

# Home Health Care

By Kate McCarthy

Peter and Mary have lived in their home for over 40 years. They have loved and cared for the house, the garden and the 4 children they raised there. Now as they are aging and the children have grown and gone, they find it increasingly difficult to keep up the place. Basic yard work and housekeeping isn't being done and daily household chores like cooking and laundry are becoming a bit overwhelming. Yet despite Peter's troubles with walking and managing showers and Mary's failing eyesight, they want to stay at home rather than move into an assisted living facility. They decided to get a home health aide who will come to and help them out a couple time a week.

Most elderly and disabled prefer to stay at home and are choosing to use Home Health services to make that possible. Home Health Care is a practical and efficient way for individuals with health care or age related issues to get the services they need right in the convenience of their

There are two types of Home Health Care options and which can be confusing when someone is just starting to look into Home Health as a possible solution to their care needs.

## Skilled (Medical) Home Health Care

Skilled or Medical Home Health Care is generally used to help someone get healthy while at home. Skilled Home Health is usually recommended after a doctor's visit or a



*Most elderly want to stay at home  
but are confused about  
how Home Health Care can help.*

hospital stay and the care is provided by medical professionals, such as a visiting RN or LPN. Because the level of care being provided is skilled, the costs can be high. Skilled Home Health Care is usually limited to just a few hours a week and assists with very specific needs.

With Skilled Home Health Care you can expect:

- ✓ Skilled nursing
- ✓ At-home physical therapy
- ✓ Pain Management
- ✓ Caring for wounds
- ✓ Prescription management

## Non-Medical Home Health Care

Non-medical home Health Care is about sustaining and maintaining a quality of life in the home. It is about preserving safety and independence at home for someone who might not be able to remain safe and independent on their own. Many times the Caregivers who provide these services are Certified Nursing Assistants (CNA). These services are a lot less expensive than the Skilled Home Health and can be used on a wider scale. Often those who use Skilled Home Health Care will also have Non-Medical Home Health Care come to help with various tasks to keep the home running smoothly.

With Non-Medical Home Health Care you can expect:

- ✓ Personal grooming services like bathing or assistance getting dressed
- ✓ Ambulation services like assistance getting in and out of the bed/shower
- ✓ Medication reminders
- ✓ Alzheimer's or Dementia care
- ✓ Errands like grocery shopping, picking up prescriptions or transportation to appointments
- ✓ Housekeeping, laundry and cooking
- ✓ Companionship

## Home Health Care Costs

Because both Medical and Non-Medical Home Health can get expensive, people wonder what payment options are available to help with the costs. The cost of services will vary depending on where you live and the type of services needed. It is a good idea to shop around and learn what services are provided. Some Home Health Care agencies have sliding fee scales, and others charge on a per task basis and others

provide a Caregiver who can assist with all cares needed at set hourly rate. Non-Medical Home Health Care services are usually paid for privately, but there are also some public and private funding sources. Funding sources include the following:

- ✓ Medicare
- ✓ Medicaid
- ✓ The Older Americans Act
- ✓ The Veterans' Administration
- ✓ Private insurance

Home Health Care (Skilled or Non-Medical) is a great way to get the assistance needed without having to give up the family home and move into a facility. As more and more people understand the options available with Home Health Care, it is bound to become a favorite option for families everywhere.



Kate McCarthy is Director of Operations for HomeAid Health Care which provides services for the elderly who wish to remain safe and independent at home. HomeAid is sister company to Prairie Home Assisted Living which has served the physical, spiritual, mental and health needs of their residents since 1999. Together the two companies provide comprehensive care for the elderly in the Fox Valley area of Wisconsin.