



Guide to In-Home Care

Families of individuals who cannot be left unattended often benefit from in-home care, such as:

- **Companion Care** is most commonly used for those with Alzheimer's and other forms of dementia and offers assistance with general supervision and activities of daily life (ADLs) such as bathing, dressing, etc. Because no medical care is involved, companion care is not covered by Medicare or most medical insurance providers.* (Long term care insurance often covers companion care, though coverage varies by policy.)
- **Home Health** provides the highest level of care and is usually prescribed by a physician and provided by licensed nurses or CNAs who may assist with more complex tasks. Because it is considered medically necessary, home health is often covered by medical insurance.
- Companion care and home health agencies should be licensed by the State of South Carolina. Agency employees should be vetted (including background checks) and trained, and they should be covered under the agencies' workers compensation and liability insurance.

Companion Care Agencies

The following list of companion care providers includes those frequently recommended by caregivers involved with Respite Care Charleston's support groups and day programs. This list is not exhaustive and does not constitute any recommendation, guarantee, warranty, or approval by Respite Care Charleston. All information provided is subject to change without notice. Families are responsible for verifying the information provided.

- Palmetto Family Homecare
 - Dorian J. Nixon – (843) 225-5420 or Dorian@PalmettoFamilyHomecare.com
- First Light Home Care
 - Lauran Hudson Hines – (843) 360-1502 or LHudson@FirstLightHomeCare.com
 - Leah Hall – (843) 212-2813 or LHall@FirstLightHomeCare.com
- Amada Senior Care
 - Don Pratt – (843) 300-9208 or Don.Pratt@AmadaSeniorCare.com
- McLeod Home Care
 - Laura Rayl – (843) 806-2522 or llrayl@mcleodcare.com
- Home Instead
 - Melinda Aranda – (843) 501-1862 or MAranda@HomeInstead.com
 - Bianca Griffin – (843) 696-6671 or Bianca.Griffin@HomeInstead.com
- Senior Helpers
 - Cyndee Cave – (843) 376-5342 or CCave@SeniorHelpers.com

- Seniors Helping Seniors
 - Katy Yahr – 843-699-2970 or Katy@SHSCharleston.com
- Home RN Concierge Caregivers Service
 - Drew Faw – (843)996-8521 or Charleston@HomeRNCare.com

Freelance Caregiver Matching Services

These websites operate primarily as a matching service to connect families directly with individuals who provide companion care. These caregivers determine their own rates for services, and often charge less per hour than agencies with more flexibility regarding duration and recurrence of shifts.

Caregivers are not employees of these companies and therefore not covered by the companies for workers' compensation or other liability purposes. Caregivers are paid directly by families, who may be responsible for employment taxes. Families are strongly encouraged to seek legal counsel regarding potential liability exposure and/or tax obligations.

- www.CareYaya.org
 - This website allows families to connect with caregivers who are undergraduate or graduate students majoring in healthcare-related fields. Families post openings for caregivers, specifying the time, location, rate of pay, and other needs/qualifications for a shift. The site identifies available caregivers who meet the requirements, confirms their availability, and then connects them with the families. Caregivers are vetted by CareYaya, and the site allows both caregivers and families to rate their satisfaction with each assignment. Caregivers are not authorized to provide medical care or assist with bathing or transportation. There is no fee for use of this service.
- www.Care.com
 - This website is an online marketplace where families connect directly with caregivers of varied backgrounds, education and experience. These caregivers are vetted by Care.com, including background checks. (Supplemental background checks may be purchased through the website.) Families specify their needs, and the site provides a list of caregivers who meet the criteria provided. Premium membership is required to communicate with caregivers, with various payment options/fee structures.

Considerations when Hiring Companion Caregivers

- Companion care agencies can work like matchmakers, helping match your needs and wants to the caregivers they employ. Don't expect to find a perfect match right away, and try not to get discouraged if it takes a couple of tries to find the aide who is the right 'fit' for you and your loved one.
- Many agencies require a minimum of three or four hours per visit. Some require two or more visits per week.
- Depending upon where you live, additional costs for mileage and/or commute time may apply.

- Be very clear and specific in relaying the services you want and need from an aide. If you want them to take your loved one somewhere, do specific activities with them, assist with household chores, prepare meals, etc., be up-front about it from the beginning. Sometimes caregivers get upset b/c aides "just sit there on the phone," but if we don't give them clear directions in advance, and if the people they care for are cognitively impaired, it's tough for an aide to know what to do in someone else's home. Giving clear directions and suggestions, along with the tools they need to succeed, is far more likely to get the level of care and interaction you want.
- Inquire about the dementia-specific training aides receive relative to communication and engagement specifically. The format (online vs. in-person, class vs. field), number of hours, frequency and assessment methods will impact the care your loved one will receive.
- If you want a commitment (i.e., the same companion care aide each time), then you likely need to make a commitment as well. Like everyone else, aides need the financial security of regular work assignments, so they're more likely to stick with assignments that offer them a consistent schedule they can rely on.
- There are many employment opportunities available in today's job market, particularly for part-time and entry-level positions. Restaurants, retailers and other companies may offer highly competitive hourly wages and benefits, and you're effectively competing with those companies to recruit and retain top-quality employees.

Funding Companion Care

- For information on potential sources of financial assistance for companion care, please contact Respite Care Charleston at 843-647-7405.