



*CICOA helps build communities that enable older persons and those of any age with a disability to live with the greatest possible independence, dignity, and quality of life in central Indiana.*

**Caregiver Assistance Foundation Information & Assistance  
In-Home Services Nutrition**

**Wednesday, April 08,  
2009**

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## **Shopping for a Home Health Care Agency**

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Helpful tips and questions to ask when shopping for a home health care agency:

- **SHOP** for a home health care agency that will meet the needs of your loved one - Call or visit various home health care agencies to compare services and prices
- Who owns the home health care agency? Is the agency owned by a national corporation or is it locally owned?
- Talk to the agency's clients and staff—What do they like about this home health care agency? What concerns do they have about the home health care agency? (Ask the agency for references)
- What type of services does the home health care agency offer? (Ask for a written list of the agency's services)

### **Home health care services include:**

**Home Health Aide**—provides bathing (including bed bath) and personal care

**Attendant care**—provides bathing and personal care

**Nurse**—provides set up or administration of medication, monitoring of health and vital signs, etc.

**Physical Therapy**—provides exercises to improve, maintain, and/or restore strength and movement (arm and leg movements, walking, etc.)

**Occupational Therapy**—provides exercises to improve, maintain, and/or restore the ability to perform activities of daily living (dressing, bathing, eating, etc.)

**Speech Therapy**—provides exercises to improve, maintain, and/or restore speech

**Homemaker**—provides housekeeping tasks - house cleaning, doing laundry, changing linens, possible shopping  
**Companion**—provides companionship from a visitor

**Respite Care**—provides services to relieve a caregiver (home health aide, attendant care, nursing care, homemaker, companion)

- Will the home care services be provided consistently by the same employee?
- Are employees allowed to run errands for the client? Are they allowed to take the client with them as they run errands? Will the client be charged for the employee's mileage while completing the errands?
- What is the cost of the requested services? Are services billed at an

- hourly rate or a per visit rate? Is there a contract?
- Does the home health care agency accept private insurance, Medicare, and/or Medicaid? How long would home health care services be provided under private insurance or Medicare? How long would home health care services be provided under Medicaid Prior Approval?
  - Does the agency require a minimum number of service hours?
  - Who should be contacted when the caregiver needs to change the service schedule? Can the cancelled dates of service be made up?
  - Will the client be charged if the employee is late or does not show up for the scheduled visits?
  - Who should be contacted regarding concerns about the provided services?
  - What situations would necessitate the home health care agency discharging a client on a temporary or permanent basis?
  - How does the home health care agency screen potential employees?
  - Are reference checks and criminal background checks performed regarding employees prior to their employment?
  - Are employees bonded?
  - Are employees allowed to accept food or items from the client while they are performing the home health care services?
  - Are employees allowed to smoke while they are performing the home health care services?
  - Ask about in-service training for employees—What topics are discussed?

Have the employees received training about working with people who have dementia?

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**CICOA** Aging & In-Home Solutions  
4755 Kingsway Drive, Suite 200  
Indianapolis, IN 46205  
317.254.5465

