



# MAKING AGING IN PLACE POSSIBLE WITH SIMPLE CONSIDERATION

BY JANE SANDWOOD

Person-centered care begins as soon as an individual enters their later years. For seniors, care truly begins at home. With the right care techniques in place, many homes can be the continued and even permanent dwelling for aging individuals if it is set up to accommodate personal, medical, and security needs.

According to the National Center on Caregiving, the number of seniors requiring long-term care services in any setting is set to double from 13 million to 27 million by 2050, thanks to the predicted growth of the senior population. This means that there should be an increased focus on ways to make aging in place possible for seniors, as it is often cited as the most contented and comfortable method of living out one's later years. If you are a senior or loved one conscious about

home safety for aging in place, there are several helpful considerations to keep in mind.

## Conduct a Thorough Home Assessment

The first step for caregivers in making sure a home is safe for seniors is to assess the areas that may need improvement. Before any crisis occurs, it is crucial to identify how and when the necessary modifications will be made. Physically go into each room and consider the potential safety hazards and difficulties that may arise.

Since falls are the leading cause of fatal injury and hospitalization in the elderly community, a home should be modified to include grab bars in the bathroom, slim carpets on tile floors, and non-slip mats near entrances. By making these and other needed renovations or updates, caregivers can improve an individual's overall quality of life as

they age at home. After all, continuity is vital to a person's happiness, well-being, and care.

### **Focus on the Outdoors, Too**

In addition to taking into consideration the necessary updates for the indoors, caregivers should look to the outside for other ideas to make the home safer and more manageable. It's easy to forget that seniors who age in place will still need to get in and out of the house, and many accidents can happen near the doors, patios, or garage.

Install good outdoor lighting, particularly during the winter months, to make the walkways or sidewalks easy to navigate. Caregivers should also consider reworking any shrubbery or foliage that may be obstructing pathways. There are many options for adding an economical and easily accessible ramp or staircase to thresholds if need be.

The main motivation for any caregiver is to learn the best techniques for making an individual live out the later years in peace, and by considering how to update a home to make aging in place possible, caregivers can support the goal for continuity of care.

