



ATLAS OF CAREGIVING

How to Create Your Care Map

The Atlas of Caregiving project is dedicated to better understanding the day-to-day lives of family caregivers. By developing practical tools and using data-driven research, we hope to strengthen resources and support for the caregivers themselves.

Drawing a family care map is one such tool that can be done using a paper and pencil. Purposely centered around the primary caregiver, it shows all the people who may be involved with the caregiver or those whom they care for. It illustrates the caregiver's own support system, and can reveal where different resources may be needed.

We've outlined the basic steps to drawing a care map here; for more detail, including a video how-to and questions you might ask once you've completed the map, please visit our [website](#).


The Care Map Worksheet

Before you begin drawing your care map, it's helpful to think about who will be on it. To make this easier, we've created the attached Care Map Worksheet.

1. On the Care Map Worksheet, start with Section 1 on the upper left, "Who is in your household?" List the names of the people (and maybe pets) who are in your - the primary caregiver's - own household.
2. Follow with the large Section 2 on the right, "Whom do you care for?." Write the main care recipient's name in the first small box ('a'), then move to the right across the top row ('b'-'d') if there are others in whose care you hold an important role.
3. If the person in 'a' does not live in your household, write down the names of the people who live with her or him in the box directly below their name. If s/he lives with you, you can skip this step. Repeat this step across this row of boxes for anyone else included on the top row.
4. On the bottom row of boxes in this section, list everyone else providing care for the person whose name you've written above.
5. Finally, go to Section 3 in the lower left, "Who cares for you or supports you," and write the names of everyone who helps you. This might be a friend, a family member, a social group, or anyone who provides some momentary respite in your day.


Drawing the Care Map

Now that you've completed the worksheet, you're ready to draw your map. Some helpful tips:

- Stick figures and shapes can represent people, groups, and places. For example:
 - Stick figures  can represent people. For a group or community of people, you might draw several people inside a rectangle
 - Circles ○○○ for pets
 - Triangles ▲▲▲ for professional caregivers, like nurses, therapists, home health
 - Squares □□□ for facilities, such as a daycare center
- Write names and locations (city or state) under the symbols for the people and places so that it's easier to follow.

- Use space on the page to represent geographical distance: if someone's nearby, draw them close to you on your map. If they're far away, draw them near the edge of the paper.
- Put a date on the map, since caregiving situations change over time.

Mapping People

1. Starting in the middle of the page, draw Yourself, then, using the worksheet as a guide, draw those people who are in your household (Section 1).
2. Draw a house shape  around those who are in your home.
3. Draw the people you care for, following Section 2, 'a' through 'd' on the worksheet. If they don't live in your household, draw the people in their homes, and a house shape around each household.
4. Draw the people who also care for them.
5. Draw the people who care for and support you that you listed in Section 3.

Mapping Location

6. Starting with You, at the center of the map, and working out from your home, draw a line around everyone who is less than 20 minutes from you, and label this "Nearby."
7. Draw a line around everyone who is between 20 minutes and 2 hours away from you, and label this "Middle."
8. Draw another line around everyone who is more than 2 hours away from you, and label this "Far."

Mapping Frequency

Finally, draw lines connecting the people and places to show how frequently care is provided, using different styles of lines to show how often care is given. Draw an arrow tip ➤ at the end of each line, pointing toward the person receiving care. If a person is providing care or support...

- many times a day, draw a thick solid line ➡
- once a day, draw a simple solid line →
- weekly, draw a dashed line ->
- occasionally, draw a dotted line ◻

That's it - you've just completed drawing your family care map. Now, take a moment to reflect on the map. What does it show you, what might it show to others, how is it different than what you initially expected?

Questions You Might Ask

What You See	What You Don't See
Who is indispensable? What would happen if any of them were not available?	Have you forgotten to include someone obvious?
Are people aware of each other's involvement?	Are their other friends or family who could be involved?
What is each person's impact on you? On each other?	Are there professionals or services that are missing, and needed?
How do you coordinate? Communicate?	How would your map look in the past? How might it change in the future?



1. Who is in your (family caregiver's) household?	2. Whom do you care for?			
	a.	b.	c.	d.
3. Who cares for you, or supports you?	If 'a' does not live with you, who else is in their household?	If 'b' does not live with you, who else is in their household?	If 'c' does not live with you, who else is in their household?	If 'd' does not live with you, who else is in their household?
	Who else cares for 'a'?	Who else cares for 'b'?	Who else cares for 'c'?	Who else cares for 'd'?

