

Your Trusted Partner for In-Home Care Across
Montgomery County, MD, and D.C.



Bringing care home.



October Spotlight:
Older Persons Driving Local and Global Action:
Our Aspirations, Our Well-Being and Our Rights

Each year on October 1, the world celebrates the International Day of Older Persons, honoring the invaluable contributions of older adults while raising awareness of the opportunities and challenges of aging in today's world. This year's theme, "Older Persons Driving Local and Global Action: Our Aspirations, Our Well-Being and Our Rights" reminds us that older adults are not passive recipients of care but powerful agents of change within families, communities, and societies.

Local and Global Action

From volunteering in community organizations to influencing policy on global platforms, older adults play a vital role in shaping a more inclusive future. Their lived experiences provide wisdom, perspective, and resilience, qualities essential in addressing social, health, and environmental challenges worldwide. At the local level, older persons often drive initiatives around intergenerational learning, caregiving, and cultural preservation. On a global scale, they are active voices in advocating for human rights, climate responsibility, and social justice. Ensuring that their voices are heard is not only a matter of respect but a necessity for balanced progress.

Aspirations and Well-Being

Every older adult has aspirations for continued learning, meaningful relationships, health, independence, and dignity. Supporting these aspirations means ensuring access to healthcare, safe housing, financial security, and opportunities for lifelong participation. Well-being extends beyond physical health. It includes mental, social, and emotional fulfillment. Policies and community initiatives that encourage engagement, reduce isolation, and promote healthy lifestyles directly enhance quality of life for older adults and strengthen society as a whole.

Protecting Rights

The rights of older persons must be safeguarded and advanced. Unfortunately, ageism, neglect, and unequal access to resources remain barriers across the globe. International advocacy and local action must work hand in hand to ensure that older people enjoy their fundamental rights to autonomy, inclusion, and dignity.

How SmithLife Homecare Advocates

SmithLife Homecare actively supports these goals through:

- Person-centered care in clients' homes, promoting independence, dignity, and quality of life.
- Advocacy and education to combat ageism in healthcare settings and the broader community.

- Resource navigation and support services that help older adults access benefits, legal rights, and local programs.
- Collaboration with community partners and policymakers to ensure that legislation and public services reflect the voice and needs of older adults.

By integrating direct service with advocacy, SmithLife Homecare helps ensure that older persons are not merely cared for but elevated as leaders, rights holders, and change agents.

Tips from SmithLife Homecare

HELPFUL TIPS



HOW TO GET INVOLVED

Helpful Hints: Supporting Aspirations, Well-Being & Rights of Older Adults

Aspirations

- Encourage lifelong learning through classes, book clubs, or online courses.

- Support hobbies and passions, gardening, art, music, or travel, that give meaning and joy.
- Create intergenerational opportunities so older adults can share skills and stories with younger generations.

Well-Being

- Prioritize regular health screenings, immunizations, and exercise for strength and balance.
- Foster social connections: community centers, faith groups, and volunteering can reduce isolation.
- Promote mental well-being with activities like meditation, journaling, or creative expression.

Rights

- Stay informed about legal rights regarding healthcare decisions, financial protection, and safe housing.
- Speak up against ageism. Challenge stereotypes and encourage respectful dialogue.
- Advocate for policies that protect older adults from neglect, abuse, and inequity.

How to Get Involved

- Volunteer locally: Offer your time at senior centers, advocacy groups, or cultural programs.
- Join the conversation: Participate in events marking International Day of Older Persons and share your voice on social media.
- Support older adults directly: Reach out to neighbors, friends, or family to lend support or companionship.
- Partner with organizations like SmithLife Homecare: Engage with us to promote independence, dignity, and thriving at home for older adults.

Together, we can ensure that older adults' aspirations are supported, their well-being is nurtured, and their rights are always respected.

Please reach out to SmithLife Homecare to find out how we can help. Visit smithlifehomecare.com or call us at 301-816-5020.

