

**Question:**

Is there a difference between a home health care and a home care agency/service? They sound the same, but are they the same?

**Answer:**

This is a frequently asked question. While both offer care in the home, there are differences.

Home health agencies provide skilled services ordered by a physician. Services are for the short term with the goal to reach the highest level of functioning possible. Included are the following care services: registered nursing assessment and oversight, home health aide care, wound care, occupational, physical and speech therapy, to name a few. The agencies are certified by the state of South Carolina and insurers such as Medicare and other health insurance providers. Insurers will be billed as stated in their health plans. There are four agencies in our geographic area that offer home health care.

Home Care Agencies offer a range of services for the long term to manage daily living needs, such as bathing, grooming, meal preparation, mobility. Services include but are not limited to: light housekeeping, bathing and other personal care services, medication reminders, meal planning and preparation, dressing assistance, companionship, transportation and pet care. Payments are most often met by the individual, out of pocket, although some long term care policies may be a source for payment. In our area, there are almost a dozen choices in home care agencies.

The Staying Connected Hub offers a list of the local agencies with their phone numbers on our "At a Glance" publication, as well as a list of questions to ask when you contact an agency so you can make the best decision for your care or the care of your loved one. There is no cost for our service. The Hub does not endorse or recommend any of the services on our list.

For more information, call Staying Connected Resource Hub, 705-2259, or drop by the Hub to choose brochures about these agencies.