

About Home Health Care

One of the biggest concerns seniors face is the prospect of leaving a home where they've spent many happy years. But as they grow older, maintaining their normal routines can become a challenge.

If you notice aging family members or friends who are struggling to keep up but aren't ready to leave home, there are two options to ensure they get the support and care they need:

- Provide care yourself
- Hire a home health care provider

What Is Home Health Care?

Home health professionals can provide varying levels of care from companionship and basic household help to health services to advanced medical care for seniors.

Such services often enhance quality of life by:

- Enabling seniors to remain in their homes longer
- Freeing up their time and energy to focus on things they enjoy
- Adjusting their routine or environment to make it more accessible, safe and comfortable
- Providing in-home eyes and ears for medical professionals
- Supporting caregivers by providing a break

There are some common misperceptions about home health care. It is NOT hospice. It is NOT solely a skilled nursing service. It is NOT only available for residents of retirement communities.

Home Health Care Services

Companions, aides, therapists, and skilled nurses can come into the home to provide needed services on a schedule that works for each individual.

Various home health care services include:

Basic Support

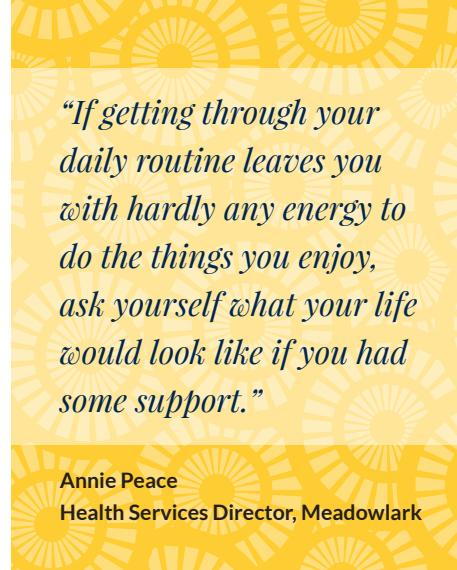
- Cooking
- Cleaning
- Shopping
- Laundry
- Running errands, transportation to appointments
- Helping care for pets or plants
- Connecting with other resources

Health Services

- Assisting with personal tasks such as showering or using the bathroom
- Administering medications
- Conducting health assessments

Advanced Medical Care

- Physical, occupational and speech-language therapy
- Providing medical support such as IV therapy, injections, vaccinations, or post-surgical support



"If getting through your daily routine leaves you with hardly any energy to do the things you enjoy, ask yourself what your life would look like if you had some support."

Annie Peace
Health Services Director, Meadowlark

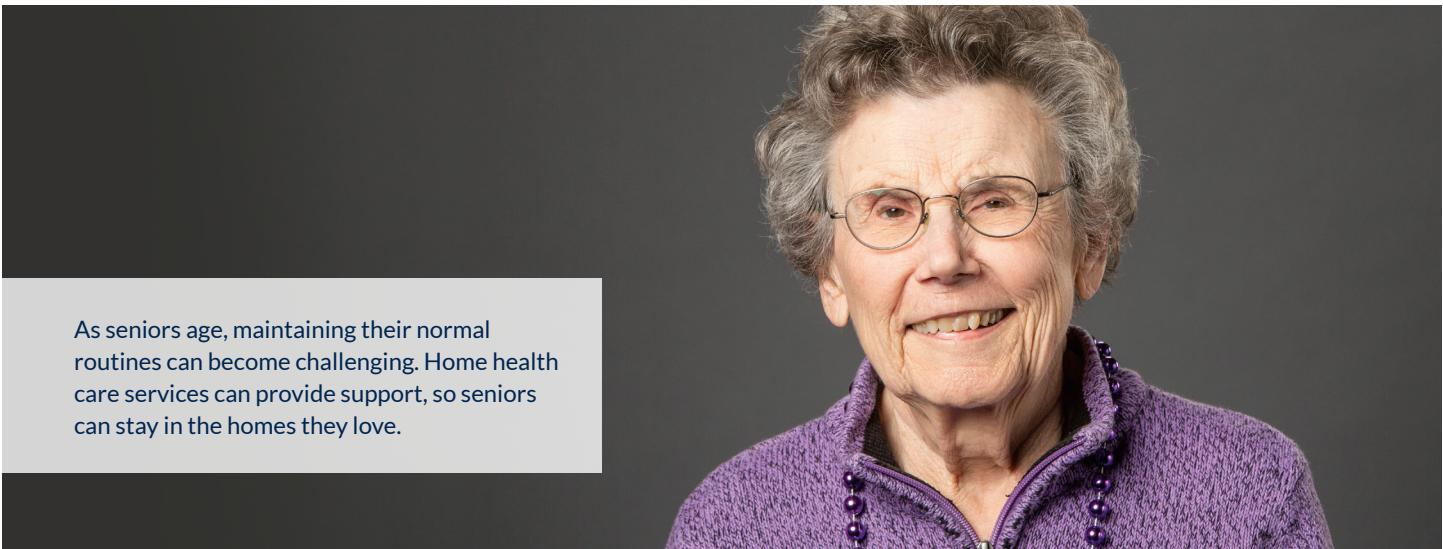
How to Finance Home Health Care

Typically, basic support is financed privately. However, medically required services may be covered by health insurance. Depending on the situation and the home-healthcare provider, you may be able to finance home health using:

- Medicare
- Veterans Affairs benefits
- Private pay
- A combination of the sources above

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As seniors age, maintaining their normal routines can become challenging. Home health care services can provide support, so seniors can stay in the homes they love.

How to Choose a Home Health Care Provider

Keep in mind that not all home health providers are created equal. It's important your loved ones feel comfortable with the agency and providers who will be assisting them in their home.

As you research potential providers, ask these questions:

- How long has the agency been serving the community? Does it have a good reputation?
- What certifications does the provider have? Are they Medicare-certified or VA-approved? What additional background checks and experience does the provider have?
- How does the patient screening process work?
- What will ongoing communication between you, the provider, and doctor's office look like?
- What days / hours is care available?

Whether you opt to provide care yourself, or look to an outside organization to provide home health care, the most important thing is to ensure the safety of your loved ones. If there comes a point when they no longer feel comfortable or safe at home, it might be time to consider a long-term care option.

To find out more, contact a home health care provider to discuss the specifics of your situation.