



Are You Prepared to AGE IN PLACE?

BY TASHA ROBINSON

With the heart of the baby-boom wave now solidly in retirement, even the *Breakfast Club* generation has begun to hear from AARP! Just as music and fashion change from one generation to the next, so do our lifestyle goals.

AARP's 2014 study on community preferences of older adults showed that 87 percent of adults age 65+

want to stay in their current home and community as they age. That means if you grew up with Elvis and the Beatles, you probably expect to spend all of your retirement years living independently in your own home, rather than in assisted living or nursing care.

But that goal presents some challenges to health and safety.

Unfortunately, the adult children who once were right next door to help care for their aging parents may live several counties or states away. Work commitments may also prevent them from being available as much as needed.

Wisconsin is in the top 10 states with the highest concentration of people age 50+, according to

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U.S. Census data.¹ For such a large concentration of our population to age in place, some level of support is needed. Is aging in place in southern Wisconsin possible if you do not have family available to help?

The leaders of Agrace HospiceCare have explored that question and decided that Agrace can help! Not just as a hospice, but through a new Agrace service that's available long before end-of-life care is needed.

Age at Home by Agrace is a new private-pay home care service for Dane County seniors and anyone whose physical limits make it challenging to live independently. Unlike other home care services, Age at Home is backed by the extensive knowledge base of Agrace's medical and social-work staff.

Our compassionate caregivers provide help with daily activities, like laundry, housekeeping, and meal preparation, that can become tough to manage as age or illness robs us of energy and mobility.

We are here to help anybody who needs a little support in order to remain independent and safe where they live. That could be someone of any age who needs physical help in their home, or even someone who has had a hip or knee replacement and needs a caregiver to come by and help them with



showering, changing the sheets, or making sure the pets are taken care of while they are recovering.

Are you ready to reach out for a service like Age at Home? Here are some signs that it's time:

- It has become difficult or exhausting to keep up with household chores, preparing meals, and cleaning.
- Loss of mobility, vision, hearing, or memory has made it hard to care for yourself.
- You worry about safety when using the shower or bathtub.
- It's a struggle to take needed medications as prescribed.
- Appointments are sometimes forgotten or missed due to lack of transportation.
- You want company and conversation.
- You don't want to rely on favors from family or friends.

Agrace's Age at Home service starts with a free home safety check. To learn more or get a menu of available services, visit ageathome.org or call (608) 327-7456.

¹U.S. Census Bureau, 2012. *American Community Survey PUMS as analyzed by the AARP Research Center.*

Photographs provided by Age at Home by Agrace.

Tasha Robinson is the care team manager for Age at Home by Agrace in Madison. She has experience assisting seniors in the hospital, long-term care centers, assisted living, and in their own homes (her favorite!).

