



The Cost of Receiving Treatment for Alzheimer's

by YVONNE BANKS

Affording Alzheimer's Treatment

There is growing concern about the increasing cost of healthcare for many people all over the world. Thousands of people are wondering how they will pay for treatments for their respective illness, such as Alzheimer's disease. There are several avenues to be explored when learning how to pay for Alzheimer's treatments.

- **Insurance:** Medicare is a major source of healthcare coverage for people 65 and older in America, so it should be available for covering treatment for Alzheimer's. Private insurance, group employee plans, or even retiree health plans could be valuable resources in paying for Alzheimer's treatment.

Employee benefits

If a person is diagnosed with Alzheimer's and continues to work, assuming that they are in the early stages of the disease, paid sick leave may be available. Short-term disability and a flexible health spending account may also be available.

Here are some ways to learn about the resources available to you:

- Review your employee handbook. It will contain information on your coverage.
- Speak with a person who specializes in your specific employee benefits to get a better idea of what your insurance plan covers.
- Keep all insurance documents pertaining your coverage.

Retirement benefits

Retirement benefits can help people with Alzheimer's receive the money they need to treat their disease, even if the individual has not reached their age of retirement.

Retirement plans include:

- Annuities
- Pension plans (if you have a disability, your pension plan may pay out early)
- Individual retirement accounts (IRAs)

Personal Savings, Investments and Property

Personal assets are anything that belongs to you, or any other family members that can help you pay for medical care. Personal assets may include, but are not limited to:

- Stocks
-

-
- Bonds
 - Savings accounts
 - Real estate
 - Jewelry
 - Artwork

Learn about a reverse mortgage. A reverse mortgage allows the equity of your home to be converted into income. You can convert some of this equity in the home for cash while retaining home ownership. The amount an individual may borrow is based on their age at the time of application, the equity within the home, and lender interest rates. These programs do not have an impact on Social Security or Medicare benefits, though they may present problems for individuals trying to qualify for other government programs.

Government Programs

The following are government programs that you can learn about if you are unable to find other means of covering the costs of your healthcare:

- Medicaid
- Tax deductions and credits.
- Social Security Disability Income (SSDI) [applies to individuals under 65]
- Supplemental Security Income (SSI)
- Veteran benefits

Community Support Services

There are community organizations that offer services to help individuals with Alzheimer's find financial support. A county relief office in your community may help pay for some of your healthcare expenses. There are free services to explore, like respite care, methods of transportation to a hospital, and 'Meals On Wheels'.

The following organizations can help you find additional resources to help with your Alzheimer's care needs:

- The Alzheimer's Association
 - Benefits Check-Up
 - Benefits.gov
 - Department of Veterans Affairs
 - National Clearinghouse for Long-Term Care Information
-