



## **Choosing a Caregiver for Your Loved One**

Selecting a home care provider is a much more challenging process as there is a large range of experience, and professionalism. Here are a few insights to help guide your decision-making to make the best choice.

1. Is the home care agency licensed by the State of Oregon? *The Oregon Health Authority requires that home care agencies follow a strict set of standards to ensure that clients are provided appropriate care in a manner that promotes their health, safety and well-being.*
2. Is the agency bonded and insured? *“Bonded” means the home care agency offers protection to the client if a caregiver steals from a client. “Insured” means the agency carries liability coverage for personal injuries and property damage, as well as workers’ compensation insurance. But don’t just take an agency’s word that they’re “bonded and insured”. Ask to see documentation verifying the exact kind of coverage and what it means to you as a customer.*
3. How does the agency screen potential employees? *Before allowing anyone access to your home, demand a background check. Does the agency thoroughly interview each candidate before assigning any caregiver to a client? Are there a physical skills test and a criminal history check completed on each applicant?*
4. Are the caregivers experienced? *Make sure your home care agency employs only qualified, experienced caregivers.*
5. How does the agency train their staff? *Your home care agency should provide on-going training to keep caregivers up to date and proficient on skills needed to care for others. Does the agency have an extensive in-office orientation program for all personal care assistants along with standardized, hands-on training, including classes on fall prevention, infection control, personal care and managing medications?*
6. Does the agency schedule around you? *Some agencies have set times that caregivers are available. Ask if they are flexible when it comes to your schedule.*
7. Does the agency have a live person on-call 24 hours? *Nothing is more frustrating than having a problem and calling your home care agency, only to find an answering machine. When you need help and answers, you should insist that your home care agency is available night and day.*
8. Does the agency have 24-hour RN supervision? *If you have an emergency or even just a question at any time of the day, it’s important that your home care agency has a Registered Nurse on call 24 hours a day to answer your questions and get you the help you need.*
9. Does the agency qualify to provide services under your insurance policy? *Will the home care agency bill supplemental insurance companies? Find out if billing is handled by the home care agency or if it is entirely your*



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1320 Lewis St SE  
Salem, OR 97302  
503.371.1495  
fax: 503.371.1612  
[www.pershomecare.com](http://www.pershomecare.com)

*responsibility to submit claims. In addition, it's important to contact your insurance company and ask what they require from the home care agency for payment. Make sure you know what you're waiting period is and if there is any exclusion.*

You have the right to know:

1. If the agency has ever had a complaint registered with the Oregon Health Authority;
2. The result of that any investigation;