



# ShareCare of Leelanau, Inc.

## What is ShareCare: *Twenty Questions & Answers*

People unfamiliar with ShareCare frequently ask these questions. Being prepared to answer them may help with responses to the most important points when asked to describe the organization.

### **1. How was ShareCare started?**

*ShareCare was founded in 1993 by a group of local retirees who wanted to overcome the problems that so often force seniors to leave their homes prematurely. They created a unique, non-profit 501(c)(3) organization to offer Leelanau County residents comprehensive, affordable assisted living services in each member's own home.*

### **2. What are the four program cornerstones upon which ShareCare was built?**

- (1) 24 hour access through a single phone call, triggering a comprehensive variety of services*
- (2) Many services provided by volunteers to keep costs at a minimum*
- (3) Free healthcare coordination/monitoring by ShareCare's RN*
- (4) Access to a list of quality independent service providers, including caregivers, screened to verify their skills and credentials*

### **3. Who joins ShareCare and why don't people just wait until they need assisted-living services before joining?**

*ShareCare is available to all Leelanau County residents, most of whom are retired and looking ahead to future needs. Many join because they recognize the value of ShareCare to the community and wish to offer their services for a worthwhile cause. Our 300 plus members range in age from late 40s to over 100! Joining before the need for services arises allows one to participate in ShareCare activities while contributing to the strength and development of the program, develop a personal relationship with ShareCare's RN, and learn more about aging issues that can improve the quality of life in later years.*

### **4. What can ShareCare do for me?**

- Provide an RN's professional care coordination at no additional charge, to act as your personal advocate to resolve healthcare or other concerns. (See #5)*
- Offer many member volunteered services: free transportation to appointments, respite care, homemade or delivered meals, etc. (See #11 for a list of volunteer activities)*
- Provide list of service contractors giving you peace of mind knowing that the recommended contractors will be of good quality and services will be efficiently delivered. (See #7)*
- Provide, free of charge, non-medical durable equipment (bath seats, commodes, walkers, wheelchairs, etc.)*
- Provide congenial social and educational activities and outings that may be shared with other members*

### **5. Why does ShareCare employ a Care Coordinator RN? What does she do?**

*Our Care Coordinator provides members with free access to an RN who is known and trusted by each member, and who understands their personal history and their individual needs and wishes. Through monitoring and occasional visits she is able to provide continuity over time. In addition to assessing needs and monitoring, she develops care plans, assists with meds, offers post hospitalization follow-up, caregiver training as needed, communication with doctors and other providers as well as consultations with family members. She is the glue in today's fragmented world of healthcare.*

**6. Does joining ShareCare mean I must change my present health care or home service providers in order to use those recommended by ShareCare?**

*No. Members may continue with no provider changes. ShareCare works with other agencies and our nurse is available as every member's professional advisor and resource regardless of whom they choose for direct care.*

**7. Are other agency services available to ShareCare members? If so, when and how are they paid for?**

*Yes, ShareCare leaves the choices to its members. Many use Munson Home Healthcare services when they are reimbursable through Medicare and Medigap insurance, but choose ShareCare recommended independent contractors for non-reimbursable long-term caregivers when personal care at home is needed. To be sure of quality service our nurse will professionally monitor the outcome of care delivery services.*

**8. What is an "independent contractor" and how do they get their name on a referral list?**

*Independent contractors are individuals who do not work for an agency, but manage their own financial and business tax arrangements. Their services range from housekeepers to chimney cleaners, and dock pullers to window washers, with everything in between. When a member chooses to use an independent contractor that ShareCare has recommended, the member makes the arrangements and pays the individual directly. Contractors may be placed on our registry after a member has hired and recommended them, and after their references have been checked.*

**9. Does ShareCare have a registry of independent contractor caregivers? How does it work?**

*Yes. To meet members' needs, local independent caregivers with a variety of skills are listed after a process of interviewing them, checking their references, and checking their background. From our experience, independent contractor caregivers are self-motivated and dependable. Our staff can match needs to skills and recommend appropriate caregivers to meet specific needs.*

**10. Who are ShareCare's volunteers and how are they organized and managed?**

*Our volunteers are members who choose to help with a variety of jobs and services. They understand the personal satisfaction and the importance of community service. They work under the direction of Co-Captains in their school district and in conjunction with our Office Manager who receives the requests for assistance and transportation from members.*

**11. What are at least 15 different jobs ShareCare volunteers may do?**

- Driver of the day
- Errand runner
- Board member
- Office helper
- Friendly visitor
- Special events coordinator
- Companion or respite provider
- Fall/spring clean up crew
- Minor home repair person
- Contributor of handmade fair items
- Bill paying helper
- Hot meal provider
- Committee member
- Fundraiser
- Gardener

