



# A Better Life News

## Getting to Where You Need to Go

by Julie Beaulieu

*“Help! I am having trouble getting to and making sense of my doctor’s appointments!”* If this is a concern for you or your loved, you are not alone. Finding a good transportation service is a growing concern among seniors, especially if they do not have friends or family available to take them.

For transportation alone, Tulsa has a few options. Tulsa Transit has a variety of programs such as the Tulsa Lift, which is a service for persons with disabilities who are at least five years old. For more information, visit

[www.tulsatransit.org](http://www.tulsatransit.org).

Another option is a cab service, but this can get costly especially if your destination is a long distance. It can also be intimidating to get in a cab by yourself with a driver you do not know.

These services are great and convenient choices for people who just need a ride, but what if you need some assistance running errands, or help at your appointments? The cab or bus driver is not going to be able to assist with that.

For transportation, plus assistance with appointments, consider home supports provided by Home Care agencies, such as **A Better Life Homecare**. Most home-care agencies will provide transportation services. To find home care agencies in the Tulsa, OK area, check out the *Vintage Guide*, published by Life Senior Services. You can pick up a *Vintage Guide* for free at any of the Life Senior Services offices. When you call about transportation services ask these questions.

- How much does it

cost?

- Can I meet the driver beforehand so I will feel comfortable with him or her?
- Will the driver be able to accompany me into my appointment?
- How far in advance do I need to schedule my appointment?
- How do you screen employees?

For more information visit or call:

[www.ABetterLifeHomecare.com](http://www.ABetterLifeHomecare.com)  
**918-392-3838**  
**931-334-6450**

## I Don’t Understand My Prescription

by Julie Beaulieu



It’s no secret that doctors don’t have the

best handwriting, so deciphering prescriptions can be difficult. However, bad handwriting isn’t the only confusing thing about prescriptions.

Doctors use shorthand when writing out a pre-

scription, particularly when they are writing the directions for taking the medication. Knowing how many times a day to take a prescription, what time of day, etc is very important.

Here are some common abbreviations found on prescriptions and an explanation of what they mean:

- PRN:** as needed
- QD:** every day
- BID:** twice a day
- TID:** three times a day
- QID:** four times a day
- AC** before meals
- PC.:** after meals
- HS** at bedtime
- PO:** by mouth
- EA:** each

*A Better Life Homecare reduces family stress by promoting independence and providing expertise. We safely support “your life your way” at home and in the community.*

# Caregiver's Corner: Compassion Fatigue

*Compassion Fatigue* is a term that describes the normal symptoms of chronic stress arising from the care giving work we do. *Compassion Fatigue* is the emotional phase that occurs before a person reaches the emotional phase called, caregiver burnout. Symptoms of *Compassion Fatigue* may include: excessive blaming, bottled up emotions, poor self-care, problems concentrating, compulsive behaviors, isolation, substance abuse, and denial.

It is important for caregivers to recognize that they cannot care well for their loved one if they are not well themselves, so at the first sign of *Compassion Fatigue*, caregivers should look for help. Consider the following solutions:

- Accept help from others; recognize that you can't do everything on your own. Keep in mind that you may need to reach out to those who care about you, as they may need direction from you about how best to help you.
- Talk about your feelings with someone you trust (i.e. support groups, family, friends)
- Be kind to yourself; we all make mistakes. Recognize you are human and doing the best you can.
- Educate yourself about your loved ones conditions and about how best to take care of your self.
- Do activities to stay physically healthy; get enough sleep and eat a healthy diet
- Live a balanced life

If you think you may have compassion fatigue, take action today for you and your loved one's sake. For more information on coping with *Compassion Fatigue*, visit our website at [www.ABetterLifeHomecare.com](http://www.ABetterLifeHomecare.com) or give us a call at 392-3838.

## Preparing for your Doctor's Visit

by Julie Beaulieu

To get the most out of your doctor's appointment, prepare before you go.

**Make a list of all your concerns and questions.** This is helpful so you can make sure you have covered everything you want to discuss with the doctor. Be sure to include any changes you've experienced with your body or your

health since your last visit. Don't be afraid to discuss issues such as sexual issues and bowel and bladder issues.

**Take information with you.** It is important to bring a list of your medications. Make sure to get the doctor to re-view the list with you.

**Bring a friend or family member with you.**

He or she can take notes for you, and act as another resource to make sure you don't forget anything.

**Update your doctor on what has happened since your last visit.** Make sure to mention any changes that have occurred since your last visit even if you don't think they are important.

Remember, your doctor wants you to be healthy and happy. You can help your doctor help you by following these guidelines. Enjoy a productive and positive visit with your doctor.



