

# In-Home Provider Review Checklist

## Questions Others Wished They'd Asked



We've learned from our clients and families the questions they wished they'd asked when they were searching for in-home and senior care providers. Use this as a guide as you begin your search to avoid missteps and learn from their experience. We hope you find this helpful.

### PROFESSIONAL GUIDANCE:

*Knowing who will be directly working with you or your loved one makes a big difference long-term to improving health and reducing cost.*

#### Role of the Nurse

- Is the nurse mostly providing supervision for the aide or developing a personal client plan to implement for the guidance she (not the aide) will be providing?
- What is the level and depth of on-call support? A nurse available 24/7 for calls? How likely is the nurse to visit in the middle of the night?
- How broad is the goal setting and planning the nurse is doing with you? Mostly medical, activities of daily living, or whole person involving purpose/passion, combatting social isolation, etc.?
- How do they handle medication management?
- How often will the nurse visit? How will you know when visits are scheduled? What triggers visits beyond scheduled appointments?
- What is the nurse's role in coordinating, scheduling, attending and following up on physician appointments for your loved one?
- Does the nurse serve as a central coordinator for all communication and care related to your loved one? Including to other family members?
- How well will your nurse get to know your loved one? Ask them to describe how they will use that knowledge on an ongoing basis.
- How often and what level of support does the nurse provide in identifying reliable and appropriate resources for your loved one?

- Who coordinates care if you need to go out of town or on vacation?

#### Understanding Caregiving Service

- Ask them to describe the role of the caregiver and the scope of the interactions with your loved one.
- What is the-caregiver's first line of support if she is concerned about your loved one?
- What happens when your caregiver is sick or doesn't show up for a shift? Is there a policy in place that no shift goes unfilled? *For example, Lifesprk has a 100% guarantee for that.*
- What level of proactive support do caregivers provide?
- How do they help prevent hospitalizations or health crises? How are they trained to understand the triggers that might signal a call to the nurse?



## PREVENTING HOSPITALIZATIONS & HEALTH CRISES:

- Who is regularly identifying changes in your loved one's needs and care in the home? Is it a nurse or is it a caregiver? For example, hygiene, medication, nutritional needs, safety issues, health symptoms, etc. *A caregiver does not have the professional assessment skills a trained nurse does and may miss some of the signs.*
- How do they help you implement plans, exercises, support and resources before those changes occur? *For example, if your loved one is at risk for falls, are they proactive by involving physical therapy to build strength and reduce the risk for falls?*
- What are their documented results for preventing hospitalizations and/or ER visits?
- How flexible are their services for continuity across settings? *For example, move to senior living campus, nursing home, hospital, etc.*
- Are they using paper documentation or EMRs (electronic medical record) which help ensure everyone involved has access to vital information as appropriate?
- How often is a home safety evaluation done? Is it only in the beginning or throughout your loved one's care as needs and medications change?

## GOING BEYOND CARE: SPARKING PURPOSE & PASSION

- Ask them to describe the ongoing plan for engaging your loved one's purpose and passion to optimize their wellbeing. *Studies show that having purpose has as significant an impact on a person's wellbeing as exercising.*

## REPUTATION & LICENSURE:

- What external benchmarks do they use to measure internal employee satisfaction? Have they earned any awards or accolades?

- How many nurses do they employ? *It's important because the more nurses a provider has, the smaller the client caseload and the more depth of professional guidance they are able to provide.*
- How are caregivers recruited, background screened and trained?
- What is the caregiver turnover rate and how many caregivers do they employ? *The more caregivers employed the greater the opportunity to make a best fit match for you.*
- What kind of Minnesota licensure does the provider have? And what are they willing to do within that license? *For example, some franchise providers may have a comprehensive license but choose not to provide hands-on care to administer medications.*

## MAKING YOUR SENIOR FUNDS GO FURTHER:

- How do they work to reduce the amount of care your loved one needs over time?
- How flexible is your Service Plan? How easily can you add or remove services as needs change? *Find out what the change policy is for making service adjustments. For example, is it 24 hours or is it one week ahead?*
- What is their shift cancellation policy if your mom is suddenly hospitalized?
- Is there a minimum number of hours per day or per week you are charged?
- What level of support is available for accessing and understanding your long-term care insurance policy?
- How do they help identify different funding sources and/or create a plan to use your limited resources wisely for your goals?

## Want to learn more?

Sign up for a free consultation or call our Navigation desk as a starting point to get your questions and concerns answered.

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