Nurse's Corner

NURSE'S CORNER

Listening • Respecting • Empowering



**International Day of Older Persons:
Listening, Respecting, Empowering**

Written by: Essy Gurevich, BSN, RN

Every October 1, the world pauses to recognize the *International Day of Older Persons*. For those of us working in homecare, this day carries special meaning—it reminds us of the value, wisdom, and strength older adults bring into our lives.

Why Celebrate?

This year's theme, "*Empowering Elderly Voices for an Inclusive Future*," highlights something simple yet powerful: older adults deserve to be heard. Too often, their opinions are set aside, yet they have a wealth of knowledge and perspective that can guide families, communities, and even policies.

What Empowerment Looks Like

Empowerment doesn't have to be complicated. It can mean:

- Asking older adults what truly matters to them in daily care.
- Encouraging them to stay engaged in hobbies, learning, and community events.
- Making sure their healthcare, social, and emotional needs are addressed.
- Standing up against ageism and advocating for fairness.

When we make room for their voices, we build a stronger, more connected society.

Our Shared Role

At SmithLife Homecare, we see the difference it makes when older adults are treated not just as care recipients, but as partners in shaping their lives. By listening closely, honoring their choices, and supporting their independence, we help create the inclusive future this day calls us to imagine.

This October, let's celebrate by recommitting to listen, respect, and empower—because every voice matters, and every person deserves to feel included.

If you have questions, concerns, or simply need some encouragement, we're always here for you. Please don't hesitate to reach out to our team at SmithLife Homecare by calling 301-816-5020.

Caregivers of the Month



Pictured: Felicia Somuah and Helen Hailu

SmithLife Homecare October Caregivers of the Month

Felicia Somuah and Helen Hailu

Both women represent the heart of what it means to provide care that feels like family, and their dedication has left a lasting impression on clients and loved ones alike.

Felicia has been praised as dependable, nurturing, and someone who naturally becomes part of the family. One client's family shared, "I highly recommend Felicia... She was dependable, bright, nurturing, and was like a family member. Felicia was always calm during stressful situations and Ellie felt safe and secure with her company. She often took initiative knowing exactly what Ellie needed to be comfortable or not in pain... She is a kind person who anyone would be happy to hire." From showing up on snow days to ensuring her client's comfort in every detail, Felicia's compassion and initiative shine through in everything she does.

Helen has also built a strong reputation for the consistent, loving care she provides. Over the years, she has earned the trust and admiration of her long-time clients and their families, who regularly share their appreciation for her kindness and dependability. Most recently, when Helen stepped in as a fill-in caregiver for one of our clients, their family called the office to personally express their gratitude and praise for the excellent care she delivered. Time and again, Helen proves to be the kind of caregiver who gives families peace of mind, knowing their loved ones are in good hands.

Felicia and Helen both exemplify the values of SmithLife Homecare through their professionalism, compassion, and dedication. We are truly grateful to have them on our team and are proud to celebrate them as our Caregivers of the Month.

With appreciation,
The SmithLife Homecare Team

The Latest from Our Blog



Addressing Transportation Challenges for Older Adults

How to Address Older Adult Transportation Challenges

Getting around often becomes harder as we age. Millions of older adults face daily transportation challenges—whether it's physical immobility or lack of a driver's license—that limit their independence and quality of life. The responsibility for older adult transportation often falls to family caregivers, but with the right strategy, providing mobility doesn't have to feel overwhelming. Learn more about how aging affects older adults' independence and how dedicated services can help.

How Mobility Changes Affect Older Adults

It's no secret that older folks deal with a wide range of physical limitations, including joint pain, reduced flexibility, and even arthritis. These conditions make it significantly more difficult to get around, as traveling in cars (and getting out of

them) can be uncomfortable or painful. Even short walks can feel like an insurmountable challenge as we age. And this is all before we consider chronic conditions that necessitate the use of wheelchairs and walkers. Unfortunately, the modern world just isn't always accessible for older adults. That's why mobility support services are so critical for many families.