**12. Are all members expected to volunteer? And why do all volunteers also join RSVP?**

*Volunteering is not a requirement of membership, but it is an essential part of offering economical services that can be provided to members without cost. Not all members choose to volunteer. If they do, however, United Way's RSVP provides ShareCare volunteers (over age 55) with additional insurance while they are assisting or driving our members.*

**13. How are ShareCare and the Leelanau Commission on Aging the same or different?**

- *The goals of both organizations are similar: supportive services to improve seniors' quality of life and their ability to remain in their homes as long as possible.*
- *The Commission on Aging is supported by taxpayer dollars, with activities defined to some degree by national, state and local guidelines. ShareCare is an independent member-supported organization directed by a volunteer board of directors that sets policy and guidelines.*
- *ShareCare's services include a professional assessment and monitoring of health needs by our Registered Nurse (See #4)*
- *The ShareCare program relies on extensive use member volunteers for delivery of many services to help keep costs at a minimum. (See #11).*
- *Members of ShareCare may also use Commission on Aging services*

**14. How is ShareCare managed? What are the responsibilities of Board members?**

*A volunteer Board of Directors, elected by its membership, manages ShareCare operations. This includes supervising two employees, a Care Coordinator and Office Manager, who run the day-to-day operations. The Board is responsible for fundraising, establishing fees, financial management of funds, selecting and monitoring employees, and for assuring that member satisfaction and program goals are being met.*

**15. How is ShareCare financed, and what does it cost to join?**

*ShareCare maintains its flexibility to meet member needs by remaining independent. Therefore, all funds must be raised through our one-time membership fee, annual dues, financial gifts, and fundraising efforts. Occasional grants may provide assistance for new programming or special needs, but grants are not generally available for general operating expenses.*

<b>Level</b>	<b>Age</b>	<b>Initial Fee</b>	<b>Annual Dues</b>	<b>Total to Join</b>
<i>I</i>	<i>Under 60</i>	<i>\$100</i>	<i>\$100</i>	<i>\$200</i>
<i>II</i>	<i>60-75</i>	<i>\$300</i>	<i>\$150</i>	<i>\$450</i>
<i>III</i>	<i>76-84</i>	<i>\$900</i>	<i>\$175</i>	<i>\$1,075</i>
<i>IV</i>	<i>85+</i>	<i>\$1400</i>	<i>\$300</i>	<i>\$1700</i>

- ♦ All adult members of a household must become ShareCare members.
- ♦ A discount applies to enrollment fees and annual dues when more than one adult joins.
- ♦ Initial fee to join, annual dues, and all gifts are tax deductible.
- ♦ Annual dues remain at the class level paid at the time of joining. They do not increase with birthdays, so it pays to join early!

**16. Why are membership costs related to age?**

*Membership costs are related to age in order to encourage people to join ShareCare before they actually need to use its services. Since dues remain at the class level paid at the time of joining, members are rewarded with lower dues for having served and supported the organization over the years. It is important to keep this balance in the age distribution in order to provide an energetic and*

*enthusiastic group of willing volunteers and to develop over time, knowledgeable board members needed for leadership roles.*

**17. Approximately how expensive is it to run the ShareCare organization per year?**

*ShareCare has two employees, an RN who works 4 days per week and a full time Office Manager. In order to meet nursing needs we employ three RNs who cover when the primary RN is unavailable. The annual budget currently runs over \$100,000 including the expenses related to insurance, supplies, phones, newsletters and mailings. Income from membership fees and dues covers approximately 50% of expenses, with the balance coming from fundraising and income from our Endowment Fund. Fundraisers bring in between five to six thousand dollars each year and members contribute the rest. A financial report is available upon request (386-2273).*

**18. Does ShareCare receive assistance from other organizations to help keep their costs down?**

*Yes, ShareCare gets help from the Northport Highlands who provides office space.*

**19. What happens if a member can no longer remain safely in his/her home?**

*Every possible measure is taken to help a member live independently for as long as possible, but if safety becomes an issue it may become necessary to find alternate living arrangements for someone. When that occurs, the Care Coordinator and Office Manager can provide information, offer support, and help family members make a decision on the proper placement for their loved one.*

**20. Why is it so important for ShareCare to remain independent?**

*ShareCare has been able to chart its own course, making decisions for handling each case because we can be flexible and focus on individual needs and wishes. Our independence makes it possible to have caring volunteers provide home made meals, drive members, and provide other home services that may not be allowed by other organizations. Our standards are high, which means that professionally tailored responses and thoughtful personal interactions with members determine ShareCare's recommendations, providing members with top quality care.*

6/6/11