What Will Care Actually Cost?

ELDER CARE COST ESTIMATOR · PRINTABLE WORKSHEET

Gather the real numbers for your parents' situation. Write them here, total them up, and trade vague dread for a number you can plan around. Use this alongside the free interactive Estimator.

Tip: Fill in what you know today. Leave blanks for items still to research. The interactive Estimator will calculate a personalized monthly estimate and 3-year projection once you have the core figures.

1. Care Setting

[ ] Home (aging in place)	Monthly costs if any: $ __________
[ ] Assisted Living	Base monthly rate / rent: $ __________
[ ] Memory Care	Level-of-care fees (if separate): $ __________
[ ] Skilled Nursing / Nursing Home	Private or semi-private? $ __________
What's included in base rate?	Notes: ________________________________
What's billed separately?	____

2. In-Home Help & Adult Day

Hours per week needed	______ hrs × $ ______ /hr = $ __________ /mo
Overnight or live-in premium?	Yes / No Extra: $ __________
Adult day (days per week)	______ days × $ ______ /day = $ __________ /mo
Agency vs. private caregiver?	Notes: ________________________________

3. Medical & Medications

Prescriptions & copays (monthly avg)	$ __________
Equipment, supplies, incontinence care	$ __________
Therapies / treatments not covered	$ __________
Other medical (notes)	_________________________________

4. Daily Living

Meals / groceries / delivery	$ __________ /mo
Housekeeping & laundry	$ __________ /mo
Transportation to appointments	$ __________ /mo
Other (phone, utilities share, etc.)	$ __________ /mo

5. One-Time & Setup Costs

Home modifications (ramps, grab bars, etc.)	$ __________
Move-in / community fees	$ __________
Legal & document preparation (POA, etc.)	$ __________
Other setup	$ __________

6. Income & Coverage (available each month)

Social Security + pension	$ __________
Other income / savings draw	$ __________
Long-term care insurance (monthly benefit)	$ __________
VA benefits (Aid & Attendance, etc.)	$ __________
Medicare covers?	Mostly skilled/rehab short-term — not long-term custodial
Medicaid / HCBS waiver status?	Applied / Waitlist / Not yet Notes: ________

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Your Numbers — Totals & Interpretation

Add the monthly recurring costs. One-time items sit outside the monthly total but still matter for cash flow.

Monthly Recurring Cost Summary

Category	Monthly Amount
1. Care Setting (base rate / rent)	$ ______________
2. In-Home Help + Adult Day	$ ______________
3. Medical & Medications	$ ______________
4. Daily Living	$ ______________
TOTAL MONTHLY CARE COST	**$ ______________**
Available monthly income + benefits (section 6)	$ ______________
MONTHLY GAP or SURPLUS	**$ ______________**

One-time / setup total (section 5): $ ______________ — keep these separate so they don't distort the monthly picture.

Simple 3-Year Projection (optional)

Long-term care costs have historically risen 3–5% per year. Use 4% as a working assumption unless you have better local data.

	Year 1 (today)	Year 2 (+4%)	Year 3 (+4% again)
Estimated monthly cost	$ __________	$ __________	$ __________
Estimated annual cost	$ __________	$ __________	$ __________

What Your Numbers Are Telling You

Compare your monthly total against income and resources — then plan from there.

INCOME COVERS IT · WITH MARGIN

You have room — protect it. Costs are manageable today but care needs climb overtime. Build the 3-year projection now so a rate increase or health change doesn't catch the budget off guard.

CLOSE · INCOME NEARLY MEETS COSTS

Plan the gap before it opens. You're near the line, which means a single change could tip it. Map where savings, benefits, and insurance fill the gap — and check whether VA or long-term care coverage applies.

COSTS OUTRUN INCOME

It's time to look at Medicaid & asset planning. When care costs exceed income, early, careful planning protects both your parent and the family's finances. Understand spend-down rules now — not after a crisis forces a rushed decision.

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What to Do With This Estimate

If your number felt bigger than you expected — that's normal. Most families are. The gap between what care costs and what's available isn't a failure of planning. It's a reflection of a system that wasn't designed to make this easy. You're not behind. You just now have a real number to work with instead of a worry with no shape.

You're not selfish for thinking about the financial impact on your family. You're being honest about something most people are afraid to say out loud. Facing the number — even when it's hard — is an act of love, not a betrayal of it.

Practical next moves most families take

- Have the first conversation with your parent about their wishes (use the free talking guide if you have it).
- Locate and review legal documents — Power of Attorney, healthcare proxy, advance directive, will.
- Review insurance policies and coverage gaps (long-term care, VA, Medicare Advantage extras).
- Estimate what family contribution (if any) is realistic and sustainable.
- Create a simple emergency contact + medical information sheet.
- Start a caregiving binder or shared digital folder so nothing lives only in one person's head.
- Call your local Area Agency on Aging (eldercare.acl.gov or 1-800-677-1116) about benefits and waivers.

Where this worksheet leads next

This page gives you the raw numbers and a first interpretation. Two paths go deeper:

Compare the care options themselves

Care Options Comparison Workbook — $12

Side-by-side charts for all six care types, real cost ranges, Medicare/Medicaid notes, touring checklists, and a family decision framework. Includes the "How to Talk to Your Aging Parent" guide.

Best when you still need to choose or confirm the setting.

Turn the numbers into a living plan

Elder Care Financial Planner — $11

6-tab auto-calculating Excel (and Google Sheets) system: budget tracker, insurance log, asset inventory, care cost projector, daily care log, medication schedule. Formulas built in — just fill it in.

Best when you already have a direction and need to manage the money.

Free tools that pair with this worksheet

- Care Cost Estimator (interactive) — personalized monthly estimate + 3-year projection.
- Care Options Navigator — which care types fit your situation right now.
- Home Safety Walkthrough — catch expensive hazards before they become emergencies.
- Family Meeting Facilitator — structured agenda and responsibility assignments.

This number belongs in a family conversation.
Print it. Save it. Bring it to a sibling meeting.
The worst thing you can do with it is close the tab and go back to not knowing.

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Created with care for families who would rather plan than scramble.

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Free Elder Care Cost Calculator | Estimate Assisted Living & Memory Care Costs for Aging Parents

Estimate assisted living, memory care, and home care costs for aging parents. Free private calculator designed to help families plan before a crisis. No email required. Results in 2 minutes.

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