NURSE (PARISH NURSE)

(Faith community nurses are licensed Registered Nurses who facilitate holistic health of body, mind, and spirit.)

Promoting Health and Spiritual Healing

- Health education
- Personal health counseling
- Spiritual caregiving
- Connecting with community resources
- Advocacy

Faith community nurses do not perform direct or hands-on health care. They do not duplicate other nursing or medical services in the community.

VOLUNTEER TRAINING

All Mercy Care Volunteers are required to complete a one-day training course, where they learn about Mercy Care's mission & programs, policies & procedures, referral & intake process, varying volunteer activities, spirituality, community services and supports, and more. Mercy Care Faith Community Nurse (Parish Nurse) Volunteers are required to complete additional training—the Foundations of Faith Community Nursing Course, developed by the Westberg Institute, a specialized 36.5-hour program designed to equip Registered Nurses (RNs) to integrate professional nursing practice with Spiritual Care. In addition to the training requirements, all Mercy Care Volunteers are required to provide personal and professional references, complete a background check, and an onboarding interview before beginning their volunteer services.

**Helping elders to age in place more successfully
with Friendship and Compassion**



SOCIAL CARE

Mercy Care Volunteer Programs are based on a social care model of informal supports. Given that Mercy Care is not a health care model, our volunteers do not perform or provide personal care, direct or hands-on care, nor do they duplicate nursing or medical services in the community, including Mercy Care's Faith Community Nurse Volunteer Program.

Mercy Care may be able to meet some of an elder's needs, but not all of them. When Mercy Care identifies needs beyond our capacity, we refer the elder's needs beyond our capacity to other community organizations.

WHAT IS BEYOND OUR CAPACITY

- Elders with moderate to advanced stages of Alzheimer's or other dementia related diseases.
- Elders with moderate to severe behavioral mental health disorders and intellectual impairments.
- Elder's homes with mold, insect infestations, or vermin concerns.
- Elder's homes considered unsafe, such as homes that do not have electricity or running water.
- Mercy Care can provide transportation for errands, outings, and any other non-medical-related requests for individuals enrolled in Medicaid. Mercy Care can not provide medical transportation for individuals enrolled in Medicaid.
- Transportation for individuals on oxygen.
- Transportation for individuals who use a wheelchair, and those who use a walker and are unable to self-transfer/lift from sitting to standing independently.
- Respite Care for those who use a wheelchair or use a walker and are unable to self-transfer/lift from sitting to standing, who would require assistance with toileting, or other personal care needs.
- Friendly Visits in a home that is considered unsafe such as those who are hoarders.

UPDATED REFERRAL PROCESS EFFICIENCIES

To facilitate the most efficient referrals to Mercy Care for health care providers or other referral sources to help their patients or clients, we have developed a new referral form, which should help ensure that the elders and their needs being referred to Mercy Care are suitable to be met by a volunteer. A Mercy Care Volunteer is often referred to as a substitute for what a friend or family member might help with if they were available.

To understand the elder's needs and develop mutual understanding of what the elder is requesting and what services Mercy Care is able to provide, elders must complete the referral process and have an in-home intake visit before they are eligible to enroll in Mercy Care's services.

QUESTIONS

For more information regarding Mercy Care's referral and intake process, please visit our website at www.adkmercy.org or contact Mercy Care's Director of Elder Care & Volunteer Services, Krista Berger, at 518-523-5585 or kberger@adkmercy.org.



ELDER ENROLLMENT

How does Mercy Care receive referrals? Who can submit a referral?

Mercy Care receives referrals from health care providers, Offices for the Aging, Public Health, Skilled Nursing Facilities, families, neighbors, friends of elders in need, and from elders themselves.

Referrals may be submitted to Mercy Care via our website at www.adkmercy.org, by emailing Mercy Care's Director of Elder Care & Volunteer Services, Krista Berger, at kberger@adkmercy.org, or by calling Krista at 518-523-5585 during our office hours Monday – Friday from 8:00 am – 4:00 pm.

REFERRAL PROCESS

What's included in the referral?