Ways Physical Decline Impacts Safe Driving

Aging doesn't just impact our physical mobility. Many effects of aging also influence our ability to be good, safe drivers. For one, slower reflexes mean longer response times to unexpected situations, like a car suddenly breaking in front of you. Too often, a delayed reaction is the difference between a car accident and a close call. Beyond this example, aging can also affect driving ability in the following ways:

- Increased neck stiffness may make checking blind spots difficult and even painful.
- Medication side effects might cause dizziness or impair judgment and coordination.
- Worsening vision makes night driving even more of a challenge, especially when there is a lot of glare from headlights.

Does Your Loved One Need Older Adult Transportation

Services?

If your loved one is having a harder time making it to all their medical appointments, it may be time to consider investing in older adult transportation services. After all, aging in place shouldn't mean giving up all kinds of travel!

Here are some specific warning signs that your loved one could use some help:

- Difficulty reading road signs or seeing traffic signals
- Getting lost in areas that were once familiar
- Feeling nervous or overwhelmed while driving
- Frequent close calls or minor accidents
- Physical discomfort that affects the ability to operate a vehicle's controls

How Professional Transportation Preserves Independence

Professional transportation services designed specifically for older adults allow older folks to maintain some of their independence while reducing their need to drive themselves. These services connect older adults with trained drivers who can assist with mobility devices, medical equipment, and other special requirements. Unlike public transportation, professional older adult transportation services offer door-to-door pickup and drop-off. This eliminates the challenge of walking to bus stops or navigating parking lots. Many services are dedicated to accessible travel and allow things like advanced scheduling to ensure older

adults can get where they need to go on time. Say goodbye to the uncertainty of ride-sharing apps or the physical demands of using public transit!

Other Ways to Support Accessible Travel

You have several options that can supplement professional older adult transportation services. While professional transport is a top choice, it may not be available at all hours of the day. If you want to make sure your loved one never misses an event or medical appointment, try using the following approaches to older adult transportation:

- **Community Resources:** Local community centers, religious organizations, and older adult centers often provide volunteer driver programs. These initiatives connect older adults with community volunteers who donate their time to help with transportation needs. While availability may be limited, these programs offer a personal touch and often cost less than commercial services.
- **Family Support:** Get a group of family members to create a transportation schedule that divides the responsibility among multiple people. This prevents any single person from becoming overwhelmed while ensuring consistent support for your older adult's mobility needs.
- **Technology Solutions:** Some smartphone apps can help with older adult independence! For example, GPS devices and navigation apps with voice commands can help older adults who still drive by providing clear directions. This reduces the stress of driving in unfamiliar areas. [**\[Read More\]**](#)

Easy Recipes



Berry & Spinach

VITALITY SALAD

- ✓ Easy to customize
- ♥ Respects the body's health
- ⚡ Empowers with energy

Berry & Spinach Vitality Salad

Easy to customize: add nuts, seeds, or cheese to fit dietary preferences.
Uses fresh, nutrient-rich foods that honor the body's health.

Packed with antioxidants, vitamins, and healthy fats to support energy and independence.

Ingredients (Serves 4)

- 6 cups baby spinach (or mixed greens)
- 1 cup fresh strawberries, sliced
- 1 cup blueberries
- ½ cup walnuts or pecans, toasted
- ½ cup crumbled goat cheese or feta (optional)
- 2 tbsp sunflower or pumpkin seeds

Dressing:

- 3 tbsp olive oil
- 1 tbsp balsamic vinegar
- 1 tbsp honey or maple syrup
- 1 tsp Dijon mustard
- Pinch of salt & pepper

Directions

1. In a large bowl, toss spinach, berries, and toasted nuts.
2. Whisk dressing ingredients until smooth.
3. Drizzle dressing over salad, toss lightly, and top with cheese and seeds.
4. Serve immediately as a refreshing main or side dish.

Nutritional Highlights

- Antioxidants from berries to support brain and heart health.
- Omega-3s from walnuts for healthy aging.
- Iron & vitamins from leafy greens to sustain energy and strength.

A colorful, nourishing dish that empowers older adults to thrive with flavor, vitality, and balance.

Healthy Eating at Home

SmithLife Homecare supports balanced, nutritious meals through grocery shopping, meal planning, and cooking—always customized to personal tastes and medical needs. Our caregivers also provide companionship at mealtimes, encouraging healthy habits and ensuring safe food preparation, so clients can maintain energy, independence, and overall well-being at home.

