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Cornerstone
CAREGIVING

**Helping People
Remain Safely and
Comfortably at Home**

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Cornerstone CAREGIVING

Helping People Remain Safely and Comfortably at Home

By Kathy Hunt

At some point, most people need a bit of help with either their own or their loved ones' daily care. Illness, injury, chronic conditions, or just aging in general make housework, errands, and personal care difficult to do. Family members frequently step in to assist with these and other tasks.

In July 2025, the AARP reported that one in four, or roughly 63 million, American adults provide direct care for a family member. Often that family member is a parent, aged 65 or older.

Although caring for a family member can be very rewarding and even bring the family closer together, it can also be quite challenging, made more so by commitments to work, spouses, partners, children, and other key players in the caregiver's life. In a study released by the *Pew Research Foundation* in February 2026, caregivers cited the negative impact that this role had had on their careers, finances, physical and emotional health, and social lives.

When the negatives of caring for a family member at home start to outweigh the positives, many may consider a move to assisted living or a nursing home. For anyone not ready, willing, or in a position to make such a major change, in-home, personal care can work wonders. For those residing in Chester and Montgomery counties, Cornerstone Caregiving of Phoenixville does just this. Part of the Cornerstone Caregiving organization, the newly-opened Phoenixville branch provides the same high level of award-winning, in-home care as the group's other 430-plus, U.S. locations. This year, Cornerstone Caregiving was named the "2026 Most Reliable In-Home Care Service Provider" by ElderCare Review.



Cornerstone Caregiving was founded during the pandemic, in 2020, by Texans Michael Hillman and Ryan Gibson and remains co-owned by the two. Their premise is that every senior should be allowed the choice of where and how they age. If someone wants to remain at home during their final years, Cornerstone Caregiving will make it easier to do so. Today, their mission extends not only to seniors but also to veterans, those with developmental disorders, and anyone else requiring assistance with day-to-day home life.

"A lot of people don't want to move to long-term care or a nursing facility," said Nitish Arora, operating director of Cornerstone Care Phoenixville. "We have a mission of delivering high-quality, compassionate care at home while also allowing for flexibility. If you need care or you are the loved one of someone who needs care, we will work closely with you so that you get the best home care possible."

Cornerstone Caregiving Phoenixville supports clients residing in Chester and Montgomery counties. Arora pointed out that there is a high demand for this type of service in Phoenixville as well as Pottstown, which contributed to the opening of the Phoenixville branch.

Personal Care to Meet Each Person's Well-Being

When the term "in-home care" comes up in conversation, it's easy to assume that skilled care from a medical professional is involved. Although clients of Cornerstone Caregiving may be receiving physical or occupational therapy, visiting nursing, or hospice through an authorized medical provider, what Cornerstone Caregiving offers is aid with unskilled care. This includes bathing, cooking, housekeeping, errands, transportation, mobility and wheelchair aid, fall prevention, among other life essentials. These are activities that become harder with age, illness, and/or disability.

Where Home Care Meets Compassion.

Built on the belief that every senior deserves the choice to age where and how they wish, Cornerstone has grown into a leading nationwide home care organization, committed to delivering premier care wherever seniors call home.



Not every Cornerstone Caregiving client needs this type of personal care. Sometimes, a client may simply want someone to sit, chat, and visit for an hour or so each week. Perhaps the person feels a bit isolated or unable to pursue favorite hobbies without a little assistance. Then again, maybe the client's loved ones have a pressing appointment or crave a short break from caregiving, which necessitates finding someone to cover for them. This is where Cornerstone Caregiving Phoenixville steps in with companion visits and respite care. Nitish Arora pairs clients with compatible caregivers, aiming to match people who share common interests and who can participate in favorite pastimes. He and his staff work with the client, the client's loved one(s), and healthcare team to ensure not only that day-to-day demands are met but also that the client remains happy and comfortable at home.

