

Selecting An Agency

What to look for in home care service providers



*Don't Feel Guilty ∞
You Can't Do It All!*

Know What Questions to Ask

Retaining a home care partner to help with loved ones can be a stressful process. There are many companies, agencies, and individuals who provide these services, but their capabilities and quality of service vary widely.

Always remember, it's your right to ask probing questions.

The following points will help you know what questions to ask when evaluating home care options.

- Patient Rights are explained and observed at all times.
- Confidentiality is assured and maintained at all times.
- Ongoing professional assessment begins with the agency's first encounter with the patient/family and is continuous.
- Services are available and supervised 7 days a week, 24 hours a day. Professional nursing is available at all times.
- Planning for care includes the patient, family, physician and home care team.
- Community resources are accessed appropriately.
- Infection control processes are in place and monitored.
- Patient and staff safety systems are in place and monitored.
- Discharge planning involves the patient/family and includes instruction for self-care or alternate care arrangements.
- Employees are screened, bonded, supervised by a nurse or social worker, and held accountable to the agency.
- Insurance is adequate for employee, agency and patient protection.
- Staff Competency is evaluated and upgraded constantly.
- Staff is provided with adequate resources to deliver quality and safe patient care.
- Supervisory support and guidance is available at all times.
- Billing Practices are ethical, consistent, fair and explained at admission.

Licenses

Top agencies will hold all licenses that the state of Texas requires for a home health agency, including Licensed Home Health Service (LHHS), and Personal Assistance Service (PAS). What does that mean for clients? When the level of care increases, clients do not have to move to a skilled agency or a nursing home.



Caretakers

Look for an agency whose caretakers are paid employees not contractors. Employees should be subject to stringent background checks, drug testing throughout their employment, and ongoing driving record checks.

“Caregiver Quality Assurance”

The CQA program is designed to identify home care companies and companion care companies that go above and beyond the norm when selecting quality caregivers.

Companies displaying the Caregiver Quality Assurance seal use the most advanced pre-employment assessment tools that examine key aspects of an applicant's personality:

- Dependability – Ensures that an individual will be dependable, careful, industrious, and organized.
- Honesty/Integrity – Ensures core values of honesty and integrity.
- Hostility/Aggression – Measures the risk of a person being aggressive, hostile, disruptive, or having poor anger control.
- Substance Abuse – Measures the risk of alcohol or illegal drug use.
- Cognitive Reasoning – Evaluates problem-solving abilities and learning speed to ensure they use good judgment.

