

8 Things to Know About Hiring In-Home Care Providers

Like choosing assisted living or nursing care, hiring an in-home care provider is an important personal decision. Candidates must be trustworthy, dependable and competent. The interview process may be time-intensive. Yet the more research and time you invest during the hiring process, the greater success you'll have finding the right in-home provider to meet your own or a loved one's long-term care needs.

Know Your Needs

Whom you choose will in part depend on your needs. For example, hiring someone to do shopping or yard maintenance is different from needing medication management, live-in or hands-on personal care. Ask your healthcare provider to help you determine the specific care and support you need.

Ask for Referrals

Ask doctors, trusted advisors, friends, coworkers, religious affiliations or local hospitals to recommend reliable providers.

Interview Candidates Personally

Pre-qualify candidates by phone before a personal interview. Consider meeting at a public venue before bringing the candidate to your home. It's also important to meet agency care providers before hiring to ensure that they are the right fit for your needs. Ask candidates why they are interested in the home health field. Listen to their answers. Are they enthusiastic or are their answers vague and brief? Does their personality seem compatible with yours or your loved one's?

Assess Competence

Determine the candidate's skill level by asking detailed, open-ended questions during the interview. Confirm their credentials and licensing. Are they certified in Cardiopulmonary Resuscitation (CPR) and First Aid? Ask what education, experience and related interests they have.

Be Specific About Needs

Prepare a Care Plan that describes the services you need. Be sure the provider understands and is comfortable with the tasks associated with your own or a loved one's care. If hiring an independent provider, draft a contract outlining the tasks, payment and termination procedures.

Confirm Expectations

Be sure you understand what is covered in any contract you sign, including costs for specific services. Ask if there are additional fees that apply to specific services or timeframes. Ask agencies about termination procedures and how to request another provider if necessary.

Check References

Confirm recommendations carefully. Background checks may provide added peace of mind. These are often provided by agencies yet you may want to confirm how the assessment is done. You can check independent providers online, with your local police department, legal aid service, or ask an attorney for referrals to people or organizations that provide this service.

Move On If Needed

It's important that you feel comfortable with your provider. If an issue arises, try talking it through. Sometimes misunderstandings can be resolved. If not, don't hesitate to find another provider that better meets your needs.

The relationship between you and your in-home care provider is a special bond involving mutual trust and understanding. Finding the right person is well worth the time and effort invested to ensure that needs are met and wishes are honored for your own or a loved one's long-term care.