

Where to Find In-Home Care Services

Finding People to Provide Care

Lowest costs, least regulation.....Highest costs, most regulation

NEED:	A. periodic housecleaning or yard work	B. regular assistance with household tasks but no hands-on, personal care (e.g., bathing, dressing, toileting) or nursing	C. daily (or so) assistance, ranging from a few hours to 24-hours/day. May include housekeeping, meals, laundry, shopping, plus hands-on, personal care	D. same as C	E. same as C	F. personal care and nursing services
SERVICE:	hire a neighbor or housecleaning or yard work company	hire a neighbor or companion through an agency	hire privately through friends, church, newspaper ads	hire privately through an employment agency	hire through home care agency	hire through home health agency
PRO:	low cost	provide a wide range of non-medical services for low cost. Not state licensed.	lower cost, flexible in duties. Not state licensed.	Agency recruits, screens, etc., then you select caregiver. Is lower cost in the long run but with up-front service fee to agency. May have a pool of qualified people	Agency is licensed by state. Provides backup coverage. Pays all taxes for caregiver (many home care agencies are also lic'd home health agencies)	Same pros as hiring through home care agency (see box to left). Care is supervised by RN.
CON:	limited to housekeeping or yard work	no personal, hands-on care	Is hard work & time consuming to recruit, screen, & interview applicants, check references, hire, and pay taxes. No back-up coverage. No supervision.	Once person is hired, same cons as hiring privately (see box to left). May require minimum of 4 hours work.	higher cost, may require minimum # of hours	highest cost but most oversight

Adult Day Services

Adult day centers care for frail or physically or cognitively impaired adults during the day, providing activities, a hot meal, friendship, light exercise, mental stimulation, and sometimes health and rehab services. Participants benefit from getting out of the house occasionally, while families benefit from much needed breaks from caregiving. For a list of centers, call the Washington Adult Day Services Association in Seattle at 206-461-3899 or 1-888-609-2372. Website: www.adulthood.org.

Durable Medical Equipment

Families can rent or buy a wide range of equipment that allows older people to live at home more safely – items like raised toilet seats, canes or walkers, grab bars for the bathroom, wheelchairs or electric scooters, special mattresses, railings for the bed, and many more. Find under “Medical Equipment and Supplies” in the yellow pages.

Transportation

Not being able to drive makes living at home especially challenging. Some agencies provide volunteer drivers to take you to medical or other essential appointments. King County Metro (and other counties in the state) operates Access, which are small busses that provide door-to-door rides for people who can't use the regular bus system. Both services require advance notice. There's also taxi script (reduced fares) for low-income people. For info on volunteer drivers, call Senior Information & Assistance at 206-448-3110 or 800-972-9990. For info about Access and taxi script, call 206-263-3113.

Food

Malnutrition is a serious problem for many older people living at home, often due to lack of interest, poor appetite, and low energy. Meals require a lot of work – shopping, putting the food away, cooking, eating, and cleaning up. To minimize this effort, older people can have frozen meals delivered to their homes by Meals on Wheels or attend a hot lunch program at 37 sites in the county (includes some ethnic menus). Some grocery stores and websites also deliver food to your home, and some catering services deliver entire meals. Call Senior Information & Assistance.

Minor Home Repair

For home repairs or modifications, low-income older people may be eligible for low-cost plumbing, electrical and other household repairs. Call Senior Information & Assistance.

Lifeline Systems, Telephone Reassurance Systems

A variety of systems exist that allow an older person to call for help 24 hours a day in an emergency. Other services provide periodic phone calls to older people, some run by volunteers. Call Senior Information & Assistance for lists.