Join the SmithLife Community!

Have you connected with us on social media yet? If not, we'd love to see you there! Dive deeper into our community, follow us for updates on events, useful



What's Happening Soon

AGEISM AWARENESS DAY



Ageism Awareness Day

October 9, 2025

Ageism Awareness Day is a time to shine a light on how ageism affects our society and to take action toward building communities where people of all ages are valued and included. Ageism shows up in many ways: through stereotypes (how we think), prejudice (how we feel), and discrimination (how we act) toward others, or even ourselves, based on age. Its effects are far-reaching, impacting health, well-being, financial security, and even the economy. And it doesn't just affect older adults, it touches us at every stage of life. The encouraging news is that together, we can make a difference. On Ageism Awareness Day, we commit

to challenging stereotypes, fostering respect, and creating age-inclusive communities for everyone.

Age-Friendly Communication: Listening, Respecting, Empowering

At SmithLife Homecare, we know that how we talk about aging shapes how we value and support older adults. Too often, ageism, stereotypes, prejudice, or discrimination based on age, slips into everyday words, images, and assumptions. It may sound like “they’re too old to learn technology” or “she’s still working.” These phrases, even if well-intended, diminish the dignity and strengths of older adults.

Moving Beyond Stereotypes

The truth is that older adults are active, creative, and vital members of our families and communities. They are leaders, workers, caregivers, volunteers, and learners. At SmithLife Homecare, we recognize that aging is not about decline, it’s about adaptation, growth, and contribution.

Why Words Matter

Language has the power to either reinforce stereotypes or empower. Instead of terms like the elderly or frail, we use words that reflect dignity, such as older adults or older persons. We avoid framing aging as something to resist. There’s nothing wrong with looking older, and there’s everything right about celebrating the experiences that come with age.

The Power of Images

Just as words can stereotype, so can pictures. Too often, media portray older adults as helpless, sad, or disengaged. At SmithLife Homecare, we highlight older adults as engaged, diverse, and thriving, whether enjoying a meal, learning new skills, spending time with family, or receiving care that helps them remain independent at home.

Our Commitment

Our guiding values: Listening, Respecting, Empowering, shape the way we communicate and provide care every day. We:

- Listen to each individual’s story and preferences.
- Respect cultural traditions, identities, and life experiences.
- Empower older adults to maintain dignity, independence, and well-being at home.

Age-friendly communication isn’t just about avoiding harmful words. It’s about building a culture of respect where older adults are seen, heard, and valued for

who they are. At SmithLife Homecare, we are proud to bring this approach to every interaction—with our clients, their families, and our community.

[Additional Resources](#)



CAREGIVING WITH CONNECTION: *FINDING JOY IN THE JOURNEY*

Caregiving with Connection: Finding Joy in the Journey

November 13 | 11:30 a.m. - 1 p.m.

Landon House
1799 East Jefferson Street
Rockville, MD 20852

Gain practical tools for your caregiving journey from the personal and professional wisdom of two caregiver advocates who bring unique perspectives and lived experience.

Embracing Moments of Joy

Community educator Carolyn Schick will share her journey of caring for her parents, inspired by Jolene Brackey's book "Creating Moments of Joy." Schick will illustrate how embracing her parents' reality through storytelling, a spirit of adventure, and a growth mindset—helped her build meaningful connections and create moments of joy amidst the challenges of dementia.

Strengthening Communication

Susan I. Wranik, MS, MA, CCC-SLP, author and speech-language pathologist—will provide strategies for improving communication among healthcare providers, caregivers, and the individuals they support. Drawing on her clinical expertise, she will address the unique challenges of cognitive decline and highlight practical approaches for fostering understanding, respect, and collaboration.

[Register here](#)

Mark Your Calendars



Montgomery County Active Aging Week

October 6-October 11, an international celebration of leading an active lifestyle at any age. Residents 50 and older are invited to participate in free programs and events that support and promote the benefits of leading healthy physical, mental and intellectual lifestyles across the lifespan.

