Older Adults with Serious Illness Report a Variety of Challenges

Older adults with serious illness face a significant set of challenges, including...

- Forgetfulness: 71%
- Sadness or Depression: 56%
- Loneliness: 48%
- Understanding Medical Instructions: 48%
- Preparing Meals: 39%
- Getting to Medical Appointments: 30%
- Paying for Support Services: 20%
- Paying for Medical Tests or Treatments: 17%

Some older adults with serious illness and their family members say they...

- Need help more often: 44%
- Have had trouble getting needed help: 27%
- Didn’t get needed help because of cost: 18%

Family members of older adults with serious illness report helping their loved one with a variety of tasks, such as...

- Transportation: 67%
- Everyday Activities: 57%
- Coordinating Care: 55%
- Managing Finances: 43%
- Medical-Nursing Tasks: 42%

51% of family members who help spend several hours a day caring for their loved one with serious illness

21% of family members who provide help with everyday activities say there’s no one to give them a break

SOURCE: Kaiser Family Foundation Serious Illness in Late Life Survey, 2017
NOTE: For this survey, those who are seriously ill are older adults (65+) who have at least one of several chronic conditions and report functional limitations due to a health or memory problem.

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