



# SHARECARE OF LEELANAU

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Supporting Independent Living for Seniors in Leelanau County

## SERVICES GUIDE

January 2021

SHARECARE OF LEELANAU  
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## **About ShareCare**

***Mission Statement: Providing Leelanau County Seniors the Services They Need to Live Independently and Well in Their Own Homes.***

ShareCare of Leelanau was founded in 1993 to provide seniors in Leelanau County access to the kinds of resources that they need to age well and remain in their home for as long as possible. ShareCare is committed to volunteerism and delivers many of its services through volunteers. As an independent nonprofit community organization, ShareCare exists to support all Leelanau County seniors in need ages 60 and above. ShareCare's priority is to provide those services most needed and for which volunteers are well suited to provide. Recognizing that it can only do so much, ShareCare focuses on what it can do well and also works collaboratively with local organizations. In this way ShareCare helps fill the gaps in needed services and avoids the duplication of what others are doing, yet ensures that seniors get the help they need.

## **Enrollment**

A senior must enroll with ShareCare to access its services. To enroll you must be 60 years of age and live in Leelanau County, and pay an annual fee of \$75 for an individual and \$125 for a couple; however, the fee can be waived due to financial hardship. Enrollment fees are due annually on May 1, and fees are not prorated if the individual enrolls in another month. This fee helps support the organization. Those who would like to support ShareCare's mission by volunteering or by making a financial contribution are recognized as Friends of Sharecare. Anyone who donates at or above the annual enrollment fee is automatically considered eligible for services in that year, provided they are age 60 and over and complete the enrollment form. Anyone that provides their email or mailing address will receive a quarterly newsletter and other communications about services, events and volunteer opportunities.

## **Governance**

**Board of Directors:** ShareCare's Board of Directors support the mission and purposes of the organization, including developing policy and procedures for ShareCare's services. The Board has fiduciary responsibility for the organization. New Board members are approved at the annual member meeting.

**Staff:** ShareCare has four staff: Executive Director, Care Coordinator, who is a Registered Nurse, Volunteer Manager, and Office Manager. The Executive Director is responsible for managing the overall administration of ShareCare. The Care Coordinator provides a link between seniors in need and services they require, including those available through other community services. The Volunteer Manager is responsible for recruiting, training, engaging and retaining volunteers, and scheduling services that are delivered by volunteers. The Office Manager supports the Executive Directory with administrative functions.

## **Volunteers**

Volunteers are valued members of the ShareCare family. ShareCare can provide the

services it does because it has dedicated volunteers ready to provide the kinds of assistance seniors need. For ShareCare to be successful it must have a pool of volunteers with both an interest in serving seniors and a willingness to share their skills. Most seniors who receive services also volunteer at one time or another. When you enroll with ShareCare, you are asked to complete a volunteer interest form with information about any special interests or skills. The volunteer interest form is updated periodically. This is a good way for the Volunteer Manager to match volunteers with the current needs.

ShareCare responds quickly when there is an illness, need for surgery, a family emergency and other issues that put a burden on seniors and their families. Our team of volunteers can provide many of the things that seniors need. Although transportation is the most requested service, volunteers will arrange for meals when a member is returning from a hospitalization, assist with minor home repairs, pick-up and return durable medical equipment, help with fall and spring yard cleanup, run errands, etc. There are 13 regions throughout the County designed to encourage volunteers to provide services to seniors in their region if possible.

There are limits to the services we provide. ShareCare retains the right to prioritize service needs and deny services that are beyond its capacity. For example, if there are more ride requests than can be filled with volunteers, ShareCare will prioritize medical rides. When appropriate, a referral may be made to one of its partner agencies, such as Bay Area Transportation Agency for their help. In addition, for other types of requests we are unable to handle, ShareCare keeps a list of vetted home health care providers, and recommended tradespeople for pay services.

## **ShareCare's Services**

ShareCare is building a reliable network of community resources and assuring easy access to volunteers, making staying at home a safe, comfortable, convenient reality for seniors. ShareCare is not a medical provider or a replacement for a member's general practitioner or other health care provider. However, because so many of the issues facing seniors have something to do with health, ShareCare has a Registered Nurse (RN) on staff who provides health services coordination. It is the Care Coordinator's role to connect seniors with resources to support their health needs. When someone has a complicated chronic or acute health issue, the Care Coordinator, with the senior's approval, can establish a communication link between ShareCare, the senior's health care providers, and family members. This communication link creates a way for the Care Coordinator to complement what is being done by health care providers and keep families informed.

