

A Checklist to Find the Right Home Care Provider

Check agency background and business structure

- How long has the agency been providing private duty home care?
- What kind of reputation does the agency have in the community?
- Does the agency provide references that can be verified?
- Does the agency manage all payroll and employee-related matters and adhere to state and federal guidelines in its employment practices?

If using a provider for care who is hired privately

- Who actually employs the caregiver? (Who pays the mandated taxes and withholdings?)
 - The client?
 - If no, and the caregiver is an independent contractor, does the caregiver (independent contractor) carry Workers' Compensation Insurance and liability insurance?

Verify the agency's or provider's services

- Is there a care professional (social worker or nurse) who, along with the client and family, develops an individualized plan of care?
- Does the provider include the client and his/her family members in developing the plan of care?
- Is the client's plan for service documented with details of specific tasks to be carried out by each professional caregiver?
- Are the client's needs medical and require a nurse or therapists to evaluate for home care?
 - If so, does the agency provide that option?
- Does the provider assign supervisors to oversee the quality of care that clients receive in their homes?
- What is the company's process for introducing a new caregiver to the client?
- Does the company use paper time sheets or a telephony system to monitor the presence of its employees in the home?
- Is the agency capable of meeting diverse needs, or does it only provide non-medical services?



- Does the provider have procedures in place to handle emergencies during care shifts as well as after hours?
- Does the agency monitor services?
- Does the agency employ a full time nurse, social worker or other qualified professional to make regular visits to the client's home?
- What are the financial requirements of this provider?
 - Is a deposit required?
 - How often are clients invoiced for services?
- Is there a contract required prior to starting services?
- Are costs for home care estimated up front?
- Does the provider supply literature explaining its services, eligibility requirements, fees, and funding sources?
- Is there a set cancellation period to terminate services without charge?

Verify the agency's employee screening processes

- Are employees given a thorough criminal background check?
- Is the background check completed on the employee only in the state where the care is being provided?
- Are references checked prior to placement in the home?
- Is a driving record check completed?

Verify the agency's training of its in-home providers

- What training is required of the employees?
- Is additional, ongoing training provided and required for the employees?

Additional items to consider depending on need

- Does the agency supply employees who have their own vehicles?
- Is the agency a member in good standing of national professional organizations for the home care industry?

How to Resolve Difficulties with an In-Home Provider from an Agency

High quality, safe, and effective home care is likely if time is invested prior to starting service. If a problem develops, however, or if you would like to issue a complaint, notify the home care provider's lead supervisor or director of care.