

## Professional Geriatric Care Managers

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The “Professional Geriatric Care Manager” (PGCM) is a rather new profession made up of those who come to the work from other related fields such as social work, counseling, nursing, or gerontology. Most individuals who deliver PGCM services have an extensive history in the field of aging and want to ensure that older adults have the highest quality of life even when affected by disability or changes in physical energy.

A PGCM is often called upon to help individuals look at all the choices, benefits/entitlements and resources in any given area that would support that person to live as independently and fully as possible. Often individuals need advocates to assist them in navigating the medical arena and ensure they get the best care to return to the highest level of functioning/independence. When one is down due to illness or disease it is hard to advocate for oneself, that is when the PGCM sees that their client has all they need to return to optimal functioning.

Often elders with family at a distance count on the PGCM to be like a family member and can depend on the PGCM to support and guide them during a health or other crisis.

Many clients use PGCM’s to assist with a move. A Care Manager can do everything from finding a retirement housing situation that meets their needs and values to arranging for the move –a local move or across the country.

Because PGCMs have experience in a local area, they often know the best resources from home repairs to Elder Law attorneys. Often they have clients in all levels of care and retirement living and can make very good recommendations based on experience for individuals – thus saving families and clients hours and hours of time.

How does one find a PGCM and what questions should you ask before you hire someone? All professionals in this field should be certified as a Care Manager and belong to a professional organization that screens members such as The National Association of Professional Geriatric Care Managers ([www.caremanager.org](http://www.caremanager.org)). If you are unsure about hiring a PGCM it is best to look for one who is also licensed to practice like a Licensed Social Worker, Family Therapist or Registered Nurse.

Ask how long they have done PGCM work – for someone to be an expert and have the knowledge you need you should be looking for someone who has done

this work for five years or more. Ask to speak to a former client and maybe even another professional who knows of the person's work.

Across the United States, PGCM's charge from \$100 to \$200 dollars per hour and most charge only for the time of service (much like CPA's and Attorney's) some even include limited professional time as part of Caregiving fees. However, a consultation might cost a little more per hour but gives individuals a road map that will save hours and dollars. A short meeting helps individuals with the resources they need to make sound decisions. Often families are unaware of benefits and entitlements and come away saving more than what was spent on the consultation.

A Professional Geriatric Care Manager is a guide that will base his or her direction on the values, resources, needs and desires of the older adult not on the values of the professional or extended family members. However, the entire family will benefit from a Professional Geriatric Care Manager because peace of mind is the result with good planning and direction.

Eldercare Services is a pioneer in a unique delivery of services, providing counseling, geriatric care management, family support groups, classes and direct caregiving. Eldercare Services has offices in Walnut Creek, Marin and San Francisco, California. For further information regarding their services, please call: (925) 937-2018, (415) 469-8300 or (866) 760-1808. You may also visit them on the web at: [www.EldercareAnswers.com](http://www.EldercareAnswers.com)