

Table 1. Decision Maps Used in the TCARE Protocol

Online-only content for “TCARE: Tailored Caregiver Assessment and Referral” by Rhonda Montgomery, PhD, and Jung Kwak, PhD, in the American Journal of Nursing, September 2008 Supplement, p. 54-7.

Decision Map	Use	Explanation
Decision Map A	For caregivers with low scores on all three burden measures (relationship burden, objective burden, and stress burden)	Caregivers with low scores on all three types of burden tend to be in early phases of the caregiving process and are often seeking very specific information. They are unlikely to have high depression scores. It is important to connect with these caregivers to prevent future crises.
Decision Map B	For caregivers with high scores on all three burden measures who don't intend to end their caregiving role.	Caregivers with medium or high scores on all three types of burden and who do not intend to place the care recipient in an institutional setting or to discontinue being a caregiver have a strong sense of duty, stemming possibly from love or guilt. Meeting or going beyond their perceived obligations often gives them positive rewards. For various reasons, these caregivers may fail to perceive alternative options for care. Because caregivers in this category report high levels of stress but no intention to stop providing care, they are at the highest risk for mental and physical health problems.
Decision Map C	For caregivers with medium or high relationship and stress burdens. These caregivers may or may not have high objective burden scores.	Caregivers with medium or high scores on relationship burden usually have medium or high scores on stress burden. This combination of scores signals a need to alter the caregiver's self-appraisal, which can usually be done by encouraging a change in the caregiver identity or by providing affirmation for the caregiver's current behavior. Caregivers with relationship burden may or may not have objective burden. Caregivers in this category are the most likely to place the care recipient in an institutional setting or end their caregiving activities.
Decision Map D	For caregivers with medium or high objective burden scores and low relationship burden scores. Caregivers may or may not have high stress burden.	A medium or high score on objective burden indicates that caregiving duties are interfering with other everyday responsibilities and activities. In the absence of stress or relationship burden, high objective burden usually indicates that the caregiver is in an early phase of caregiving. Caregivers can be helped by encouraging them to seek direct support services. The caregiver may need help with identifying ways to reduce or juggle multiple tasks. Caregivers in this group are generally comfortable with their personal relationship with the care recipient, but they frequently need help changing or adjusting personal norms so they can seek and accept outside help. Often caregivers in this category can best be helped by first helping them change their personal norms for behavior and then introducing other service options.

Supporting Family Caregivers

Decision Map	Use	Explanation
Decision Map E	For caregivers with medium or high stress burden and low relationship and objective burdens.	Stress burden is a measure of general stress or anxiety. In the absence of high objective or relationship burden, high levels of stress burden often are not directly related to caregiving, but instead may stem from other sources, such as jobs or relationships with people other than the care recipient. In such cases, caregivers may be helped by general stress management programs and techniques.
Decision Map F	When referenced in Decision Map B, C, or D	This supplemental map guides care managers in making an informed professional judgment about the most appropriate goal for intervention and support of the caregiver.