"Everything is based on what the patient wants," Arora said. "We have no minimum-hour requirements; you can request as little as one hour per week or around the clock, 24-hour care. No minimum doesn't mean no minimum standard of care. We go for the maximum standard of care every time."

He added that ideally, there are two caregivers assigned to each patient. However, for those requiring 24-hour care, the general rule is four to six caregivers.

(Continued on page 8)





(Continued from page 7)

In addition to companion, respite, and 24-hour care, Cornerstone Caregiving Phoenixville provides hospital recovery care, which includes medication pickups and reminders, hot meals, assistance with prescribed exercises, bedside care, and laundry. It also works with hospice teams to make sure that clients who have chosen palliative care remain comfortable and content in their homes.

Additionally, Cornerstone Caregiving ensures its staff members undergo extensive training in dementia and specific neurocognitive diseases such as Alzheimer's. By learning about and understanding dementia and its diseases, the staff can offer an extra level of patience and empathy for clients struggling with these conditions. As its website states, they can also help family caregivers "navigate sundowning, exit seeking, behavioral outbursts, and other symptoms of memory loss."

Making In-Home Care Easier

Unlike when seeking skilled care, those interested in personal, in-home care won't have to track down a doctor's referral. Simply call Cornerstone Caregiving Phoenixville at 484.922.9186 or fill out an online form on its website, <https://cornerstonecaregiving.com>. Arora will then schedule a free home visit where he gets to know the prospective client and any family and friends involved with the person's care. At that time, he will go over the services on offer, determine what the client desires and requires, and discuss the cost of care.



"If a patient is paying out-of-pocket, we go over budgeting, flexibility, and what they specifically need help with," Arora said. "If they're unable to speak for themselves, I speak with the power of attorney or representative who is present and set up a care plan that way. Once I have this plan, I contact my caregivers and we get someone lined up for them."

Depending upon the client, a professional caregiver can start within 24 hours of the home assessment. Arora attends the first visit with the caregiver and makes sure that everything is in place and going smoothly for all involved.

"We want to make sure that patients have a say in their schedules and care," Arora said.

If a client also receives skilled in-home healthcare, social services, or is in hospice care, Cornerstone's caregivers will work closely with those providers, updating and discussing any concerns that arise. If there are any changes observed by Cornerstone Caregiving or by the other providers, that information will be shared in a confidential, professional manner.

How to Pay for Personal Care

For unskilled, personal care, patients generally pay out of pocket, as Arora had mentioned, through long-term care insurance, or through Veterans Affairs (VA) programs. Those enrolled with the VA may have Homemaker and Home Health Aid (HHA) Care benefits, which alleviate some of the cost of aging in place.

Cornerstone Caregiving is credentialed for VA-funded, in-home care for veterans throughout the country. For veterans not currently enrolled with the VA, a member of the Cornerstone Caregiving staff will help them navigate the VA system and sign up for benefits. The organization likewise offers support to veterans' families so that they'll also be informed and empowered.

As with all clients, there is no minimum number of hours that a veteran must receive from Cornerstone Caregiving. This "no-minimum" policy differentiates Cornerstone Caregiving from other personal care services, many of which mandate hourly minimums for their





clients. Arora noted that a large number of people don't require as much help as is stipulated by some personal care services.

To be covered by HHA benefits, veterans must first consult their primary care physician and receive confirmation that they need assistance with at least two activities of daily living—housekeeping, personal hygiene, etc. To comply with VA regulations, their physician must also approve a specific number of hours of care. Note again that self-pay clients do not have to perform these steps.

In July 2025, Cornerstone Caregiving began serving patients enrolled in Medicare's new Guiding an Improved Dementia Experience (GUIDE) model. Patients with a diagnosis of dementia and who have traditional Medicare Parts A and B are eligible to participate in the GUIDE model. Enacted in 2024 and running for eight years, GUIDE will ultimately test the impact of providing comprehensive services and support to dementia patients and their family caregivers. It aims to enable these patients to remain in their homes longer, reduce hospital visits and stays, improve quality of life, and address the needs of unpaid family caregivers.