- The Prospective Elder's Contact Information - Date of Birth, Name, Phone, Email, Address
- General Information - Languages Spoken, Living Situation, Physical Limitations and/or Mobility Barriers, Communication Barriers, Hearing & Vision Impairments, Medicaid Enrollment
- Referrer's Information & Assessment

Reason for the Referral

*Home & Living Environment

- Adequate Heating & Cooling • Working Electricity • Running Water
- Insect Infestation and/or Vermin Concerns • Food Insecurities

Additional Health or Safety Concerns

*Community Services & Supports

- Fit for Life • Meals on Wheels • Supplement Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) • Lifeline
- Home Energy Assistance Program (HEAP) • Expanded In-Home Services for the Elderly (EISEP)
- Office for the Aging • Alzheimer's Association • Adult Protective Services • Behavioral Health

Additional Referrals Planned

** Included only in the provider referral form*

- Services Requested - Friendship Volunteer, Faith Community/Parish Nurse, Spiritual Care Companion, Health Care Companion, Other
- Permissions - Consent to Referral, Permission to Contact

PROVIDER REFERRAL FORM

Any referrals submitted from a Health Care Provider, Social Worker, Case Manager, or other Community Service Organization will need to complete a Provider Referral Form.

INTAKE PROCESS

Assessment of the prospective Elder and their home, completed by trained volunteers who are (or were) social workers, nurses, or other health and social service professionals.

- Verify Personal Information
- Get to know the Elder - how they like to spend their time (interests, hobbies, skills), previous work, other members of the household, pets, community services/supports
- General Health - physical issues or concerns, physical limitations, memory/cognitive diagnosis & behavioral health services, vaccination information, Medicaid enrollment
- Important Contacts - Primary Support Person, Primary Health Care Provider, Behavioral Health Provider, Emergency Contacts
- Volunteer Preferences - Male/Female, Requested Services
- Elder Consent - Photo, Services
- Intake Specialist Recommendation & Notes

Completing the referral and intake process does not guarantee enrollment.



ELDER ENROLLMENT

How does Mercy Care receive referrals? Who can submit a referral?

Mercy Care receives referrals from health care providers, Offices for the Aging, Public Health, Skilled Nursing Facilities, families, neighbors, friends of elders in need, and from elders themselves. Referrals may be submitted to Mercy Care via our website at www.adkmercy.org, by emailing Mercy Care's Director of Elder Care & Volunteer Services, Krista Berger, at kberger@adkmercy.org, or by calling Krista at 518-523-5585 during our office hours Monday – Friday from 8:00 am – 4:00 pm.

REFERRAL PROCESS

What's included in the referral?

- The Prospective Elder's Contact Information - Date of Birth, Name, Phone, Email, Address
- General Information - Languages Spoken, Living Situation, Physical Limitations and/or Mobility Barriers, Communication Barriers, Hearing & Vision Impairments, Medicaid Enrollment
- Referrer's Information & Assessment

Reason for the Referral

*Home & Living Environment

- Adequate Heating & Cooling • Working Electricity • Running Water
- Insect Infestation and/or Vermin Concerns • Food Insecurities

Additional Health or Safety Concerns

*Community Services & Supports

- Fit for Life • Meals on Wheels • Supplement Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) • Lifeline
- Home Energy Assistance Program (HEAP) • Expanded In-Home Services for the Elderly (EISEP)
- Office for the Aging • Alzheimer's Association • Adult Protective Services • Behavioral Health

Additional Referrals Planned

** Included only in the provider referral form*

- Services Requested - Friendship Volunteer, Faith Community/Parish Nurse, Spiritual Care Companion, Health Care Companion, Other
- Permissions - Consent to Referral, Permission to Contact

PROVIDER REFERRAL FORM

Any referrals submitted from a Health Care Provider, Social Worker, Case Manager, or other Community Service Organization will need to complete a Provider Referral Form.

INTAKE PROCESS

Assessment of the prospective Elder and their home, completed by trained volunteers who are (or were) social workers, nurses, or other health and social service professionals.

- Verify Personal Information
- Get to know the Elder - how they like to spend their time (interests, hobbies, skills), previous work, other members of the household, pets, community services/supports
- General Health - physical issues or concerns, physical limitations, memory/cognitive diagnosis & behavioral health services, vaccination information, Medicaid enrollment
- Important Contacts - Primary Support Person, Primary Health Care Provider, Behavioral Health Provider, Emergency Contacts
- Volunteer Preferences - Male/Female, Requested Services
- Elder Consent - Photo, Services
- Intake Specialist Recommendation & Notes

Completing the referral and intake process does not guarantee enrollment.

