

# Guidance on Aging in Place at Home

PHILADELPHIA, PENNSYLVANIA, UNITED STATES, November 8, 2018 /EINPresswire.com/ -- We have all heard of the phrase running in place, but what about aging in place? Did you know that aging in place refers to more than just aging in one spot?

Aging in place is a new trend with the retiring "baby boomers" who want to remain in their homes, growing older gracefully during their golden years.

But how does one achieve that gracefully smooth transition through retirement? This is where senior care comes into play for individuals in need of assistance all while maintaining their lifestyle in the comfort of their home.

There are home remodeling companies and contractors that specialize in transforming the homes of older adults who want to age in place. These home modifications can be as simple as adding a bedroom to the first floor of a home or as complicated as wirelessly integrating smart home technology. Before you jump on the bandwagon and get a full-fledged construction project with universal design to enhance independent living going, you should do your research as to what your needs are at this stage in your life and what you can afford on the spectrum of staples as well as bold new technology.

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*Michelle Sahl, Drexel University*

The main goal of aging in place is to avoid moving into a senior living situation such as an assisted living facility, adult day care center, or nursing home. There are many options to remain in a home depending on your budget and physical limitations while living in style:

- Remain in your current home.
- Move into a one-floor home (e.g. rancher, apartment or condo).

- Move into an age 55+ community.
- Move into a "granny" home, which is a small home in the backyard of an adult child's home.
- Move into micro-unit housing, which is a small apartment with a common living area and kitchen (like a college dorm suite).



## Comfort Keepers.

Philadelphia Caregivers

As we age, safety risks such as slips, trips, and falls are more common and chronic diseases take shape becoming part of our life. Thus, the need to make homes adaptable to the changes of age is key, and in-home care services make this a priority. There are some things you can do before tearing down walls or adding them. Below are some relatively inexpensive senior care solutions.

- Move items from the higher shelves and cabinets to lower ones for easier reach. You can even create a kitchen island that has the microwave in it.
- If you have arthritis, you can change out the hardware on your kitchen cabinets and drawers to making grabbing them easier.
- If you have a sunken living room or have a few steps leading to your front or back door, you can install a metal ramp. This is an inexpensive cost and the ramp can easily be removed.
- To avoid slipping on hardwood or vinyl floors, install floor treads for better traction.
- Change out showers for walk-in bathtubs with grab bars. You can install grab bars next to the toilet as well.
- Widen doors for wheelchairs.

Once you have decided to stay in your home, you should do a home audit. This means taking stock of your health, physical limitations, preferences, safety, and budget. At Comfort Keepers Philadelphia, our team of home care medical advisors and care plan coordinators can make recommendations that make staying in your home both safe and comfortable. When it comes to quality long-term home care look at these key performance indicators:

**Functionality** – Do you have a physical limitation? Do you now use a walker or wheelchair? When you use these medical devices, navigating your home will be more difficult. Even if you don't, using the stairs can be hard. Also, having a first-floor bathroom can make life easier, especially if you are incontinent.

**Location** – Are stores close enough to shops to make driving less a chore? Are you close to family, in case you have an emergency? How far is the hospital, shops or pharmacy?

**Affordability** – Most seniors own their homes. So, paying for in-home care is manageable. However, paying a mortgage and other services can be a challenge. Maybe downgrading is a better solution, so paying for home care aid and a mortgage (or rent) is a better financial fit.

**Safety** – it's easy to miss a step or slip on an area rug. Can your home be safeguarded? If you were to potentially have an accident, would you be able to get help quickly? Are there secure locks on doors to prevent your loved one with dementia from wandering?

### What is Aging in Place?

Aging in place is a popular term people use to describe a person living in the dwelling of their choice and doing so for as long as they are able. This lifestyle includes being able to have any services and support the need provided consistently as needs change.

To be clear: the act of aging in place hinges on elderly people having the specific things they need to maintain their daily lives at a level of independence and quality so that they don't feel cast off by society or forced into a nursing home.

The reason this distinction is important is that many people think aging in place will fix the problems they have in their lives. But the only problems that can be fixed while aging in place are the problems that people plan for including budget and health care concerns.

### Aging in place planning for quality of life

Most people are familiar with retirement planning, but usually only focus on the finances of that time in their life. They push off or carelessly forget the health and living concerns of aging.

But as Michelle Sahl, associate teaching professor in the Health Administration Department of Drexel University in Philadelphia, notes, there is an explosion in the number of seniors looming for the area.

"By 2050, one out of every five people across the globe will be seniors," Sahl told NewsWorld Media.

This change in the population is going to make aging in place a big issue for everyone from the people affected by local government, as accommodating a growing population of seniors will become a common civic issue.

That's why [Comfort Keepers of Philadelphia is already planning](#) much of its service philosophy around the concept of Aging in Place. We believe the role of the family caregiver as it is in 2018 can be overwhelming. Extend that out to 2050 and the people of Philadelphia will come to rely more and more on in-home care to help with their senior ones aging in place needs.

