

Navigating Later Years

Information for Older Adults

We know there's no one-size-fits-all of what aging looks like. Many older adults thrive in their later years. However, there are some common concerns and issues you may be facing. As specialists in senior care, we want to help you navigate this phase of life. We hope the following insights and resources will be helpful for you. And, if you have any questions or there's anything we can do to help, please don't hesitate to reach out.

Safety

As we age, our physical function changes. Things like hearing and vision loss, decreased strength and even balance issues can make navigating daily life more challenging. Sometimes it may feel like other people want to take control over how you live. It's important to have your voice heard while making sure you're in a safe environment. There are many professionals who can support you.

Occupational therapists can do home assessments to help identify ways to make your environment safer. Adjustments like adding grab bars in showers or clearing potential trip hazards can make a big difference.

Additional services like home health and medication management can provide assistance to enhance the health of older adults. Home health

"Never hesitate to give us a call. We've got such great resources at Meadowlark and we're always happy to help the community if we can."

Kristen Martin, Care Transition Leader,
Meadowlark

aides and other professionals can visit your home and help with tasks like bathing, or simply provide companionship.

Memory

It's perfectly normal for our ability to remember to change as we get older. We have all walked into a room and forgotten why we were there! But more complex issues, or issues that come on suddenly, can point to a problem. Sometimes people delay going to the doctor because they're afraid of what they might hear. Memory impairment does not always mean dementia. Common medical conditions like urinary tract infections and dehydration can affect

our cognitive function. And, they can easily be treated!

If you are experiencing an acute issue with memory, talk to your doctor. There may be helpful resources you didn't know about. For example, research has shown that certain changes like diet, movement and various creative activities can enhance quality of life. Also, Meadowlark offers a Memory Program designed specifically for people dealing with cognitive changes, as well as their caregivers.

Loneliness

One of the most common issues older adults face is loneliness. We know you come from a tough generation that may not always feel comfortable asking for help. But an abundance of resources are available to help you work through feelings of isolation, grief, depression and loneliness. If individual or group talk therapy isn't your style, social workers can help you think through transitions and provide support.

Volunteering can also be a great way to feel more engaged. Many older adults find giving back — even in little ways — can help them feel more connected and give them a greater sense of purpose.

Continued



MEADOWLARK

2121 Meadowlark Rd, Manhattan, KS | 785.537.4610 | For more resources, visit: meadowlark.org

Navigating Later Years

“Have conversations with your family and friends. If you had a significant decline in your health and couldn’t take care of yourself, think through what you would want that to look like. Would you like to have care in your home? Would you want to move? What type of facility would you want to go to? Talk to your family about what your wishes would be. That can be really helpful for everyone involved.”

Bridget Larkin, Social Services Leader, Meadowlark

Planning

Many people save for their retirement for years, but don’t focus on estate planning beyond that. While it can be difficult to talk about setting up an advanced healthcare directive or planning for a funeral, getting these essentials in place can provide a lot of peace of mind for you and your family. You can rest easy knowing that you’ve set up a framework so your wishes will be honored should something happen to you. And your family will not have the added stress of guessing what your wishes are while managing an emergency. There are many specialists who can help guide you through creating a durable power of attorney, living will and other documents to secure your wishes and take that burden off your shoulders. If you haven’t already done some in-depth estate planning, we encourage you to talk with a lawyer or financial advisor to get those pieces in place.

Helpful Resources

From home health services to area agencies on aging, there are many resources available to provide support and information for older adults like you. Here are some great places to start:

Area Agency on Aging

This one-stop shop offers many resources and services. The Manhattan area is served by the North Central-Flint Hills Agency on Aging.

Senior Centers

Devoted to older adults, these centers may offer activities, meal programs and more. The Manhattan area is served by the Riley County Senior Center.

Volunteer Centers

Whether you’d like to have a volunteer visit you or you’re interested in volunteering yourself, there are many opportunities to connect. The Manhattan area is served by the Flint Hills Volunteer Center. Meadowlark also has volunteer opportunities for older adults.

Continuing Care Communities

These residential communities can provide a number of services. At Meadowlark, we offer Memory and Parkinson’s programs, as well as home health and medication management, fitness programs, volunteer opportunities, rehabilitation, outpatient therapy and physician care. Our Passport Program also lets community members access our on-campus amenities, regardless of whether they live at Meadowlark or not.

Financial Advisors and Legal Counselors

These professionals can help you get estate issues in order.

Mental Health Support

There are many social workers, therapists and groups who can help you talk through issues and emotions you might be facing.



MEADOWLARK

2121 Meadowlark Rd, Manhattan, KS | 785.537.4610 | For more resources, visit: meadowlark.org