



Choosing Care:

A Short Guide

Choosing Home Care

Choosing home care is often done under pressure—after a hospitalization, during a health decline, or when caregiving becomes more than one person can manage alone. Families are asked to make important decisions quickly, often with limited information.

This short brochure is intended to help you pause and orient yourself. It does not tell you what to do. Instead, it offers perspective drawn from real-life experience and highlights the factors that most influence the quality, consistency, and sustainability of care over time.

Why This Guide Exists

CareProvide Co-Founder Jill Kidwell managed care in her own home for several years. During that time, she worked with agencies, searched independently for caregivers, and hired live-in support. As her family's needs evolved, she became increasingly aware that there had to be a more reliable way to provide care at home.

What stood out most during those years was not a lack of compassion. The caregivers she worked with were always kind, capable, and deeply caring people. When changes were needed, they were rarely driven by the desire to get a new caregiver. More often, they reflected differences in how caregivers were supported, supervised, and guided in their work.

Those experiences shaped both CareProvide—and the questions shared in this guide.



A Thought as You Compare Agencies

It's hard to get to the heart of a complex decision like getting care for someone in a short period of time.

Two agencies may list similar rates and services while offering very different levels of oversight, coordination, and support. The questions that matter most often surface later—when needs change, when a medical issue arises, or when care must scale up or down.

The purpose of this guide is to help families ask those questions earlier.



The Big Picture: What to Look For

When families step back and reflect, these themes consistently rise to the surface:

- How caregivers are oriented and supported
- Whether nursing guidance is available when situations change
- How communication works—especially across distance or among multiple family members
- Whether care can adapt as needs evolve, from part-time support to 24/7 care or hospice
- Who carries responsibility for supervision, insurance, and compliance

These factors often make the difference between care that feels manageable—and care that becomes another source of stress.



How to Use the Checklist That Follows

The checklist in this guide is not meant to be exhaustive or prescriptive. You do not need to use every question.

Instead, we encourage you to:

- Pick the questions that matter most to your family
- Add your own
- Use your personalized list to guide conversations with caregivers and agencies

The goal is not to find a perfect answer—but to gain clarity and confidence as you choose.



A Final Note

This document also includes additional sections for families who want to go deeper—covering topics such as specialty care, insurance coordination, hospice, and private caregiving arrangements. You may not need all of that information now. It is there if and when it becomes relevant.

We hope this short read helps you feel more grounded as you begin—or continue—your search for care.

Core Questions

This family checklist is intended as a guide. We encourage you to adapt it—selecting the questions that matter most to your family—and use your personalized list as you evaluate caregivers and agencies you are considering.

Caregiver Orientation & Supervision

- Is there a structured onboarding period?
- Who ensures caregivers understand our care plan and routines?
- How are early adjustments handled?
- What happens if a caregiver is unavailable?
- How is turnover managed?
- Are new caregivers oriented to our home, routines, and care plan before working independently?
- Is there ongoing supervision and oversight of caregivers?

Handling Change & Emergencies

- Is clinical support available by phone or in person when concerns arise?
- Who helps troubleshoot health changes outside scheduled hours?
- Is guidance available before a situation becomes a crisis?
- Who do we contact if a situation changes suddenly?
- Is clinical guidance available by phone or in person?
- How quickly can care plans be adjusted?

Communication with Families

- How does the agency provide updates?
- Is there a secure portal for schedules and care notes?
- How are multiple family members kept informed when they live in different locations?
- Who takes responsibility for keeping everyone aligned—the caregivers, a nurse, or a coordinator?

Nursing Oversight & Check-Ins

- Is there a Director of Nursing involved in care planning?
- Are there regular nursing visits to assess evolving needs?
- Who adjusts the care plan as conditions change?
- Will a nurse remain involved as needs change?
- How often are care plans reviewed or updated?

Rates

- Are rates locked in for a defined period?
- Are services subject to annual rate increases?
- What is included / excluded in the listed rate?
- Does the hourly rate include nursing oversight?
- Are care coordination or assessments billed separately?
- Are there additional or hidden fees?

Additional Questions

Coordination & Delivery of Specialty Care

- Can the agency support Parkinson's disease, dementia, and skilled nursing needs?
- Is care coordinated with in-home PT, OT, speech therapy, or other specialists?
- Are caregivers trained in Parkinson's, dementia, and complex care needs?
- Is training ongoing and role-specific?
- Are caregivers supported when care becomes more complex?

Continuum of Care

- Can care scale from a few hours a week to 24/7 support?
- Is there support during hospital discharge or acute transitions?
- Can the same agency remain involved as needs increase?
- Can the same agency move with our loved one into assisted living, or provide care at a rehab center?
- How does the agency work with hospice?

Insurance

- What insurance does the agency accept?
- Does the agency assist with insurance documentation?
- Are care notes, schedules, and assessments supported and organized?
- Will families need to manage paperwork on their own?

Are Agency Caregiver Employees?

- Are caregivers employed by the agency, or are they independent contractors?
- What training does the agency provide?
- Are caregivers covered by workers' compensation?
- Are caregivers regularly supervised or evaluated?
- How are my concerns about caregiving addressed?
- Can care be adjusted if expectations aren't met?



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