

Questions to Ask When Comparing Agencies

This comparison chart provides a few important questions to ask when choosing a home health care provider. This insight will help you determine which agency is best for you or your loved one.

	Agency:	Agency:	Agency:
How long has the agency been serving the community?			
<p>Is the agency certified by Medicare?</p> <p>A Medicare-certified home health agency has met federal minimum requirement for patient care and financial management and therefore can provide Medicare and some Medicaid home health services. To determine the caliber of a Medicare-certified agency, you can review its Medicare Survey Report. Contact the Ohio Health Department for assistance in obtaining this document. An agency's decision not to become certified does not imply it provides poor care. In many cases, these agencies adhere to their own set of standards. It is imperative you consider all the circumstances surrounding an agency's home care services before making a final decision.</p>	Yes No	Yes No	Yes No
<p>Is the agency certified accredited?</p> <p>Accreditation is a voluntary process conducted by non-profit professional organizations. It signifies the agency has met national industry standards. Agencies may be accredited by the Community Health Accreditation Program, The Joint Commission, or Accreditation Commission for Health Care. Most agencies seek accreditation from the organization most applicable to their services.</p>	Yes No	Yes No	Yes No
	Accrediting Organization	Accrediting Organization	Accrediting Organization
<p>Does the agency provide literature explaining its services, eligibility requirements, fees, and funding sources?</p> <p>An annual report can provide helpful information about the agency. Many providers supply patients with a detailed "Patient's Bill of Rights" that outlines the rights and responsibilities of the providers, patients, and caregivers alike.</p>	Yes No	Yes No	Yes No
How does the agency select and train its employees?			
Are workers protected with written personnel policies, benefit packages, and malpractice insurance?	Yes No	Yes No	Yes No
Does it run criminal records checks on new and current employees?	Yes No	Yes No	Yes No
How does the provider ensure patient confidentiality?			

	Agency:		Agency:		Agency:	
	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	No
Are the agency's nurses or therapists required to evaluate the patient's home care needs? If so, what does this entail? Are the patient's physicians and family members consulted?	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	No
Is the course of treatment documented, detailing the specific tasks to be carried out by each professional caregiver?	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	No
Is a copy of this plan given to the patient and his/her family member and updated as changes occur?	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	No
Does the agency assign supervisors to oversee the quality of care patient are receiving in their homes? If so, how often do these individuals make visits?	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	No
Whom can you call with questions or complaints?						
How are problems followed up and resolved?						
Does the agency educate family members on the type of care being provided?	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	No
What are the agency's financial procedures?						
Are written statements explaining all the costs and payment plan options associated with care provided?	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	No
What procedures are in place to handle emergencies?						
Are the agency's caregivers available 24 hours a day, 7 days a week?	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	No



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