

## Long-Term Care (LTC)--More than Just a Nursing Home--How Will You Pay For it?

Traditionally, long-term care (LTC) was actually thought of as "end-of-life" care - you went into a nursing home and died there, generally within a year or two. But if your care was given at home, your family either provided it themselves or paid for outside help out of their pockets. If Medicare or Medicaid (Medi-Cal, in California) doesn't pay for nursing-home care you or your family did.

Long-term care is usually very expensive, which is why most people need long-term care insurance. For example, on average, nursing facilities that provide skilled care can charge \$150 to \$300 per day, or over \$80,000 a year or more. Even custodial home care at three visits per week can cost over \$9,000 a year. Most Long-Term care insurance policies will cover only a specific dollar amount for each day you spend in a nursing facility or for each home-care visit. Thus, when considering a Long-Term care insurance policy, consult with a Long-Term care specialist and compare the benefits to determine which policy will best meet your own needs.

Long-Term care insurance offers more flexibility and options than many public assistance programs. It provides coverage for nursing-home care, home-health care, personal or adult day care usually for individuals with a chronic or disabling condition that needs constant supervision. Some policies include provisions for respite care and home modifications.

There are many types of Long-Term care facilities and settings. If you can afford them, you can choose long-term care insurance policies that allow you to receive care almost anywhere. The same applies if you pay as you go. But, if you choose to rely on your family, Medicare or Medicaid (Medi-Cal), you may feel the consequences.

As you will see below there are four funding methods, but they are not equal or necessarily available to everyone.

- **Long-Term Care Insurance**
- **Pay-As-You-Go**
- **Medicare**
- **Medicaid**

<b>Facilities</b>	<b>Medicare</b>	<b>Medicaid</b>	<b>Pay-As-You-Go</b>	<b>LTC Insurance</b>
<b>Nursing Home</b>	Yes-for up to 100 days of medically necessary skilled care	Yes-for as long as custodial care is needed	Yes-as long as your money lasts	Yes-according to the chosen policy's benefit, period and amount.
<b>At-Home Care</b>	Maybe, but not likely	Maybe-depends on your state	Yes-as long as your money lasts	Yes-according to the chosen policy's benefit, period and amount.
<b>Assisted Living/Continuing Care</b>	No	Rarely-it depends on your state	Yes-as long as your money lasts	Yes-according to the chosen policy's benefit, period and amount.
<b>Alzheimer's/Group-Home Care</b>	Rarely	Maybe-it depends on your state	Yes-as long as your money lasts	Yes-according to the chosen policy's benefit, period and amount.
<b>Respite Care</b>	No	Rarely-it depends on your state	Yes-as long as your money lasts	Yes-according to the chosen policy's benefit, period and amount.
<b>Adult Day Care</b>	No	Rarely-it depends on your state	Yes-as long as your money lasts	Yes-according to the chosen policy's benefit, period and amount.
<b>Home Modification</b>	No	Rarely-it depends on your state	Yes-as long as your money lasts	Yes-according to the chosen policy's benefit, period and amount.

**In Conclusion:**

Long-Term care refers to a great many types of care and facilities. One day you may need some or even all of them. Remember Long-Term care has come a long way-far beyond nursing home care - so if you want to keep your options open in the future, make appropriate choices in the present.