



## Guide To Selecting the Best Homecare Agency

Choosing a homecare agency can be a stressful experience, especially if you are pressed for time due to a health issue or crisis. However, there are a few things to keep in mind to choose the best homecare agency and protect you and your loved one from further stress.

Ideally, if you have friends or family who have used home care services, you can see who they might recommend, as having a trusted agency from someone who has actually used their services, is always preferred.

If you do not have the names of any preferred agencies, you can contact your local Councils On Aging (COA's), <http://www.mass.gov/elders/docs/shine-by-town.pdf> or Senior Center for a list of local referrals.

Once you acquire the names of several providers, you can contact them to learn more about the range of services they offer, their philosophy in providing care, and pricing.

Below, is a list of questions we recommend that you ask homecare agencies and other individuals who may know about the agency's track record. Their insight will help you determine which provider is best for you or your loved one.

- How long has this agency or individual been providing this service to the community?
- Can the provider provide you with a list of references, such as nurses, doctors, discharge planners, or community leaders who are familiar with the agency's work and reputation?
- Does the agency provide an in home evaluation of the patient's home care needs? If so, what do they evaluate?
- Does the patient and his or her family receive a copy of a care plan, and do the caregivers update it as changes occur and notify the family when changes occur ?
- Are caregivers available 24 hours a day, seven days a week?
- What criteria does this agency use to choose and train its employees?
- Is this provider clearly communicating it's eligibility requirements, fees, and services?
- Does this agency contact and include all parties involved in the care of the patient such as and his or her family members, and other medical providers in developing the plan of care?
- Does this agency provide patients and families with a detailed "Patients Bill of Rights" that outlines the rights and responsibilities of the providers, patients, and caregivers?
- How are the financial details of billing handled by the agency? Does the provider furnish written statements explaining all of the costs and payment plan options associated with the home care?

## Don't Forget To Check References

When checking references, in addition to asking some of the questions listed above-ask each reference if this agency has cared for people who have similar health needs. By doing your due diligence you can get the most qualified individual who can provide the level of care you need, with the compassion and reliability you expect for yourself or your loved one.

For a free in-home evaluation for homecare- contact us today at [\(800\) 296-9962](tel:8002969962).