

Choosing the Right In-Home Caregiver for You



It's no surprise that many seniors would much prefer living in their own homes as opposed to facility care. Family members who fully understand the benefits associated with aging in place—a sense of independence, better health outcomes, and the comfort home can provide—may consider an in-home caregiver for their elderly loved one.

Here are tips for choosing the right in-home caregiver for your loved one:



Assess Your Loved One's Needs

Evaluate what level of help your loved one needs. He or she could require home health care, non-medical personal care such as assistance with bathing, dressing, toileting and meal preparation, or with items such as bill-paying, errands, housekeeping, and shopping.



If Your Loved One Needs Health Care Assistance

If health care training is needed, specify what level and what type. If driving, operating special equipment, or lifting the senior is required, these requirements should be clearly stated.



Write Up A Job Outline

Develop a job contract which includes wages, hours of work, employee's Social Security number, the overall job description, any unacceptable behaviors and issues related to termination (including how much notice, reasons, etc.).



Finding an In-Home Caregiver

There may be neighbors or friends who would be good prospective caregivers. Remember hiring, managing, and firing a caregiver are business decisions. If you would be uncomfortable discussing issues with them, it might be better to go through an agency.



Conduct a Comprehensive Interview

Screen the applicants, then prepare to interview in person the ones who make it past the screening. Make sure you have a list of questions to ask. It can be helpful to have another person sit in on the interviews for a second opinion.



Check References Always

Check references carefully and obtain a criminal background check on each individual. If you choose to go through an agency, make sure they screen carefully, with background checks.



Monitor the Caregiver

Once you have hired an in-home caregiver for your loved one, it is important to monitor the caregiver by making personal contact with the caregiver on a regular basis. Always watch for any signs of abuse, neglect, or exploitation.

