



6 STEPS TO GETTING QUALITY HOME CARE WHEN HIRING YOUR OWN WORKER

The best way to achieve quality care is to work with your home care worker. Below are some ways in which you can actively participate and monitor your care.

1. Be clear about expectations and responsibilities

- Explain what you expect from your worker.
Expectations might include:
 - ◊ Being on time.
 - ◊ Calling you as soon as possible when unable to show up for a shift.
 - ◊ Giving as much notice as possible when time off is requested.
- Indicate exactly what tasks your worker is to do for you.
- Explain what your worker can expect from you.
- Create a written work agreement that states expectations/responsibilities for both you and your worker. Give a copy to your worker.

2. Create a Circle of Support

- Develop a group of family members, friends and other people you trust who can assist in advocating for your care.

3. Periodically review the tasks that need to be done

- Create a process for sitting down with your worker and reviewing the task list.
- Revise the task list to indicate any changes that you and your worker agree to make. Give a copy to your worker.

4. Develop a Positive Relationship with Your Worker

- Get to know your worker.
- Treat your worker with respect and show appreciation.

5. Communication Tips

- Express your needs and preferences.
- Explain to your worker how you like tasks to be done.
- State what you mean directly, respectfully and in language that is free of blame or judgment. Try to ask a question, not make an accusation.
- Tell your worker to let you know right away if there is something that makes them uncomfortable or that they do not understand.
- Write down any concerns that arise, especially the details surrounding any incidents or issues.

6. Know Where to Turn with Questions and Concerns.

You can call or contact the following:

- **State/Local Long-Term Care Ombudsman**

Ombudsmen work to resolve complaints on behalf of long-term care residents; they can answer questions, give suggestions, or address issues you may have. Contact your state ombudsman program to see if the program covers home care services in your state. Go to http://theconsumervoice.org/get_help to find your state ombudsman program.

- **Citizen Advocacy Groups**

These local or state organizations advocate for quality long-term care. Go to http://theconsumervoice.org/get_help and click on your state to connect with a representative from the citizen advocacy group in your area.

- **Care Managers or Service Coordinators**

Care or case managers assist consumers in getting the care and services they need and can help resolve a problem. To get a list of private geriatric care managers, go to <http://www.aginglifecare.org/> or call 520-881-8008. If Medicaid or a state-funded program pays for your services, you will most likely have an assigned case manager.

- **Aging and Disability Resource Centers (ADRCs)**

ADRCs can also help you learn about local programs and services. To get a list of ADRCs in your area go to https://www.adrc-tae.acl.gov/tiki-login_scr.php

- **Area Agencies on Aging (AAAs)**

AAAs coordinate and often provide a range of services to assist older adults and frequently younger persons with disabilities maintain their independence and dignity. To find your local AAA to go <https://www.n4a.org/>

- **Centers for Independent Living (CIL)**

CILs are organizations that provide services to maximize the independence of individuals with disabilities. To learn more about the services they provide and locate a CIL near you, go to <https://www.acl.gov/programs/aging-and-disability-networks/centers-independent-living>

These agencies may be able to answer questions or refer you to organizations that can help.

Additional Resources

- For more in-depth information on these and other related topics, see the Piecing Together Quality Long-Term Care Guide produced by the Consumer Voice <http://theconsumervoice.org/product/piecing-together-quality-long-term-care-a-consumers-guide-to-choices-and-advocacy>.

**For more information and resources on getting quality care
go to, www.theconsumervoice.org**

National Consumer Voice for Quality Long-Term Care (formerly NCCNHR) is a nonprofit organization founded in 1975 by Elma L. Holder to protect the rights, safety and dignity of American's long-term care residents.