

Important Questions When Preparing for New In-Home Care Equipment or Supplies

When preparing to care for someone in the home, obtaining the proper information for what equipment and supplies will be most needed and helpful can seem like a daunting task. The questions and information below can help with this process:

WHO TO DIRECT QUESTIONS TO:

- **If being discharged from the hospital:** A hospital discharge planner sometimes can help determine and order the proper equipment.
- **If being discharged from a rehabilitation facility:** A physical therapist can evaluate the need for home equipment and coordinate an order.
- **If utilizing home healthcare:** A nurse or other supervisor can assess needs and arrange for delivery of needed equipment and supplies.
- **Independently hired Geriatric Care Manager:** A Geriatric Care Manager can assess the situation, perform a home visit, and assist in making a determination about what equipment is the best for the particular situation.

GENERAL QUESTIONS ABOUT EQUIPMENT AND SUPPLIES:

- What equipment is needed? (hospital bed, shower chair, commode, oxygen supply, etc.)
- Is customization of the equipment necessary?
- What supplies are needed? (adult diapers, disposable gloves, skin care items, etc.)
- How do I obtain additional equipment or supplies if needed?
- My family member already has this (or similar) equipment at home. Can it be used again?
- Who will be ordering the equipment/supplies or where do I call to order the needed items?



PAYMENT:

- Will my family member's medical insurance or Medicare provide payment for any of the needed equipment, supplies, or assistive devices? (Note: If your family member doesn't have health insurance, check your own; if it covers dependents and you're now claiming her as a dependent, it may cover health care equipment.)
- If supplies are an out-of-pocket expense, have the best prices been researched?
- Even if the insurer pays, does an out-of-network vendor provide better value and/or greater convenience?
- Is rental or purchase a better option?

USING THE EQUIPMENT:

- Have instructions for use and adjustment of equipment been provided to my family member and all caregivers?
- Who will teach my family member and me how to use the equipment correctly?
- Will my family member be able to operate the medical devices independently or will a caregiver need to assist?
- Does the equipment require any home modification to support its use, such as additional electrical power?

For a free in-home care assessment, call **Independence-4-Seniors** today. Besides offering traditional home care services, we can make recommendations for assistive devices, supplies and equipment, arrange for order and delivery and answer all of your home care equipment questions.

Sources: AgingCare, eHow, United Hospital Fund: Next Step in Care