The goal of any aging in place care plan is to maintain or improve the quality of life for the person aging. In order to achieve that goal, good long-term care plans focus on fully covering self-reliance, home safety, financial independence, and physical care. Other items unique to that individual should be noted as early as possible in the plan creation and the plan should be flexible so that changes can be made over time.

#### Aging changes

Aging brings changes both mentally and physically to us all. As a person embarks on their aging in place journey, it is important to plan for those changes and the impact those changes will have. As humans age, the body and its capabilities change. Examples of changes you might experience from aging include:

- Decreased muscle strength or endurance
- Decreased mobility
- Increased risk of falls due to balance
- Reduced vision
- Increased risk of illness
- Increased frequency of medical care
- Reduced hearing
- Reduced mental processing capabilities

Being aware of the impending changes that happen to people as they age gives you greater control over the direction you can take your aging in place plan. That control gives you the greatest potential for imbuing your long-term care plan with the highest quality of daily life and greatest level of independence.

As a person ages, the physical prowess and care needs of the individual changes. This, in turn, creates new issues for Activities of Daily Living (ADL) tasks, including daily activities such as:

- Transportation and Driving Safely
- Socialization
- Navigating around the home safely and easily
- Basic housekeeping
- Health needs and medication management

Planning ahead for aging in place presents a person with the chance to lessen the burden on family members. Family caregiving is growing by leaps and bounds as the population gets older. Having an aging in place preparedness initiative outlines how and where a senior loved one's needs are met. This, in turn, lessens the need for emergency assistance from local area

resources that may or may not be financially amenable to the burden.

### Why is Aging in Place so Important?

The majority of people age 65 or older currently live with a spouse or alone in their own home. Many of those seniors struggle with everyday tasks such as laundry or making it to a doctor's appointment. Seniors in this type of situation have major problems with the quality of daily life and health care.

This is causing more and more seniors to depend on younger family members as they age to help facilitate basic tasks.

According to News World Media, the challenge this number of older Americans will bring to the country is unprecedented. Given the data for the current economy, the United States' failing health care system and the lack of local infrastructure that supports older people, this is a serious predicament for our country. More importantly, aging issues are a very big problem for millions of Americans choosing to live out their golden years at home.

### What does aging in place mean for my family?

Issues that families will continue to have to deal with include home remodeling, support issues, work-family balance for the responsibilities of caregiving, and managing emotional and physical stress. All of these issues will need to be dealt with in a way that empowers the person aging in place and their caregivers, so people can make informed decisions about their lives and care.

Choosing to age in place means you are deciding:

- what your health care choices will be
- what your wishes are for major life events
- how you want your home set up
- the types of assistance are right for you
- how you want to spend the retirement years

Making these choices gives you control over your independence, quality of life and dignity. Most importantly to note, aging in place does not mean you have to do everything yourself; that's where the personal care management plan comes in. It means you get to plan how your needs are met, who meets them and when.

### An Aging in Place Plan is Not for 'Old' People

It's for responsible people who want to ensure their quality of life and live it out in dignity, without being a burden to their family or community. Regardless of whether you have retired or not, it's for you, right now. If you haven't retired yet, it means you have time to think about your needs, research your options and put together a plan that is good for you and your family. If you have retired, putting the time into building a plan will help keep you in control of your life. Building a plan together with the assistance of a certified aging in place specialist will help you deal with issues you will encounter down the road and ease some of the burdens your loved ones will experience.

For those caring for an elderly parent or loved one, it's for you, too. You can be the most help by working with them to ensure their needs are met and wishes are respected. It also will help you provide the level of care that is right for them, and show your respect to them by ensuring their dignity is kept intact and their needs are met.

Comfort Keepers Philadelphia Home Care Services

At Comfort Keepers of Philadelphia, our home health care staff is trained in the latest practices

to help you and your partner remain in a happy and safe home. We are always finding ways to provide our clients with the best in-home care services at affordable rates, whether that is just providing supervision for respite care or more specialized care for a senior with Alzheimer's. Comfort Keepers offers a full range of high-quality in-home care services to meet both caregiver and senior needs. For more information about senior care contact us today at (215) 672-2195 to learn how we can create an interactive caregiving plan for your loved one.

#### About Comfort Keepers Philadelphia:

Owners Michele Berman and her brother, Marc Reisman, took over Huntington Valley Comfort Keepers in 2000, when their father, Richard Reisman, was diagnosed with lung cancer and became increasingly ill. They experienced firsthand the care and comfort provided by Comfort Keepers. In fact, Richard Reisman originally started the business when his mother was diagnosed with Alzheimer's. At that time, there weren't many options for those in need of additional support and quality care. Today, the owners are proud to carry on the legacy of their father, but they are even more proud of the difference Comfort Keepers is making to those who need their help the most.

To find out more about Comfort Keepers' commitment to excellence, please call 215.885.9140.

This release was drafted by [Results Driven Marketing, LLC](#): a full-service digital marketing, public relations, advertising and content marketing firm located in Philadelphia, PA.

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