

MAINE SAVVY CAREGIVER PROJECT

Savvy Caregiver is a training program for caregivers of people who have decreasing memory or cognition. Many families are new as caregivers and are seeking ideas and information on increasing their comfort with caregiving and with caregiving skills while increasing quality of life for the person that they are caring for.

Savvy Caregiver is a 12-hour program, usually offered in six 2-hour sessions, which provides caregivers with:

1. Knowledge

- Knowledge of the disease and how it affects the individual.
- Understanding that the goal of successful caregiving is to help the person achieve periods of contented involvement.
- Knowledge of available resources and services to support the individual with dementia as well as the caregiver.

2. Skills

- Skills to develop strategies for dealing with losses that the disease produces in the person and that help the person to use the capacities he or she still has – so as to promote periods of contented involvement.
- Skills to take care of one's self in the role of caregiver and develop support in the caregiving role.

3. Attitude

- Attitude that fosters confidence and a sense of mastery in the caregiving role.

Each session includes training, interactive exercises, and discussion. Between sessions, caregivers have readings and assignments to complete. They report back to the group on these home activities. Feedback is provided, and strategies are developed to support successful caregiving.

This Program is sponsored by the Office of Aging and Disability Services (OADS) – Department of Health and Human Services with funding from the U.S. Administration of Aging. Training is arranged and provided by Area Agencies on Aging. To obtain more information about the training or to register for training near you, contact: Sharon Ann Berz at Aroostook Agency on Aging, 1-800-439-1789 or 760-6251. Email sharon.berz@aroostookaging.org

