

CHOOSING
THE RIGHT

Home Care Agency

Interim
HEALTHCARE®
First in Home Care™



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It's not something we really like to think about, however, there will come a time when a loved one may not be able to function as independently as they once did at home. Whether someone you love is learning to live with a newly diagnosed condition or rehabbing from a surgery, illness or injury, you'll want to ensure they have access to the medical support they need at home.

As a caregiver, one of the best things you can do to help your loved one is to do your research on home care services and the agencies that are available to help in your area. Knowing what to look for when choosing a home care agency is the key to ensuring your loved one is able to remain safe and comfortable in their home for as long as possible.

Home Care Keeps The Elderly Healthy At Home

Older Americans are one of the fastest-growing age demographics in the United States. According to the Administration on Aging, by 2040, it's anticipated there will be about 80.8 million people age 65 and older living in the United States—that's more than twice the number of elderly people in the year 2000. That number is expected to reach 94.7 million by 2060.

Though the expected growth is astounding, it's safe to say the population in America isn't the only thing evolving. The lifestyle expectations of the new "older" generation have changed over the years too.

Not only are seniors living longer, they're also adamant about where they intend to grow older. A recent study from AARP showed that 77 percent of adults age 50 and older want to remain in their home long-term.



What type of home care services are available?

Home care offers the daily care and support an individual needs to live safely and independently at home as opposed to moving into an assisted living facility or skilled nursing facility to do so. Home care is commonly utilized by older people, but it can be beneficial to people of all ages. There is a vast selection of home care services available, however, a person's specific situation often determines the type and range of care that is provided. Your physician can help you determine the specific in-home care options that will be most helpful for you.

Personal Care and Support Services

Non-medical services, which are often referred to as personal care services (PCS) or personal care and support services (PCSS), are available to help elderly or disabled people in performing the activities of daily living. Personal care services are ideal for seniors who need assistance with transportation to appointments or help with grocery shopping, light housekeeping, and meal preparation. Assistance with bathing, toileting, dressing and grooming, as well as companionship, are additional non-medical services often available through a home care agency that offers PCS or PCSS.

Home Health: Nursing Services and At-Home Therapies

There are a variety of medical home care services available for people who are recovering from a surgery or illness but don't necessarily need an extended stay in the hospital. These services are referred to as home healthcare.

Home Health Nursing Services

Offered through a licensed home healthcare agency, skilled nursing services are provided by Registered Nurses (RNs), Licensed Practical Nurses (LPNs) or Licensed Vocational Nurses (LVNs) in the comfort of your own home.

Nursing services that may be performed in your home include:

- Health assessments including blood pressure, glucose, postoperative recovery and other vital signs
- Disease and treatment education
- Wound care
- Dressing changes
- Ostomy/colostomy teaching and management
- IV management
- Medication reconciliation and doctor or pharmacist reporting
- Medication administration
- Injections
- Heparin flushes
- Foot care
- Management of urinary catheters
- Management of tubes, drains and bags



At-Home Therapies

In addition to home nursing services, some home care agencies also offer therapy services. Therapy plays an important role in helping an individual regain independence, function and range of motion following an illness, surgery or injury. A licensed physical therapist (PT), occupational therapist (OT) and speech language pathologist (SLP) are often a critical part of a home healthcare team.

- Physical Therapy—Home health physical therapists often work with people who have experienced a loss of balance, are recovering from a fall, have difficulty walking, are suffering from back or joint pain or are recovering from joint replacement surgery, heart attack or stroke.
- Occupational Therapy—Home health occupational therapists focus on a person's ability to perform everyday tasks. An occupational therapist helps individuals regain their strength, balance and coordination in order to perform daily activities which they have lost the inability to perform due to an illness or injury.
- Speech and Language Therapy—Home health speech language pathologists work with individuals who are having trouble breathing, speaking or swallowing. They typically work with patients who have experienced a heart attack or stroke.

Specialized Home Health Services

Often offered through a licensed home health agency, specialized home health services offer medical care to people who are learning to manage a chronic disease at home. Through specialized home health services, people can receive a personalized plan of care that is focused on their individual needs.

Specialized home health services can be helpful for people with the following conditions:

- Arthritis
- Chronic Obstructive Pulmonary Disease
- Congestive Heart Failure
- Coronary Artery Disease
- Dementia
- Diabetes
- Huntington's Disease
- Hypertension/high blood pressure
- Joint/hip replacement surgery
- Mental health conditions, including depression
- Multiple Sclerosis
- Paraplegia and quadriplegia
- Parkinson's disease
- Pediatric care
- Ventilator care
- Wound care
- Post-traumatic stress disorder



Hospice and Palliative Care Services

Though not all home care agencies offer palliative care and hospice services, they can be extremely beneficial for people suffering from severe illnesses. These services also offer support to loved ones as well. Both can be provided in a patient's home, in hospitals, nursing homes or in assisted living facilities, however, when the services are provided is what differentiates the two types of care.