Join

Offered for Active Aging Week
Better with Age Comedy Show,
Wednesday, October 8, 12-2PM, South Germantown Recreational Park

Nature on Wheels, Hikes to Parks

Unknown – October 10, Lois Y Green Conservation Park, 8711 Snouffer School Road, Gaithersburg, MD, 20879

Nature on Wheels, Hikes to Parks
Unknown – October 12, Fairland Recreational Park, 3928 Greencastle RD, Fairland, MD, 20866

How SmithLife Homecare Helps Promote Active Aging

SmithLife Homecare is uniquely positioned to empower older adults to age actively at home and in the community. Here are some of the ways:

Supporting Physical Health

- Trained caregivers encourage safe mobility, exercise, and healthy routines.
- Assistance with meal preparation ensures balanced nutrition.
- Care coordination helps clients stay on top of medical appointments and preventive care.

Enhancing Mental & Emotional Well-

Being

- Caregivers provide companionship and conversation to reduce isolation.
- Activities such as reading, puzzles, or memory games support cognitive engagement.
- Nurses and care staff listen and respond with respect and

What Is Active Aging?

Active aging is a concept promoted by the World Health Organization (WHO) that emphasizes optimizing opportunities for health, participation, and security in order to enhance quality of life as people age. Instead of focusing only on medical care or longevity, active aging highlights:

- Physical well-being: Staying strong, mobile, and healthy through exercise, good nutrition, and preventive healthcare.
- Mental well-being: Engaging in lifelong learning, memory activities, and practices that support emotional resilience.
- Social participation: Staying connected through community involvement, friendships, and intergenerational relationships.
- Independence & rights: Preserving dignity, choice, and autonomy in daily living.

It's about thriving, not just surviving through older adulthood.

empathy, empowering confidence.

Fostering Social Participation

- Transportation and escort services allow clients to attend community programs, religious services, and social events.
- Connection to local senior centers and cultural programs promotes ongoing engagement.

Preserve Independence & Dignity

- SmithLife helps clients remain at home safely, with support tailored to their goals.
- Personalized care planning respects individual rights, preferences, and aspirations.
- Advocacy and resource navigation empower older adults and their families to make informed choices.

Active aging means living fully, with dignity, independence, and joy. SmithLife Homecare's mission, "Bringing care home", aligns directly with this philosophy by providing compassionate support, practical help, and advocacy that enable older adults to thrive in every stage of aging.

A Special Note From Our Team

At SmithLife Homecare, our work is guided by three simple but powerful commitments:
Listening, Respecting, and Empowering.

We listen to the voices of older adults and their families, respecting their unique journeys, traditions, and choices. Through compassionate care and advocacy, we empower individuals to thrive—nurturing their aspirations, protecting their rights, and supporting overall well-being at home and in the community.

On this International Day of Older Persons, and every day, our team remains committed to listening, respecting, and empowering the older adults we serve. Together, we can create a future where aging is not just about care, but about thriving.

Thank you for trusting us to walk alongside you. Together, we can ensure that aging is not only supported, but celebrated.

With gratitude,
The SmithLife Homecare Team



SmithLife Homecare is a leading provider of in-home care services in Maryland and Washington, D.C., specializing in senior care, dementia and Alzheimer's care, companion services, support for aging-in-place and support for complex medical recovery.

We are also the premier agency for nurse staffing, serving hospitals, rehabilitation centers, memory care facilities, and assisted living communities.

Contact us today to learn how we can help you or your loved ones.

Telephone: 301-816-5020
Website: smithlifehomecare.com
Email: info@smithlifehomecare.com



SmithLife Homecare is proudly owned by Charles E. Smith Life Communities, a trusted leader in senior care for over 115 years. Backed by a century-long legacy of excellence in healthcare, SmithLife Homecare provides compassionate, professional in-home support that empowers older adults to live independently and safely at home, or wherever they call home.

Licensed as a residential service agency by the Maryland Department of Health and Mental Hygiene, Office of Health Care Quality and Washington, D.C. Department of Health as a Home Support Agency. MD #RSA-01265 | DC #HSA-0014



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