

The Six-Domain Care Decision Framework

Your checklist + AI research prompts — no memorizing, no writing while driving. Everything from the episode, ready for you to work through at your own pace.

Before You Start: Orient Yourself

A few questions to think through first. None of these need your name, your loved one's name, an address, or any identifying detail — they're just here to help you know which prompts to reach for first.

1. What stage is your loved one's diagnosis at right now — early, middle, or later stage?
2. Are you evaluating the town you're already in, or comparing it to somewhere you might move to?
3. Is your loved one currently living alone, with a spouse or partner, or with family?
4. Roughly how far away do you live from your loved one — nearby, a few hours away, or a different state entirely?
5. Looking at the six domains below, which one feels most urgent to you right now?

You don't need to write these answers down anywhere. Just hold them loosely in mind — they'll help you decide where to start.

How to Use This Guide

For each domain below, copy a prompt into your AI assistant of choice, swapping in your own town, region, or state wherever you see brackets. You don't need to work through every prompt in every domain — start with whichever domain felt most urgent above, and come back for the rest later.

The Six Domains

1 Legal & Financial Foundation

Why it matters: legal setup and cost of care determine what's actually possible, before you even get to preference.

- “What is the Medicaid look-back period for long-term care in [state]?”
- “What is the difference between a power of attorney and guardianship in [state], and which one applies to my situation?”
- “What documents should I gather before meeting with an elder law attorney in [state]?”
- “What is the current average monthly cost of memory care in [town/region]? What about assisted living, which is usually less expensive?”
- “Does [state] offer a Medicaid home- and community-based services waiver for dementia care, and is there a waitlist?”
- “Are there VA Aid & Attendance benefits available to help with memory care costs, and how do I check eligibility?”

2 Medical Care & Insurance Access

Why it matters: specialist access — and whether insurance actually covers it — shapes quality of care more than almost anything else.

- “What geriatric or memory-specialist clinics are within a reasonable drive of [town]?”
- “Is there a dedicated memory or brain health research center near [town/region]?”
- “Does [insurance plan / Medicare Advantage plan] have adequate specialist coverage in [town]?”
- “What questions should I ask at a first appointment with a new geriatrician or neurologist for a dementia diagnosis?”
- “What telehealth options exist for neurology or geriatric follow-up visits in [town]?”

3 Safety & Environmental Risk

Why it matters: wandering and extreme weather are two of the fastest ways a manageable situation becomes an emergency.

- “Does [state] have a Silver Alert or Golden Alert program, and how does it work?”
- “How do I register a loved one with local police in advance for a wandering or missing-persons alert?”
- “What GPS tracking devices or wearables are commonly recommended for someone with dementia who wanders?”
- “What extreme weather risks does [town] face, and what does the local emergency management office recommend for medically vulnerable residents?”

4 Care Setting Continuum

Why it matters: assisted living, memory care, in-home respite, and home health are different tools for different needs — knowing the difference now saves a scramble later.

- “What memory care communities and assisted living facilities are available in [town], and what are their waitlists or quality/inspection ratings?”
- “What’s the difference between assisted living, memory care, and skilled nursing, and how do I know which one fits right now?”
- “What questions should I ask when touring a memory care community?”
- “What in-home respite and home health agencies serve [town]?”

5 Transportation & Mobility

Why it matters: losing the ability to drive independently is often the first major loss of independence — and the one families are least prepared for.

- “What senior or paratransit transportation options exist in [town]?”
- “What are common warning signs that someone with dementia should stop driving?”
- “Are there volunteer driver programs for seniors in [town]?”
- “What local resources help families navigate the conversation around driving cessation?”

6 Culture & Community Support

Why it matters: formal services matter, but so does whether anyone is actually nearby to help on a Tuesday afternoon.

- “What Alzheimer’s Association chapter serves [town], and what caregiver support groups do they run nearby?”
- “Are there adult day programs specifically for people with dementia in [town]?”
- “What senior day programs, faith communities, or social activities are available in [town]?”
- Reflection (*not an AI prompt*): How many family members or close friends currently live within a reasonable distance of [town]?

Your Decision Checklist

- ☐ Legal & financial foundation confirmed (POA vs. guardianship, look-back period, cost comparison run)
- ☐ Medical care and insurance network confirmed for prospective town
- ☐ Safety and seasonal/environmental risks assessed
- ☐ Care setting continuum options shortlisted (assisted living, memory care, respite, home health)

- ☐ Transportation and mobility plan in place
- ☐ Culture, community, and family support fit assessed

Pick the one domain that feels most urgent. Start there. You don't have to finish all six this week.

A Note From Bright Legacy Care

If working through even one of these domains feels like more than you want to take on alone, that's exactly the gap Bright Legacy Care exists to fill. I work with families to lay this exact framework over their own town — or wherever they're considering a move — one domain at a time, so the decision comes from clarity instead of crisis.

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