



CHOOSING AN IN-HOME CARER

In-home care can allow a person living with Alzheimer's or another dementia to stay in his or her own home. It can be a great help to family members, if done well. It is important to understand that you have a responsibility to equip your carer so they can care for your loved one. Do not assume they will know what to do. Dementia is different for each person.

(Adapted from www.alz.org)

GETTING STARTED:

Make a list of the kind of care needs your loved one has: Do they need companionship? Personal care assistance (with bathing, dressing, etc?) Housekeeping help? Or do they need skilled care such as help with injections, physical therapy or other medical needs that should be done by a qualified professional?

Once you have your list, ask around for recommendations from colleagues, neighbours and friends.

Decide on a budget. Think about the person's needs, and consider other costs like medication, doctor's visits, adult diapers, etc. Decide as a family how you will pay. Ensure that you ask about costs upfront when choosing help.

YOUR RESPONSIBILITIES

Background checks- Be sure to call the person's references and ensure that their qualifications are genuine. If you are concerned about safety, ask that they provide a police certificate of good character.

Equip the carer with information about your loved one-

The more care providers know about the person they are caring for, the better care they can give. Provide a profile with work history, life achievements, fond memories, favourite foods, colours and hobbies, and anything else that will help them to get along with their client.

QUESTIONS FOR AN AGENCY

If you choose to use an agency to help you find a carer, find out:

How long has the agency been in business?

What happens if a carer doesn't show up?

Are there a minimum number of hours or days per week required by the agency? Is there 24-hour care in case of an emergency?

Are references checked? How many are required?

What kind of experience/certification do persons have before they are hired? What type of training does the company provide to employees?

Are carers trained in dementia care? Do they use care plans?

QUESTIONS FOR CARERS

How long have you been working in the field?

Do you have experience working with someone living with dementia? Are you specifically trained in dementia care?

Can I have at least 2 references from former clients?

Are you trained in first aid or CPR? Do you have reliable transport?

Are you able to provide backup care if you get sick?

Are you able to manage our specific health and behavioral care needs?

Is there anything you are unfamiliar or uncomfortable with?