

## *Define the Service: What is the difference between home health and home care?*

Home health care is a more extensive and more highly regulated service than home care. Home health care requires special and specific licensing, procedures and policies to meet the needs of the client.

Many home health care agencies specialize in serving medically fragile or chronically ill patients. They tend to also contract to serve Medicare patients, who are recuperating from a recent hospitalization or procedure. As hospital stays are getting shorter, more home health care agencies are now accepting private pay and long-term care insurance-based payments. A registered nurse who trains, monitors, assesses, and ensures proper care oversees the home health care.

Home care is also a specific license; however the majority of home care is not medically oriented. Home care agencies specialize in providing hands-on care to less chronically ill patients. For this reason, they also tend to serve clients for a longer period of time than a home health care agency.

As health care evolves, so does in-home care. Consumers seem to prefer staying in their own homes as long as they can; and they can successfully do so by enlisting the support and assistance of caregivers or care managers. Older adults living in independent, senior living communities are also arranging for such services. As long as the older adult or family has the financial resources to pay for these services, paid staff can meet almost every need.

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*Author: Tech Support*

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