Palliative Care

Palliative care is a resource for anyone living with a serious illness, such as heart failure, COPD, cancer, dementia, Parkinson's disease or any other type of chronic illness. Palliative care can be helpful at any stage of illness and is best provided soon after the person is diagnosed. Palliative care is designed to improve a person's quality of life by relieving pain and symptoms associated with their disease.

Hospice Care

Hospice care is a compassionate, patient-centered approach to medical care and support for people who are at their end-of-life. Hospice care services focus on improving the quality of life for people when their quantity of time is limited. Hospice care offers physical, emotional and spiritual support to patients, as well as to those who love and care for them.

Why is it important to choose the right home care agency?

In-home caregivers can be a lifeline for individuals who have chosen to age in place, and the services they offer provide comfort and support to family members who are unable to handle all of the caregiving duties themselves.

When you put your loved one's well-being in the hands of another person, it's vital you are confident that the caregivers are trustworthy, reliable and qualified to provide the care that your loved one needs at home. It's important to remember that not all individuals who claim to be independent caregivers are trustworthy. And, the same goes for home care agencies. In order to avoid putting your loved one in a dangerous or difficult situation, it's important that you thoroughly vet any caregiver or home care agency before allowing them to provide services in your loved one's home.

Trustworthy Home Care Agencies Have Credentials

Choosing a licensed and certified home care agency is the best way to ensure your loved one receives the level of care and security they deserve. In most states, a home care business will need to be licensed to provide non-medical services and clinical services in the homes of patients. Before you decide who will provide care for your loved one in their home, be sure to check the business or individual's credentials, licensing and certifications. This will ensure they are a valid business or independent caregiver that you can trust to care for your loved one.

There are many benefits of choosing a licensed home care agency over an independent caregiver. A few of the benefits include:

- The person caring for your loved one will be an employee of an agency versus working directly for your family. This means the agency will ensure the caregiver has passed a background check and has valid credentials as well as the training needed to provide the best care possible.
- The agency will be responsible for withholding payroll taxes and covering the liability that comes with on-the-job injuries that may occur in your loved one's home.
- If the caregiver is sick or suddenly unable to report to work, the agency is responsible for finding a replacement caregiver.

Safety Will Be A Top Priority

A reputable home care agency will tell you that safety is their top priority. Your home care team should ensure your medication is given at the proper time, all equipment is maintained and stored properly, and guarantee that you are free from harm. Your family should always feel safe and secure in the presence of your home care team.

Your Home Care Team Will Become More Like Family

When it comes to the care and safety of your loved one, it can be difficult to know who you can trust. You will want a team of professionals that care for your loved one as they would their own family members.

At Interim HealthCare, our team of home care professionals does just that. In fact, many of them say their patients become like family to them.



"My patients are not only going to get the care they need—it's going to be heart."

Renee H.

Certified Medical Assistant



"Some life experiences redirect your path and lead precisely to where you were meant to be."

Joshua B.

Certified Nurse Aide



"Making the perfect match between a caregiver and the family is the most rewarding part of Taylor's job."

Taylor H.

Director of Marketing and Recruiting



"Going to the Banana Museum was just another adventure in Brittanie's nursing story!"

Brittanie H.

RN Case Manager



"Some people spread love wherever they go—that's the golden thread running through Melissa's story."

Melissa W.

Certified Nurse Aide



5 Questions To Ask When Choosing A Home Care Agency

When choosing a home care agency for yourself or a loved one, consider the following factors to ensure you are making the right decision as to who will care for you or your loved one.

1. How long has the home care agency been in business?

When you're evaluating agencies, be sure to ask how long they've been in business. If the agency has been in business for more than 50 years, like Interim HealthCare, you know you are dealing with a reputable agency. If they are a newer agency, you may want to dig a little deeper to make sure they are a valid, quality home care company.

2. What certifications/accreditations does the home care agency have?

Many different organizations can certify a home care agency, however, if the agency has certification from the National Association of Home Care and Hospice or the National Board for Certification of Hospice & Palliative Nurses, you can feel confident in the fact they met rigorous certification criteria based on the quality of care they provide. A third reputable accrediting body is the National Board for Certification of Hospice and Palliative Nurses, an organization that focuses primarily on nurses providing medical care in the home.

3. What is the reputation of the home care agency?

Perhaps one of the best ways to validate the quality of care the agency provides is to ask others about their experience with the agency. You may also want to check online reviews from past clients. If a home care agency has a great reputation around town, you can rest easy knowing that they will provide the same level of care to your loved one.

4. Will the home care agency be available when you need them most?

When you're caring for a family member at home, you need to know that your home care agency will be there when your loved one needs them most. Be sure to ask potential home care agencies for details regarding how they schedule visits. The agency's ability to be flexible based on your loved one's needs will be very important, and you'll want to work with an agency that is willing and able to schedule visits around your schedule. You'll also want to inquire about the home care agency's availability after hours, on weekends and on holidays. It's critical that you know how and when an agency will respond should your loved one's condition require attention outside of scheduled visit times.