To accomplish these goals, GUIDE supplies monthly payments to support a patient's in-home care. The model funds an additional \$2,575 to cover respite care, which gives family caregivers a break and helps stave off burnout. Respite is set up through a care coordinator. As one of the few participating in-home, personal care agencies, Cornerstone Caregiving supported 1,622 additional clients in its first year with GUIDE.

Additional information about GUIDE can be found on the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services website, <https://www.cms.gov/>, and by contacting Cornerstone Caregiving Phoenixville 484.922.9186.

High-Quality Home Care Starts at the Top

When founders Hillman and Gibson created Cornerstone Caregiving, they had four fundamental principles, or pillars in mind: compassion in home care; clients having a choice and having their preferences honored; recognizing the calling for caregiving; and embracing challenges and striving for excellence. In other words, they built the company upon four C's — compassion, choice, calling, and challenge. This was something that appealed greatly to Arora. Prior to joining Cornerstone Caregiving as Phoenixville's operational director, Arora had worked in the home care industry for roughly six years.

"I've gone into many homes and seen patients not being treated the greatest and seen horror stories firsthand. I assure you that when we serve Chester and Montgomery counties, we give the highest quality standard of care," he said. "I do this work because I care."

This year, Arora received his master's degree in health administration (MHA) from Temple University, which he'd earned while working full-time in home care. A native of India who lived in South Africa for seven years before immigrating to New Jersey at the age of nine, Arora is "an example of someone who moves to America and wants to make a difference, to make things better."

He added, "I've lived here over 20 years and been treated very well here. The least I can do is have a line of work where I treat others as well and give them the help they need to succeed and also to remain in their homes."

During his career, he has noticed that many people do not want to move into long-term care facilities and prefer to remain in the comfort of their own homes and receive high-quality care. "That's where companies like Cornerstone Caregiving come in. I want to make sure that every patient is treated with the dignity and respect that they deserve."

To learn more about Cornerstone Caregiving Phoenixville's high-quality, personal care services, please contact Nitish Arora at 484.922.9186.

TEASING OUT THE DIFFERENCES BETWEEN TERMS

With the multitude of similar sounding terms used to describe healthcare needs and facilities, it can be tricky to tease out which word applies to which scenario. Below is a brief, alphabetical rundown of common terms and their definitions from Merriam-Webster, the World Health Organization, and the Cambridge Dictionary.

- **Assisted living:** system of housing and limited care designed for aging adults who need some assistance with daily activities but do not require care in a nursing home.
- **Caregiver:** a person who provides direct care for a person.
- **Home care:** non-medical or medical care provided in a patient's home.
- **Home healthcare:** medical care and therapeutic services provided in a patient's home by licensed healthcare workers.
- **Hospice:** a program or facility that provides palliative care and emotional support to terminally ill people in a home or homelike setting so that quality of life is maintained and family members may participate in their care.
- **In-home care:** See definition for home care.
- **Long-term care:** broad range of personal, social, and medical services and supports provided over extended periods of time by family members, friends, or informal or professional caregivers.
- **Long-term care facility:** residential facility that provides care for those who are chronically ill, disabled, or aging and cannot care for themselves. Nursing homes and assisted living facilities are two examples.
- **Nursing home:** public or private residential facility providing a high level of long-term personal or nursing care for aging or chronically ill people who are unable to care for themselves properly.
- **Palliative care:** medical and related care provided to a patient with a serious, life-threatening, or terminal illness that isn't intended to cure but rather to manage symptoms, relieve pain, improve quality of life, and meet the patient's emotional, social, and spiritual needs.
- **Personal care:** day-to-day tasks such as bathing, eating, getting dressed, and taking medicines with which people may need help due to aging, illness, or other conditions.
- **Skilled care:** medical or rehabilitative services that can only be provided by skilled, licensed medical workers.
- **Unskilled care:** nonmedical/personal care provided by caregivers.