*Need Help Getting to the Doctor?*

Call 918.392.3838

A Better Life Homecare  
Can Help!

**A Better Life**  
H O M E C A R E

## Don't Get "Burned"

by Lori Hauge

Older adults tend to be more vulnerable to fire-related injuries:

- People 65 and older are twice as likely to die in fires as any other age group.
- The fire death rate for those 85 and over is four times the national average.
- Seniors are at a higher risk of fire injury .

### Reduce your risk of fires:

- Make sure your smoke alarms and CO2 alarms are in working order.
- Flammable liquids stored in the house or near sources of ignition can cause fires and explosions. Store these materials in a well-ventilated area away from living quarters.
- Don't keep large quanti-

ties of combustible materials in the house, especially near escape routes such as hallways

- Look for electrical problems. Flickering lights, loose switches and damaged cords are warnings of electrical fire.
- Place fire extinguishers in accessible areas. Know how to use them.

- Teach everyone to get everyone to safety and call the fire department first.
- Post emergency numbers at each phone including who to call in case of fire. Also, post your own address and telephone number because a panicked person can forget these.

## National Aging In Place Week

*Aging in Place* is the concept of planning your life and preparing your home so that you have the accommodations and support you need to be able to stay in your own home throughout your life.

Most Americans want to continue to live in their

own homes with their own things, enjoying their own families, friends and communities. The National Aging in Place Council is an organization dedicated to providing education and collaboration to older people and their families to help ensure they have the information they need to

plan the life they want.

The Council is sponsoring Aging in Place week from October 11th-18th. In recognition of this week, organizations in Tulsa will be sponsoring events. The Better Business Bureau will be holding a free shredding event to pro-

vide identity theft prevention, held October 17 at 635 W. 41st St.

**A Better Life Homecare** will be hosting a Senior yard cleaning event, a scrapbooking event and an Essential Lifestyle Planning training for family caregivers of seniors. For more info, call **392-3838**.

## Scrapbooking to Help Cope with Dementia

by Julie Beaulieu

Scrapbooking is lots of fun. Interestingly, scrapbooking is also effective tool for memory preservation for folks with Dementia or Alzheimer's.

Photographs remind people of pleasant times, and sometimes even have the capability of calming a person down when he or she is in a stressed state.

Depending on the type of

Alzheimer's or Dementia one has, the scrapbook can be used to assist in reminiscing about the past or to help them relate to their current situation.

Scrapbooks are also a good tool for professional caregivers to use, particularly when the patient is asking questions about his or her past. With the scrapbook, the caregiver

has the capability to answer the question.

Using specific techniques can help maximize the usefulness of scrapbooks for people with Alzheimer's or Dementia.

- Use close-up pictures of the person or object
- Use captions to describe each picture. Include who is in it, and a little informa-

tion about the person. Use large, legible print.

- Keep it simple. Avoid cluttering pages with extraneous décor, not directly related to the photos.

To learn more, A Better Life Homecare is having a scrapbooking event on October 13 at 1:00. Call **918.392.3838** for details.



931.334.6450 (TN)  
 918.392.3838  
 Tulsa, OK 74114  
 2424 E. 21st St., Suite 310  
**ABetterLife**  
 H O M E C A R E

## Sorting Out the Details of Medicare Part D

Information source: (Health Insurance Counseling for Medicare Recipients)  
 by Jolynn Officer

Medicare Prescription Drug Plans (also called Medicare Part D) add prescription drug coverage to Original Medicare and other Medicare plans.

All Medicare drug plans must offer at least the standard level of coverage, but plans can be flexible with their benefit design. Drug plans must cover “all or substantially all” medications in six areas:

- Cancer
- HIV/AIDS
- Antidepressants

- Antipsychotics
- Anticonvulsants
- Immunosuppressant

Coverage varies among plans and not all drugs are covered by each plan. So, it is important to review your meds each year and make sure you shop for the right plan for you. Each plan has a list of covered drugs. Although you might not find a plan that covers EVERY medication you take, in most cases, a similar drug that is safe and effective will be available.

To control costs, plans may “tier” drugs at different pricing levels. Prescription drug plans can also use strategies to manage access to the drugs. Examples include:

- **Tiers**—different cost levels for different types of drugs (generic, preferred, brand-name)
- **Prior authorization**—doctor must contact plan before prescription will be covered
- **Step therapy**—person must try a similar, usually less-

expensive drug that has proven effective

- **Quantity limits**—plans may limit quantity of drugs they cover over a certain period of time

Part D Prescription Plans can change yearly and your health needs may also change. Review your prescription drug plan yearly and compare it to other plans to make sure you are on the most cost effective plan for you. For more info, visit: [www.Medicare.gov](http://www.Medicare.gov).