

# Do You Know What To Look For When Choosing A Caregiver?

With our elderly population growing and people living longer than ever, many families and seniors are turning to paid personal caregivers to help and to keep seniors in their homes for as long as possible.

But, do really know what to look for when hiring a caregiver? Many of us have heard the nightmare stories of abuse, neglect, and theft. It is important that we know who we are hiring and they will take the best care of our loved ones.

So how do we decide who to hire? In these pages you will learn the 8 things you must do when hiring a caregiver.

This could be one of the most important decisions you can make for you loved ones or yourself. So please take the time to review this information and be confident you are making the right decision.

Hiring the right caregiver can mean a happier, safer, and better life at home!



Dear Seniors and Families,

As a home health professional for the last six years, I saw many paid caregivers in homes. Some were excellent caregivers and treated our seniors with respect. However, others were not so great. *Well, let's just say it, others were lazy, neglectful, and sometimes down right mean to the people they were supposed to be taking care of!*

I was shocked! So I decided to begin my own business helping families and seniors to ensure that the caregiver they hire is reliable, respectful, kind, and hard working.

As I began the journey to starting a nonskilled home care agency, I was surprised that there are no licensing, qualifications, or monitoring done in the state of Georgia to monitor this crucial aspect of senior care. You can simply get a business license (not hard) and hire a few people to sit in your loved ones home.

I decided to share some of what I learned and arm families and seniors with the right information so that they can make the best decision possible when hiring a caregiver. **This decision could save your loved ones life!**

## **Top 8 Things You Must Know When Hiring A Paid Caregiver**

1. **Asses Your Needs**. What kind of care does you or your loved one need? Most seniors are independent in many ways but maybe struggling with everyday tasks such as housekeeping, bathing, dressing, or preparing meals. These types of activities can be done by most paid caregivers. But you must make sure that the caregiver is able and willing to fulfill these activities with respect and compassion. Someone who will treat your loved one with



dignity when performing task that may be more embarrassing for your loved one than others. If nursing care or physical therapy is not necessary, a private pay caregiver may be the best option.

2. **Write a job description.** Even when hiring a caregiver through an agency, you will want to write a job description to put forth expectations of the caregiver. As I stated before, there is no regulation of nonskilled homecare agencies in Georgia, therefore you need to be clear about what is needed in your loved one's home. You are hiring them to do one of the most important jobs I can think of, make sure they know that you expect the best!
3. **Make sure there is a job contract.** If you hire an agency, the job contract will be done for you. But make sure you get pricing up front! *(I had a patient that paid \$2700 for a weeks' worth of care because she did not know what the agency charged! They completely ripped her off and even wrote the check for her!)* Hours of work, job duties, termination requirements and tax information should be included. If hiring a neighbor or someone not with an agency, you will have to make your own contract. Make sure that all parties involved understand and sign the contract. *It may be beneficial to contact an attorney when writing a contract to protect you if anything should happen.*
4. **Know where to look.** Many people look to neighbors, friends, and family when hiring a caregiver. But they may not be qualified to take care of all your loved ones needs. Sometimes those with the best intentions can cause harm simply because they do not know the right techniques to care for a patient. Make sure you understand what is required and if the person you hire can do the job. As stated, many agencies do not have high standards when hiring their employees. Make sure the agency is insured and hires qualified people. Don't be afraid to ask for credentials or



references when hiring ANYONE to take care of you or your loved one.

5. **ASK QUESTIONS.** It is OK to ask A LOT of questions. This person will be in your loved ones home. Conduct an interview so that you know this person is the right fit. When hiring an agency, make sure you know who they are sending. You can meet with the caregiver before they come into your home to ensure that this person will make your loved one comfortable. (If any agency objects to this, it may not be the agency for you) Double check references, credentials, and background checks even when hiring from an agency. WRITE A LIST QUESTIONS THAT ARE IMPORTANT TO YOU! AND IF YOU DON'T GET THE RIGHT ANSWERS, WALK AWAY!
6. **Get a criminal background check.** If you are hiring someone independently, make sure you get a background check. They are not expensive and are easy to get. If a paid caregiver objects to giving you the information needed to get a background check, MOVE ON! When hiring from an agency, make sure they run background checks on all of their employees. Ask to see them to ensure that they are being through when hiring employees. It is important to know who will be in your loved ones home. (I know I keep writing that, but it is VERY CRITICAL!)
7. **Licensed vs. Non Licensed Caregivers.** License caregivers are monitored by the stated. They take tests and have to pass in order to practice. Licensed caregivers include, nurses, physical therapist, occupational therapist, and certified nursing assistant. All have to have a measure of education in order to give care. However, not all seniors need a licensed caregiver. If only housekeeping and errand running is needed, then a licensed caregiver is not necessary. But for some a licensed caregiver is



what a senior needs. If your loved one need is things like toileting, transferring, bathing, and other more complicated assistance, a licensed caregiver may be more appropriate. They are better trained to take care of more complicated needs of aging seniors.

8. **Do Surprise Visits.** Caregivers should be monitored. Doing surprise visits can ensure that a caregiver is doing what they were hired for. This is especially important for seniors with dementia or Alzheimer's that don't always remember what happened during the day. Make sure that things like household chores, regular changing, and meals are being taken care of during the day. If a senior is not properly taken care of it can lead to things such as bed sores, malnutrition, and dehydration. So even though you have done everything you can do to make sure you hired the right person, periodic, surprise visits can ensure the proper care. And if the caregiver is doing a good job, they won't mind you stopping by.

*I cannot stress enough that hiring a caregiver is an important decision. Don't be afraid to ask questions and turn down any company or private person that does not seem to be the right fit. The right caregiver can provide a senior the ability to stay in their home and live a safe and wonderful life!*

### **About Home Care Heroes**

Home Care Heroes is based on my passion and love of working with the elderly. I believe that they can live happy, safe, and wonderful lives in their home, if given the proper care and respect that they deserve.



So whether your loved one just needs some help around the house, or is having trouble with everyday activities, or just needs some help running errands, we as a company are committed to providing the best care possible.

But whether you choose our company or another, just be sure that the person who takes care of your loved one is the best!

Thank You and Good Luck with Your search!

Melony Zarafonetic, President of Home Care Heroes

*Home Care Heroes makes it our goal and mission to educate seniors and their families on the best way to keep seniors safe and in their own homes by providing information and services that can help make life easier and more enjoyable.*

*If you would like more information on how to keep your loved one in their home, please visit our website at [www.homecareheroes.net](http://www.homecareheroes.net) or call us at (912) 200-7262 or email us at [info@homecareheroes.net](mailto:info@homecareheroes.net).*

