

10 Questions to Ask Before Hiring a Home Care Provider

When selecting a home care agency, it is important to know what questions to ask. Here are some examples of important questions that consumers should ask of a prospective service provider:

1. How long has the agency been providing private duty home care?
2. Is a written, customized care plan developed in consultation with the client and family members, and is the plan updated as changes occur?
3. How are emergencies handled after normal business hours?
4. Do they closely supervise the quality of care, including maintenance of a daily journal in the client's home and non-scheduled supervisory visits?
5. Does the agency employ a nurse, social worker, or other qualified professional to make regular visits to the client's home?
6. Do they provide a written document that states the rights and responsibilities of the client, and explains the company's privacy policy and code of ethics?
7. Do they Triple-screen their caregiver employees carefully, including use of reference checks, driving records and criminal background investigations?
8. Does the Agency mandate ongoing training of its employees to continually update their skills?
9. 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 and providing Workers' Compensation and other benefits?
10. Do they also use independent contractors? If so, who employs the person and what type of background checks do they do on their employees? Also, who pays the mandated taxes and withholdings?