## **Services Provided by the Care Coordinator:**

1. Health services coordination: Assists seniors and their families by understanding the individual's health needs and developing a plan for how ShareCare's volunteers or community resources can help. With the senior's

approval, the Care Coordinator can consult with the senior's health care provider.

2. Home health assessment: When someone enrolls, they have the option of having the Care Coordinator contact them. She will make a phone call first, and may arrange a home visit. For those over 80 or with a chronic condition, a home health assessment will be conducted upon approval.
3. Monitor specialized needs of seniors: The Care Coordinator carefully monitors fragile seniors due to age or chronic conditions, and ensures that volunteers or community resources are meeting their needs.
4. Referrals to health providers: When health needs are beyond ShareCare's capacity, the Care Coordinator will make a referral to a health care provider or other community resource.
5. Independent caregivers: ShareCare maintains a roster of screened, qualified independent caregivers. Independent caregivers are not employees of ShareCare, and all scheduling and payment must be arranged directly with the caregiver.

The Care Coordinator interviews the independent caregivers and checks their availability when a request is made for a home health care provider. There are two options for caregiver placement:

- A list of vetted caregivers will be provided at no charge, and the senior or family member secure needed assistance on their own.
  - A caregiver placement will be made with the assistance of the Care Coordinator, who will locate and match the caregiver to the senior. This service will incur a one-time fee of \$250, payable when a placement is made.
6. Support groups: Develops and facilitates support groups to help seniors manage health issues.
  7. Health-related workshops: Offers educational workshops on topics of interest to improve health and wellness among seniors.

### **Services Provided by Volunteers**

1. Transportation: Drivers use their own vehicles to provide rides to any senior who does not have available transportation. Rides to medical appointments and other health-related services have priority. Rides to non-medical appointments that promote health and wellness can be arranged when a driver is available. The

maximum number of rides is five per month; however, if a medical need requires more frequent trips, staff will do its best to find a driver or other transportation service. Rides are provided in Leelanau County and to Traverse City, Long Lake Township, East Bay Township, Garfield Township and Paul Oliver Hospital in Frankfort.

- i) Reservations: The office requires 3 business days to schedule a driver. If the service request is less than 3 business days from the appointment, we try to accommodate everyone who needs transportation, but cannot guarantee that a driver will be found.
- ii) Schedule: Rides are provided between 9 am-5 pm, Mon.-Fri.
- iii) Confirmation: The office manager or volunteer will notify the senior once a ride is scheduled. The driver will confirm the day before the ride. Occasionally, the office will confirm an appointment with the medical provider.
- iv) Rescheduling and canceling rides: If a ride must be canceled or rescheduled, notification is appreciated as soon as possible. If there are numerous cancellations without reason, it may be difficult to fill future rides.
- v) Reimbursement: Drivers do not receive reimbursement for gas or mileage. They do not handle money, but those who want to donate to ShareCare can do so by mailing a check to the office or going to our website to donate online [www.sharecareleelanau.org](http://www.sharecareleelanau.org).
- vi) Limitations: The program is not equipped to provide transportation to persons who require considerable assistance getting into and out of a vehicle. Those needing special considerations, such as needing a 4-wheel drive vehicle to access a home in winter or the need for a companion to ride along, should discuss this with staff when the reservation is made. We will do our best to accommodate the ride.
- vii) Pick-up: Drivers will walk with the senior from door to door and lend a steady hand if necessary. Drivers are not expected to do any heavy lifting, but may help with small bags and other things.
- viii) During the appointment: Drivers may run errands during an appointment; however, if a driver needs to stay in the building during the appointment this should be discussed when making a reservation.
- ix) Additional stops: At the driver's discretion, a quick stop to the pharmacy or other short errand is often possible.
- x) Discharge drivers: Rides home from the hospital can be arranged M-F from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. Instructions for medications and home health care should be between the hospital staff and ShareCare's Care Coordinator or other healthcare provider.
- xi) Weather: The safety of everyone is of utmost concern. In case of bad weather, it is up to individual drivers and the person receiving the ride to

determine their comfort level for traveling. Please contact the office immediately if the ride must be canceled due to weather.

