



Why Choose a Quality Home Care Organization?

Many families that want to purchase more care at home for a loved one consider hiring private individuals rather than working with a reputable home care organization. A poll by Home Care Ontario in 2010 showed that 65% of respondents either were unaware or unsure as to the risk inherent in directly hiring an individual to provide care. By working with a home care organization, families can minimize their workload, mitigate the potential threats and be free to spend their time in the context of the family relationship.

Home care organizations that belong to an association, such as Home Care Ontario, are typically concerned about practice standards and engaged in achieving excellence in all aspects of service. The majority of the members of Home Care Ontario are accredited through Accreditation Canada, CARF Canada, and/or registered with the International Standards Association (ISO). Home Care Ontario members have many measures in place to protect families who have made the decision to bring additional help into the home. These measures include:

- **Selection** - A home care organization undertakes the advertising and process of recruiting staff with the proper training, qualifications and temperament. References (personal, work and criminal) are thoroughly checked and personal identification and certificates verified.
- **Supervision & Education** – Job descriptions, ongoing education and training on tasks specific to an individual’s care needs are essential for all staff in the home. The provider will work with the family to develop a plan of care and address the management of issues such as the handling of cash, transportation and medications.
- **Labour Practices** – Ensuring that staff are fairly compensated and provided with the labour protection required by law is important to the delivery of safe care and to fulfilling the responsibility of as employer.
- **Financial Reporting** – The onus to ensure tax obligations falls to the employer. Home care organizations are familiar with reporting requirements, make the requisite employee deductions and submit the appropriate filings.
- **Coordination of Care** – Care needs can change frequently. Home care organizations are able to increase or decrease services on short notice and can cover unexpected personnel absences assuring continued service. Home care organizations will assume responsibility for communicating with other members of the health care team and assist with the identification of sources of funding for the home care service.
- **Staff Liability Coverage** – Guarding against injury to staff and maintaining appropriate worker compensation insurance is critical as most often caregiving tasks include lifting, transferring or bathing.

The decision to purchase care should be made as carefully as with the purchase of any other service. For families seeking home care service, it is wise to choose reputable organizations that guarantee high quality of service provision and fair labour practices. Home Care Ontario offers information including a listing of members by geographic location; considerations in the selection of a provider; a client ‘bill of rights’; and a glossary of terms.

About Home Care Ontario

Home Care Ontario, *the voice of home care in Ontario™*, is a member-based organization with a mandate to promote growth and development of the home care sector through advocacy, knowledge transfer, and member service. For over thirty years Home Care Ontario has promoted the growth and development of home care as a key pillar of Ontario’s health care system through advocacy, knowledge transfer, thought leadership, and member service.

In Ontario, service provider organizations are responsible for providing nursing care, home support services, personal care, physiotherapy, occupational therapy, respiratory therapy, social work, dietetics, speech language therapy and medical equipment and supplies in the home to individuals of all ages. An estimated 58 million hours of publicly and privately purchased home care service is provided annually across the province.

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