

# THE SYSTEM NAVIGATION HUB

The System Navigation Hub (or “the Hub”) is a referral network of service organizations that help low-income seniors, adults with disabilities, and their caregivers access reliable care and support services.

## Tips on how to speak with medical professional for pain management:

You are having consistent pain levels that are starting to affect your quality of life. You are not able to sleep through the night, are tired throughout the day, cannot participate in activities that you used to, and seem to be more irritable. How do you communicate with a physician so they know how bad the pain is?

## RESPONSE



Call your primary care provider and schedule an appointment.

**Tip: using the online portal is much faster than waiting on the phone!**



Before the appointment, write down specific examples of how the pain is interfering with daily life and take this list with you so that you can refer to it and not worry about forgetting important details.



Try to think of specific descriptions of the pain and locations; **what makes it worse? When does it happen? Does anything make it better? What have you already tried? How long has the pain been going on?**



Physicians need to know the impact the pain is having on your life. **Key words to mention: losing sleep, unable to participate in activities, losing ability to perform activities of daily living, not going outside, etc.**



**Ask for a referral to a pain specialist;** these are physicians that specialize in treating pain, which doesn't always mean narcotics! There are more options, including physical therapy, injections, and non-narcotic medications. Make sure that this physician is covered by your insurance by calling the number on the back of your insurance card.



USE THESE TIPS IN OTHER SITUATIONS AS WELL

CONTACT THE HUB

SysNavHub@lifelong.org

425-375-2990

## Tips on self-care and reducing burnout:

Below are activities to help if you are a caregiver and have been experiencing: exhaustion, changes in eating habits, withdrawing from friends and family, or irritation with the care recipient.

## RESPONSE



**Ask for help!** See if another family member or trusted friend can take over a few shifts so that you can have a break.



**Take small, regular breaks** throughout the day. No one is expected to be on 24/7.



**Join a caregiver support group!** There are many in the area that can be found through a quick internet search.



Exercise regularly, eat a well-balanced diet, drink lots of water, and try to get at least 8 hours of sleep per night.



**Try incorporating a mindfulness activity or meditation practice** into your day. Even 5 minutes of a breathing exercise can help reduce stress levels.



**Keep a journal** and write down your feelings.



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# Lifelong

We remove barriers to health with relentless compassion so that no one faces **illness** and **injustice** alone.

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