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Services and information for older adults and adults with disabilities
in Wake County, North Carolina

CHOOSING A HOME CARE AGENCY

Use these first sections to write out what you need and want from a potential home care service. Being clear about these basics during your first contact with an agency may save time and prevent disappointment in future. Then use the “Gathering Information” pages to take notes while talking with each potential agency, to help you better remember what is said and be able to compare services.

Funding

How does she/he plan to pay for the service? *Keep in mind that it is a common misconception that Medicare covers the cost of home care services. In general, home care services are not considered a medical service, so are not covered by Medicare.* Have I talked to the doctor about a referral? Have I checked to see if insurance will cover this?)

Level and Type of Care

What does she/he want or need help with? (Bathing, dressing, housekeeping, meal preparation, grocery shopping, transportation, companionship, supervision, etc.? Does the person require “hands-on” care? What about skilled services such as physical therapy or nursing?)

It is important to understand the limitations of the services you are requesting. An aide typically is not permitted to directly administer medications or give injections, though they can remind a patient to take medications that have been dispensed into a pillbox; some agencies allow aides to provide transportation, while others do not; typically aides can help with “light housekeeping” but not heavy-duty housecleaning.

Gathering Information

If you will be inquiring of more than one agency, which is strongly recommended, **make copies of this page so that you may take notes about each agency.**

Name of company: _____

- Do they accept Medicare? Medicaid? Private insurance? Will they file insurance claims, or require the client/family to? _____

- If she/he will be paying privately, do they offer “private duty” services? _____
- What are their basic hourly charges? _____
- Are there overtime charges, or higher charges for evening or weekend coverage? _____

- What is the minimum number of hours per visit? _____
- Do they charge for the initial assessment? If yes, how much? _____

- Do they offer the kinds of services that are needed? _____

- What hours of the day are they available? _____

- When would they be able to start? _____
- Can they provide services on holidays if needed? _____
- Can they meet her/his special needs or requests? _____

- Will the same person provide service at each visit? _____

- What happens if the aide is sick or goes on vacation? _____

- How many years have they been in business? _____
- Are they licensed by the Division of Health Services Regulation? _____
- If Medicare is to be used for services, are they Medicare-certified? _____