2. Errands: ShareCare can assist with occasional grocery shopping, picking up prescriptions, and other types of requests that help seniors with their daily living needs. These requests should be made through the office. Often a driver can stop on the way home from a ride to fill the request.
3. Friendly visits: Living alone can be socially isolating for a senior, particularly in a rural community where limited transportation options are available. Volunteers check-in regularly with seniors who have chronic conditions or are over eighty and live alone. Friendly visitors often live in the same community and do a home visit, typically an hour once a week. The volunteer, under the supervision of our Care Coordinator, can help to connect the senior to additional ShareCare supports and other community resources.
4. Phone reassurance program: Volunteers check-in weekly with seniors who want a volunteer to call them. Seniors who live alone or are considered fragile may be recommended to the program. If requested, calls can occur on a modified schedule.
5. Basic respite: We understand that caregivers need to stay healthy to take care of their loved one. Volunteers with special training can provide up to eight hours a month for basic respite. Basic respite does not include toileting, bathing, dispensing medication or changing clothes.
6. Meals: When someone is ill or recently discharged from the hospital, there is nothing like a hot meal prepared by a friend or neighbor. ShareCare will arrange for volunteers to drop off meals for a few days while they recuperate. If longer term meals are required, ShareCare will work to connect the senior with Meals on Wheels or a private meal service.
7. Minor home repairs: Volunteers help with light tasks from changing light bulbs to fixing a squeaky door. For larger tasks, the office can assist in finding qualified contractors from our list of recommended contract service providers.
8. Durable medical equipment: ShareCare keeps all its durable medical equipment at Leelanau County Senior Services. If a senior needs a piece of equipment, we can arrange for it to be picked up and delivered. We can also work with NPalliative or your health provider to order new equipment.
9. Yard clean-up (fall and spring): One day in the spring and again in the fall, volunteers sign up to help seniors with small odd jobs, such as moving patio furniture, potting plants and flower boxes, light gardening chores, and other small jobs.
10. Pet care: For short-term pet care in the event of hospitalization or must be out of town for an emergency, volunteers can provide pet care. If necessary, the pet

can be transported to a longer-term boarding facility.

11. Technology: Help with computer issues or training on technology.
12. Social activities: Seniors appreciate occasions to socialize and ShareCare offers some unique opportunities. Occasional informational workshops and social events are organized. In addition, ShareCare has several fundraisers per year, which provide additional volunteer and social opportunities. Other social opportunities include serving on committees, attending the annual meeting and Royal Banquet luncheon, and other informal group activities.
13. Contracted services: ShareCare keeps a list of recommended contractors, such as plumbers and lawn service companies, for services that cannot be provided by volunteers. Members pay the vendor directly for these services.

\*Services highlighted in blue temporarily not being offered due to Covid. Some workshops may be provided via Zoom.

## **Volunteering at ShareCare**

Volunteers and other supporters are the backbone of the ShareCare program. Most seniors enrolled in services have volunteered in the past, currently volunteer or may in the future. Many others in the community volunteer for ShareCare. Volunteering takes on many forms, from driving a senior to just 'being there,' and to lots of things in-between. The rewards from helping can be most gratifying.

ShareCare's Volunteer Manager provides training and manages volunteers. She works with the Care Coordinator to assign service requests to volunteers. Service requests are generated either through a call to the office or logging into Club Express with the login and password you are provided when you enroll, and completing an online request. Staff may also identify a need and complete a service request for a senior.

When a service request is generated, selected volunteers for the service type and region will receive an email. If they accept the request, the service will be marked as filled in Club Express, which is ShareCare's database. Volunteers can do as little or as much as fits with their schedule. For example, there are many volunteers who are away for the winter. Drivers with passengers must be younger than 80, but those 80 and over can still run errands.

The Volunteer Manager can help with finding the right position for each volunteer. Some of the many volunteer opportunities are fulfilling services described above. In addition, volunteers can be part of a welcome committee, which explains ShareCare's services and other community resources. Help is always needed on fundraisers and social gatherings, including assisting with planning, marketing, soliciting sponsorships, event registration, set-up, and clean-up. Office assistance is needed on an ongoing basis, including data entry, compiling the newsletter, stuffing envelopes for mailings, and making calls about special events.

Volunteers often have special skills or talents that might be offered. As ShareCare

grows, new services may be added and ideas are welcome.

### **Supporting ShareCare**

As a nonprofit, ShareCare depends on donations from individuals and businesses for its operating revenue. By donating, you will help us reach more seniors in Leelanau County. All donations are tax deductible. A donation of any amount is appreciated, and donors are recognized in our annual report unless anonymity is requested when the gift is made.