

# What to Look for When Shopping for Home Health and Home Care?

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Home health care services can be provided by a variety of trained individuals. Providers may be for-profit, non-profit, or hospital based. When you are shopping for a home health or home care agency you are seeking a company that will assist you in providing for the health and safety of you or your loved one. Don't be shy about asking any questions that come to mind.

## Consider asking the following questions:

- How long has the agency been providing home health or home care services?
- Is the agency an approved Medicare provider?
- Does a national accrediting body certify the care?
- Does the agency offer a "Bill of Rights" that describes the rights and responsibilities of both the agency and the person receiving care?
- Will a plan for the patient be prepared and provided? Can the patient, his or her doctor or family members provide input on the plan and will the plan be updated as necessary?
- Are staff members available around the clock and seven days a week, if necessary?
- How does the agency ensure patient confidentiality?
- How are the caregivers hired and trained?
- What is the procedure for resolving problems if they occur? Whom can I call with questions or complaints?
- What are the total costs of the services that you or your loved one requires?
- Are payment plan options offered?
- Are you required to use the services for a minimum number of hours per day or week?