



# Health Awareness

## Six Ways To Provide Long-Distance Care To A Loved One Living With Cancer ™

(NAPSA)—When a loved one has cancer and lives far away, worry surrounding their care and well-being can be overwhelming. The consumer Web site of the American Society of Clinical Oncology, People Living With Cancer ([www.plwc.org](http://www.plwc.org)), offers the following suggestions on how caregivers can provide meaningful support from afar:

**1. Research and assess their needs.** Gather as much information as possible about your family member's or friend's medical, financial and legal needs, and use this as a basis for helping him or her make care-related decisions.

**2. Explore and manage professional and volunteer services.** A listing of support organizations can be found on [www.plwc.org/support](http://www.plwc.org/support).

Also identify and contact relatives; neighbors; longtime family friends; and members of religious, civic and social organizations who might be able to help perform caregiving tasks. Consider asking the doctor or nurse for a home care services referral.

**3. Get to know your family member's or friend's informal support network.** Ask his or her friends and neighbors to contact

you right away if they have new information or identify a problem that may require your assistance.

**4. Prepare for unexpected travel.** Investigate travel options in advance and have adequate backup help ready to care for your own family if you need to make an unexpected visit. Consider reserving some vacation or sick days from work for these visits as well.

**5. Provide emotional support.** Reach out through regular phone calls, letters and e-mails to remind your friend or relative that you care. Schedule quality time with your loved one by participating in activities that you enjoy doing together.

**6. Make the most of your visits.** Plan ahead and use the time wisely to perform caregiving tasks that can't be done from afar. If possible, plan to take over some of the local caregivers' responsibilities, so they can take a break from their routine. This will also provide the opportunity to assess any changes in your loved one's caregiving needs.

For additional information on caring for a loved one with cancer, regardless of his or her location, visit [www.plwc.org/caregiving](http://www.plwc.org/caregiving).