



# The Savvy Caregiver® Program

Technology No. z08156

First tested in 2002, Savvy Caregiver is recognized nationally as a leading evidence-based dementia family caregiver training program. Savvy Caregiver was originally developed and validated for in-person, community-based delivery in 6 weekly sessions (12 hours), but many programs are now also delivered virtually over video conferencing. Savvy expands family caregivers' knowledge, skills, and mastery related to dementia caregiving while also promoting caregiver self-care.

## Organizations:

University of Minnesota, Emory University, and Savvy Systems, LLC.

## How does it work?

The Savvy Caregiver is a 12-hour training program typically delivered in 2-hour sessions over a 6-week period. Curriculum materials include a detailed trainer's manual, a caregiver's manual, course videos, trainer's PowerPoint, and participant handouts. Savvy content focuses on knowledge of dementia diseases, elements of cognition, the role of confusion in dementia, caregiver self-care, identifying the person's current stage of disease, strategies for providing appropriate structure and support of daily activities, decision making, and expanding family support and community resources. Through weekly sessions, interactive activities, group discussions, and at-home practice, caregivers apply their new skills to meet their family's specific needs and situations. Savvy Caregiver provides person-centered, active-learning programs in a variety of formats that integrate core principles and insights from gerontology, nursing, family systems, and occupational therapy. Families learn strategies to enhance their own self-care as well as day-to-day time with their person. With the vast majority of daily long-term care provided by family members, Savvy Caregiver programs offer an array of programs across the U.S. Culturally-sensitive adaptations and translations continue to be developed and tested to serve families in diverse communities.

## Adapted Versions of Savvy Caregiver

Additional versions of the program have been adapted and translated to meet the needs of specific populations. These include:

- Savvy Caregiver® Express (3 sessions, 9 hours)

- Savvy Caregiver® Advanced (4 sessions, 8 hours) follow-up to Savvy focussing on advanced dementia and end-of-life issues
- Savvy Caregiver® Tele-Savvy (for expanded, virtual delivery)
- Savvy Caregiver® Express in Spanish; Chinese
- Savvy Caregiver® for African American communities
- Savvy Caregiver® for Native Hawaiians
- Savvy Caregiver® in Indian Country

## **Why is it successful?**

In multiple research evaluations of Savvy Caregiver programs since 2002, participants reported significantly lower caregiver burden, depression, and distress. In addition, nearly all respondents report increased caregiver skill, knowledge, and confidence, and that they would recommend the Savvy program to other dementia caregivers.

## **Cost?**

If you are a family member, Savvy Caregiver is generally provided free of charge. Email us at [info@savvy caregiver.com](mailto:info@savvy caregiver.com) for a location near you.

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