## TOP 10 TIPS FOR HIRING A HOME HEALTH AIDE

What do family members need to know when hiring a home health aide? These tips can help you make the right decision.

1. **The most important step** is to include the person who needs home care in the conversation. This way, he or she will feel part of the process and, ultimately, more comfortable with the situation.

2. **Comparison Shop.** Ask yourself: “Do all of the home care agencies I’m considering offer the same services? Do they charge the same prices? Does one agency have a better reputation than another? What type and how much training have their aides received?”

3. **Define the level of care that your loved one needs.** Does he or she need a home health aide 24 hours a day, seven days per week? Or is help only needed when the individual is awake? If you are not sure, look for agencies that can offer a personal evaluation/assessment by a Registered Nurse to determine the type of care that’s needed.

4. **Look for a home health aide who is supported by a Registered Nurse.** Does the aide have easy and immediate access to a nurse who can offer assistance if a problem arises? Many times, round-the-clock access to a nurse can mean the difference between a minor problem and a distressing visit to the emergency room.

5. **Be sure the home health aide has undergone a thorough criminal background check.** Find out if the aide has been screened nationally and internationally.

6. **Look for shared interests** between the home health aide and your loved one. For instance, if your family member is an avid sports fan, find an aide who loves sports, too.

7. **Remember that you are not looking for a good friend for your loved one.** Hire an aide who is trained to act like a guest in your family member’s home. You want the aide to be friendly but professional.

8. **Assess the situation.** Make sure that the home health aide is a good fit. The first few days with the home health aide should be treated as a trial period. Talk with both the aide’s supervisor and your loved one.

9. **You can’t possibly do everything yourself,** so don’t feel badly about calling in a home health aide.

10. **Find a home health aide who has been specially trained to care for the elderly.** Home health aides should make your life and your loved one’s life less stressful not more.

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