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Home Health Mates...Question & Answer

Take The Guesswork Out of Finding the Best Home Health Care

BY BRUCE MUENTER

I know firsthand the difficulty in navigating through the complexity of choosing home health care, and understanding the various providers and their array of services. As overwhelming as the process can seem for many, being equipped with right information will make you a more informed and confident shopper as you make these important decisions.

Beginning this month, I will be writing a column which provides concise answers to your questions so that you can be better equipped when investigating home health care options.

The following questions were from our inquiries this past month:

Q: *What is the difference between companion care and home health care?*
– Helen, Tampa, FL

A: Florida is a licensure state that requires different levels of licensing depending upon the services provided. Companion assistance is provided by a home maker companion agency, whereas nursing services and assistance with ADLs (Activities of Daily Living) can be provided by a home health agency or nurse registry. The state licensing authority is the Florida Agency for Health Care Administration.

Securing a home health care license in Florida requires significant

investment in time, money, insurance and manpower, such as a Director of Nursing. Non medical or custodial home health care provides personal care like bathing, dressing, toileting, transferring and range of motion exercises.

It is important to know what activities caregivers are allowed to do by law. This varies by companion, home health aide/certified nursing assistant, licensed practical nurse and registered nurse. Knowing what services your home health care provider offers is critical in managing the ongoing changes that occur with a client's plan of care.

Q: *Why is it important to have an RN supervising all plan of care?*
– Marty, Lutz, FL

A: It is important to understand that all clients and cases are different. Unfortunately, many agencies who offer limited services

or lack of qualified assessment personnel (such as an RN) provide services and charges that might be more or less than needed.

The intentions might be good, but the outcome or cost of the service is inappropriate. As you talk to prospective agencies, be informed of their qualifications to do the work, and you will have a higher probability to be pleased with the outcome. An RN supervising your plan of care will always increase the accuracy of assessment and plan of care development.

Keep your questions coming, and I look forward to providing you the right information to make informed decisions. Have a great month!

Please give me a call at **(813) 884-5040** or visit my website at www.homehealthmates.com/tampa.php for more information or a free consultation.

I would encourage you to **e-mail me at bmuent@homehealthmates.com** or send your questions to: **News Connection, USA, P.O. Box 638, Seffner, FL 33584, Attn. Editor – Home Health Mates.** I will answer all questions you may have, including the ones that we do not feature in *Senior Connection* magazine.