



Caregiver Support & COPD

Caregivers can be important to people living with chronic obstructive pulmonary disease (COPD). More than 70% of COPD patients have informal caregivers (1). Informal caregivers play an important role in caring for patients living with COPD- they assist with daily living, medication management, transitions between settings of care, and make important medical decisions. It's important for caregivers to have the support they need in order to take care of their loved ones. Below are recommendations from healthcare professionals to support caregivers in their role.

1) Develop a plan for care



Prepare and participate in medical appointments



Maintain and record regular communication with providers



Create reminders on how to use your medications and devices



Work with loved ones and providers to develop a plan

2) Maintain important health information



Create a central location for all legal and health documents accessible to you and your family members



Maintain up to date medical history and medication lists for you and your loved one to bring to medical appointments

3) Research available resources



Become familiar with resources in your area such as pulmonary rehabilitation, oxygen providers, and home health companies



Consider other supports, such as patient advocates or financial consultants



Know what support services are available to you: transportation, meal delivery, etc.

4) Identify additional support



Establish a back-up caregiver and provide them with all necessary health information



Develop a healthcare power of attorney for you and your loved one



Join a support group and remember to talk to family and friends

Caregivers often have a burden placed on them, and very little support. RHA has many resources to support caregivers, including our COPD Caregiver's Toolkit and a multitude of fact sheets. If you have any other questions related to caregiving and COPD, reach out to RHA at 312-628-0229 or COPDtoolkit@resphealth.org. Reference list available at: <https://resphealth.org/reference-lists/>