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[AARP Military Caregiving Guide: For Veterans, Service Members and Their Families](#)

AARP, the Elizabeth Dole Foundation, Hidden Heroes, the VA, and others teamed up to produce the [Military Caregiving Guide](#) for veterans, service members and their families. This guide provides tips, tools and strategies for caregivers.

In this guide you'll find information, a glossary of terms to know, resources (identified with an asterisk and listed throughout the guide) and checklists to help you find and organize the support that you might need.

The guide addresses five key issues that family caregivers face.

TALK IT OUT. It's essential to talk about the medical or emotional needs of your wounded warrior and your role as a caregiver. If your loved one's service is recent, you have probably discussed vital issues about health care and finances before he or she left for deployment; if you are caring for an older veteran, you may have never discussed care related issues. It's essential to start—or continue—the conversation now. After all, circumstances, wishes and needs can change.

TEAM UP. The support of family, friends and colleagues, as well as fellow caregivers and service providers, is critical. You don't have to face the responsibilities of caregiving alone.

MAKE A PLAN. Knowing how you will respond to needs as they arise will provide peace of mind for you and your service member or veteran. But remember to build in flexibility so the course of action can change as your loved one's needs shift or evolve.

SEEK PROFESSIONAL SUPPORT. Some issues will require additional information and resources. There are organizations and professionals with experience helping military or veteran caregivers— don't hesitate to reach out to them.

CARE FOR YOURSELF. Sustaining your energy and maintaining your health is critical, too. Mapping out how to care for yourself is as important as creating a

caregiving plan for your service member or veteran.