

## Home Care is Cost Effective

Home care is a popular choice for many people. With the advent of new medical procedures, portable technology, skilled staff, and caring home care aides, many services can now be effectively administered in the warmth and security of the home. Patients are safely discharged within hours or days of surgical procedures, rather than being admitted to a nursing home or staying in the hospital.

The trend toward home care will continue as the population ages and as long as the costs for providing health care in California remains a significant concern. Because home care allows people to receive treatment and services in the home rather than institutions, the services are very cost-effective for the State. Home care costs the State less than staying in a hospital or skilled nursing facility.

## Quality Measures in Home Care

With so many people receiving home care and hospice services, ensuring quality of care is essential. Many home care providers— such as RNs, LVNs, physical/ occupational/ speech therapists, social workers, and certified home health aides— hold professional licenses and certifications. The State and Federal governments carefully regulate agencies that provide home care services, and depending on the type of agency, there are a number of quality measures available to consumers:

### Licensed Home Health Agencies

Regularly surveyed by the California Dept of Public Health  
Comply with State regulations (Title 22, Div 5, Chapter 6)  
Voluntary accreditation through accreditation organizations

### Medicare/Medi-Cal Certified Agencies

Regularly surveyed by the California Dept of Public Health  
Comply with State laws and regulations (Title 22, Div 5, Chapter 6)  
Comply with Federal regulations (Medicare Conditions of Participation)  
Voluntary accreditation through accreditation organizations

### Hospices

Regularly surveyed by the California Dept of Public Health  
Comply with State laws and regulations  
Comply with California Standards of Quality of Hospice Care  
Comply with Federal laws and regulations (Medicare Conditions of Participation)

### Home Care Aide Organizations

Comply with OSHA standards  
Comply with applicable laws, regulations, and wage orders  
State business license  
State licensure will be required beginning in 2016

### Home Medical Equipment

Required to have Home Medical Device Retailer License  
Accreditation required for participation in Medicare Competitive Bidding Process

### Home Infusion Pharmacy

Regulated by the Board of Pharmacy  
Voluntary accreditation through accreditation organizations

### California Association for Health Services at Home

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# A GUIDE TO THE MOST COMMONLY ASKED QUESTIONS ABOUT HOME CARE



Established in 1966, CAHSAH is a non-profit association located in Sacramento, representing non-profit organizations and private companies providing home care services. CAHSAH's guiding core purpose is to promote quality home care and enhance the effectiveness of its members.



## Who does CAHSAH Represent?

CAHSAH represents the full spectrum of home care service providers in California and across the nation:

- \* Medicare Certified Home Health Agencies
- \* Licensed Home Health Agencies
- \* Home Care Aide Organizations
- \* Hospices
- \* Home Infusion Pharmacies
- \* Home Medical Equipment
- \* Interdisciplinary Professional Services

## What is Home Care?

Home care provides quality, cost-effective care to individuals in the privacy of their homes. Home care provides a full spectrum of services, ranging from high-tech nursing to nonmedical assistance with the activities of daily living. Home care services allow patients to shorten the length of their stay in a facility or to avoid institutionalization altogether. Home care services are generally available 24 hours a day, seven days a week. These services may be provided by an individual, or by a team of specialists, on a part-time, intermittent, hourly, or shift basis. Studies show patients heal more quickly in the comfort and familiar surroundings of their own home, rather than in an institution.

## Who Pays for Home Care?

- Medicare
- Managed Care
- Private Payers
- Medi-Cal
- Medigap Insurance
- Workers' Compensation
- Long-term Care Insurance
- Veterans Administration
- Tri Care/CHAMPUS
- Self-pay (out of pocket)

## How to Locate a Home Care Provider

Finding the right provider does not have to be difficult. CAHSAH's website contains the most comprehensive database of more than 900 home care agencies. Use this resource to find all the agencies in any particular area of the state. CAHSAH's members are California direct providers of health and supportive services and products in the home. To locate a provider go to

[www.cahsah.org/index.php?p=agency\\_vendor\\_locator](http://www.cahsah.org/index.php?p=agency_vendor_locator)

## What Services are Provided in the Home?

**Skilled Nursing:** RNs and LVNs who provide medical services, such as injections, medication, IV therapy, and wound care, etc that cannot be provided by a nonprofessional person.

**Hospice:** Skilled professionals, including RNs, LVNs, Social Workers, Home Health Aides, and volunteers, who provide comprehensive medical, psychological, and spiritual care for the terminally ill and support for their families.

**Personal Care:** Homemakers and personal care workers who support individuals through meal preparation, bathing, dressing, housekeeping, and companionship.

**Certified Home Care Aides:** Trained workers employed by licensed home health agencies who provide assistance with activities of daily living such as getting in/out of bed, bathing, grooming, and dressing.

**Respiratory Therapy:** provides assistance to individuals that have difficulty breathing, using specialized treatments, medications, and equipment.

**Physical Therapy:** provides assistance to restore the mobility and strength of patients through therapeutic exercise and other methods.

**Occupational Therapy:** provides assistance to patients who have suffered an injury or illness which has affected perceptual motor skills or the ability to perform activities of daily living such as dressing, eating, or preparing meals.

**Speech Pathology:** provides assistance to develop and restore the speech of individuals with communication disorders and assist in retaining breathing, swallowing, and muscle control.

**Home Infusion Therapy:** provides the delivery of drugs, equipment, and professional services for those receiving intravenous therapy or nutritional therapy.

**Social Work:** evaluates social and emotional factors affecting ill and disabled individuals, provides counseling and identifies available community resources.

## Choosing a Home Care Provider

The time spent selecting an appropriate home care provider will help ensure that your home care experience is positive. When choosing an appropriate home care provider, the patient and family must consider several important questions:

- What kind of care is required?
- What level of care is required?
- How will the care be paid for?
- Do I qualify for Medicare or Medi-Cal?
- How much of my care will I be responsible to pay for?
- Is the provider licensed by the State, certified by Medicare/Medi-Cal or accredited by an independent accrediting body?
- Does your physician know your provider?
- Will your provider be working with your physician?
- How long has the provider been in the community?
- What is the provider's reputation?
- Does the provider belong to a Home Care Association?
- What are the provider's procedures for safety, such as handling an emergency?
- Are references provided?

## Who Uses Home Care?

Most people prefer to stay at home rather than remain in a hospital, nursing home, or other facility when they can no longer manage their own care. Home care is suitable for persons of all ages with a variety of needs, such as:

- A person with a medical condition that requires constant monitoring, like diabetes, heart disease or stroke.
- A person with limited mobility or an illness, who needs assistance with personal care and/or domestic tasks.
- A person with a terminal illness needing personal care, pain management, and emotional support.
- A ventilator dependent person being maintained at home.
- A fragile, or developmentally challenged newborn