

Tips for Finding Reliable Care

In-Home Care Checklist: Questions to ask potential providers

This checklist provided by Bayshore Heath & Homemaker Services will help you make an informed decision by ensuring that you have asked the right questions and received information about all of the issues and responsibilities related to finding an appropriate agency to provide care for an elderly, frail or disabled person wishing to remain in their home. Private duty care is provided by agencies who work directly with families and the families pay a fee for the services provided.

Agency

- How long has the agency been providing private duty home care?
- What are the credentials and experience of the staff who perform the screening, assignment and oversight of caregivers?
- Are they fully insured?

Employment

- Who employs the caregiver?
- Does the agency manage all payroll and employee-related matters and adhere to state and federal guidelines in its employment practices, such as withholding appropriate taxes, providing workers' compensation insurance and other benefits?
- Do they also use independent contractors? If so, who employs the person and pays mandated taxes and withholdings in this case? How do they differentiate between the employees and the independent contractors?
- Are references checked and criminal background and drug screens conducted on all employees/personnel they use to staff in homes?
- How does the agency screen and select caregivers prior to an assignment?

Services

- Is there a care professional who, along with the client and family, develops an individualized plan of care?
- How are emergencies handled after normal business hours?
- How often are services monitored?
- Does the agency employ a full time nurse, social worker or other qualified professional to make regular visits to the client's home?
- Are you required to sign a contract for services?
- Are costs estimated up front?

As an additional criteria, check out the agency locator at www.NAHC.com to see if the agency is associated with a professional organization that provide ongoing education and best practices for its members.



Checklist Response

Agency

- How long has the agency been providing private duty home care?
✓ **25 years**
- What are the credentials and experience of the staff who perform the screening, assignment and oversight of caregivers?
✓ **Skilled nurses (RNs and LPNs) design care plans, conduct assessments, and oversee caregivers.**
- Are they fully insured?
✓ **Yes, Bayshore holds liability insurance for all caregivers and nurses.**

Employment

- Who employs the caregiver?
✓ **Caregivers are employees of Bayshore, not independent contractors.**
- Does the agency manage all payroll and employee-related matters and adhere to state and federal guidelines in its employment practices, such as withholding appropriate taxes, providing workers' compensation insurance and other benefits?
✓ **Yes. Bayshore provides all of the above. The client is never responsible for providing such benefits.**
- Do they also use independent contractors? If so, who employs the person and pays mandated taxes and withholdings in this case? How do they differentiate between the employees and the independent contractors?
✓ **Bayshore does not employ caregivers to be independent contractors. The client does not pay the caregiver directly. Bayshore pays all taxes and withholdings.**
- Are references checked and criminal background and drug screens conducted on all employees/personnel they use to staff in homes?
✓ **Yes, reference are checked, drug screens conducted and all caregivers undergo a level two FBI background check.**
- How does the agency screen and select caregivers prior to an assignment?
✓ **Caregivers are chosen for assignments based on availability, and any specific skill sets requested by the client such as exemplary cooking skills etc.**

Services

- Is there a care professional who, along with the client and family, develops an individualized plan of care?
✓ **Bayshore employs highly trained nurses to preform thorough assessment and custom care plan development. Our nurses develop the care plan by listening to the needs of the client and/or family members.**
- How are emergencies handled after normal business hours?
✓ **Bayshore's nurses remain on-call 24/7. Our trained on-call coordinator communicates with our nursing staff and emergency personnel in the event of a crisis.**
- How often are services monitored?
✓ **Monitoring of our patients and caregivers is our top priority. Our nurses make unannounced visits to homes to monitor care and phone call follow up is routinely completed to ensure client satisfaction. In addition, management staff review client charts on a continued bases.**

- Does the agency employ a full time nurse, social worker or other qualified professional to make regular visits to the client's home?
 - ✓ **Yes, Bayshore employs a team of skilled nurses to ensure thorough oversight of caregivers and clients. Many agencies employ 0-1 nurse.**
- Are you required to sign a contract for services?
 - ✓ **No, Bayshore only requires a Guarantee of Payment and consent form to be signed. The client is not obligated to use our services nor do we require a minimum of service hours.**
- Are costs estimated up front?
 - ✓ **Yes, A Bayshore nurse will discuss pricing up front and does not negotiate prices to ensure care is never compromised.**