5. What does the agency's approach to care look like?

At Interim HealthCare, we understand how frightening it can be to depend on others for daily care. No one wants to be a burden to family or friends or lose their independence. Those concerns are the motivation behind the creation of our HomeLife Enrichment® (HLE) standard of care.

In short, HLE is Interim HealthCare's philosophy of care. It's the way we approach caring for your loved one in their home, and it's what sets us apart from other home care agencies. HLE cares for the whole individual, engaging their mind, body, spirit and family to provide the most comprehensive and personalized form of care.

Interim HealthCare's HLE Standard of Care:

- Stimulates their mind to keep a loved one active and sharp
- Provides physical care for their body
- Uplifts their spirit and promotes joy through daily activities
- Supports and guides family on how to care for their loved one

Our Approach To Home Care Is Better

We work with each family and their individual situation to develop specific protocols and activities designed to turn each day into a comfortable flow of engaging, fun and interactive activities that:

- Stimulate their brain
- Improve motor functions
- Help them experience laughter, hope and happiness

At Interim HealthCare, we want to enrich the lives of the people we serve through our holistic approach to care, so they are safe, independent and fully engaged in life.

What levels of care does your home care agency provide?

The level of care that's available in your home will be dependent upon the scope of services your home care agency is qualified to provide. For instance, some agencies only provide non-medical, personal care services. When you choose to work with an agency that specializes in a limited scope of services, you could find yourself faced with bringing in a second or even third agency to ensure your loved one has access to the level of care they need to be safe at home. This is especially true if your loved one is in the early stages of a disease like dementia or Alzheimer's, and their medical needs could become more demanding over time.

Comprehensive Home Care To Meet All Of Your Needs

Interim HealthCare offers a full scope of home care services delivered by the same people your family has trusted throughout your loved one's journey.

From personal care and support to home healthcare and hospice, we offer a full continuum of care that is beneficial for the person receiving the services, as well as the family members caring for them.

Interim HealthCare offers a full range of in-home care services, including:

- Personal Care and Support Services (also called senior care, non-medical or private-duty)
- Home Health Nursing Services
- Home Health Therapies (physical therapy, speech therapy and occupational therapy)
- Respite Care (for family members or caregivers who need support and assistance)
- Specialized Home Care
- Palliative Care
- Hospice Care

How To Find The Right Home Care Agency

So you've decided it's time to find a home care agency, but you're not sure where to start. Follow these steps to ensure you choose the right agency for you and your loved one.

Step 1: Do Your Research

Research all of the home care agencies in your area to see if they offer the services and level of care your loved needs. Be sure to talk to friends about their experiences with different agencies, so you can get a feel for which agency would be best. You can also ask for online referrals and read reviews on Google or Facebook.

Once you have narrowed down your options, take a look at each home care agency's website and their online resources to determine which one aligns best with the needs of your family.

Step 2: Involve Your Loved One

If your loved one is able, be sure to involve them in the process of selecting the home care agency that will care for them. This will give your loved one a chance to voice any questions, concerns or desires they have before you get further in the process.

Step 3: Determine The Most Important Factors That Will Impact Your Decision

Make a list of "must-haves." Include everything that your future home care agency should have or can offer your loved one. Cross off any agencies that don't have one or more of your must-haves. This will make it easier for you to whittle down your list.

Step 4: Schedule Introductory Calls

Whether you meet via the phone, an online Zoom session or in person, get to know the people who will be working in your loved one's home. Think of this interview as a chance to confirm which option is best for your family. It's important that you feel comfortable with the staff who will be working together to provide care for your loved one. Introductory calls with agencies will be an opportunity for you to get a good sense of which agency will be the best fit for your family.

Step 5: Prepare A List Of Questions To Ask

Before your introductory calls, prepare a list of questions to ask the people that are being considered to care for your loved one at home. Don't be afraid to speak up—a reputable and trustworthy home care agency will welcome any questions you have.

To help you get started on your list, we've provided a few questions we recommend that you ask:

1. How long have you been in business?
2. What certifications/accreditations does your agency have?
3. How does your home care agency schedule visits?
4. What is your company's protocol should we need to contact someone after hours, on weekends or on holidays?
5. How would you describe your home care company's standard of care?

Step 6: Narrow Down Your List and Choose the Home Care Agency For You

Once you've done your research and spoken with the agencies on your list, you'll be prepared to make a decision on the home care agency that feels like the best fit for your family.

**Choose an agency that will put you and your loved one first.
Choose Interim HealthCare, the nation's first home care company.**

When taking the first step towards finding care, you will likely have many questions. The one thing you know is that you want only the very best for your family. That's what we want for your family too.

As the nation's first home care company, Interim HealthCare has put more than 55 years of experience into our HLE standard of care. Not only do we offer the most comprehensive approach to home care available, our entire care delivery model is designed to encompass care for the whole individual, while providing care for the family, as well.

At Interim HealthCare, we look beyond a person's basic needs to care for the mind, body, spirit, and family as well. It's the way we approach caring for your loved one in their home that distinguishes us as a leader in our industry and a first choice in home care.

