

Home Health Care Can Help



A GUIDE TO MEDICAL CARE AT HOME

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Introduction

It can be hard when you or a loved one needs ongoing health care. You might feel tired or worried about the future. You may wonder how you will handle care. Where do you turn? Home health care can help.

Home health care is a fast-growing area of health care. That's because it keeps patients in the comfort of their own home.

Home health care brings medical care directly to the patient. Above all, you are treated with the dignity and respect you deserve.

Learning about home health care may ease worries about the future. This booklet will teach you the basics. Knowing your options can lead to better care for you and your loved ones.



What Is Home Health Care?

Home health care is for people who need *medical* care at home. Many people don't know this is a choice. Common types of care given by the home health care team are:

- Giving shots/drawing blood
- Wound care
- IV therapy
- Occupational therapy
- Physical therapy
- Speech therapy
- Disease management
- Pain management
- Health/disease education
- Cardiac recovery
- Nutrition plans
- After-surgery care

Please call us for a full list of our services.

Home health care is also called skilled nursing or home care. It is “skilled care” given by licensed experts. Registered nurses (RNs) or licensed practical nurses (LPNs) give most skilled care. Therapists are also part of the home health care team. There may be occupational, physical, and/or speech therapists on the team.

Home health care is different from *private duty home care*. Private duty home care is “unskilled care,” or non-medical care. It's care that can be given without a special license. Private duty home care helps only with activities of daily living (ADLs). This is non-medical personal care, such as bathing, feeding, grooming, or toileting.

How Home Health Care Works

Below is an outline of how home health care works. **There is space at the back of this booklet for notes and questions. Keep this booklet handy when you call us.**

1. Referral. A doctor must order home health care. Talk to your doctor to see if home health care is right for you.

2. Eligibility. You are eligible for home health care if you have a doctor's order and Medicare. If you have an insurance plan, we will contact the provider to see if services are covered.

3. Payment. Call us to talk about fees and payment options. Medicare, Medicaid, or insurance may cover certain services.

Medicare pays 100% of the cost of covered services. **Medicare covers home health care only if:**

- A doctor says that the patient is homebound and needs skilled nursing care and/or a form of therapy.
- The medical care needed is specific and effective treatment for the condition.

Medicare does not cover 24-hour care or meal delivery. If Medicare covers your home health care, it may also cover some personal care for a short time. But keep in mind, unskilled care is usually an out-of-pocket cost.

4. The Care Plan. **The care plan and number of visits is based on what the doctor orders.** The doctor may want the care team to visit once a day to treat a surgery wound or once a week for speech therapy.

The home health care team will come to your home. We will work with you to make a schedule. We may also give you ideas on how to improve the home setting and/or daily routines. For instance, we may suggest ways to make the home safer.

5. Delivering Care. **Home health care is, of course, delivered at home.** In some cases, we may bring services to patients who are in a facility. During each visit, we will:

- Make sure the care setting is safe
- Check vital signs (blood pressure, heart rate, temperature, and breathing)
- Teach patients/caregivers how to give proper care
- Make sure medicine is being taken the right way

6. Making the Plan Work. **The home health care team will visit at routine times based on the care plan.**

Members of the care team may visit at different times. This is based on the patient's needs and the doctor's orders.

If you or a loved one needs medical care at home, we're here for you. Talk to your doctor or call us today.




Questions and Notes:

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