



## Ten Vital Attributes Of A Home Health Agency

1. **Extraordinary Customer Service** - You should expect prompt and courteous communication with caregivers and office staff at all times. Service providers will soon notice a shift in our industry, as we are moving towards a business model where consumers will only choose services based on how they are treated. The leadership at Harmony understands this very clearly.
2. **Director of Nursing** - Confirm that there is a qualified Director of Nursing (DON) to supervise all cases. Ask how many years of experience the DON has with home health care. It is important to meet the DON, as you will communicate with him/her often to discuss a care plan and the subsequent maintenance of the care plan.
3. **No Minimum Numbers of Hours** - No home health agency should tell you that they have to be there for “at least three/four hours.” Choose an agency that is flexible and willing to work to fit **your** needs and within **your** budget. There are times when the necessary care can be completed in one hour or less.
4. **24/7 On-Call Service** - Ask if you will have access to office staff to express questions, comments, and schedule changes at all times, especially weekends and holidays. Ensure that the agency will provide **backup care** if your care provider is unable to make their shift that day. At Harmony, we guarantee all shifts will be attended.
5. **Direct Employees** - This is the most important thing to ask a Home Health Agency. By using an agency that employs only direct employees you are affording yourself many protections. When using direct employees, the agency is responsible for the employees’ payroll taxes and workers compensation insurance. Some agencies (nurse registries) utilize independent contractors and it opens the client up to a number of liability concerns. Please contact Harmony Home Health to learn more about this important subject.
6. **Diverse Set of Caregivers** – The direct care staff should be highly qualified and trained professionals, and picked from a group of talented caregivers of all ages, races, and cultures. Make sure there are enough caregivers to provide backup support.
7. **One Stop Shop** - If there is a service that the home health agency does not provide they should have a network of trusted colleagues that they can refer you to. The home health agency should link you to resources and help coordinate the services with you. (This is most often completed by a social worker.)
8. **Social Work Component** - Ask the office staff if there is a qualified social worker to address medical, legal, and social concerns. By incorporating social work into the care plan, the agency maximizes all areas of the client’s quality of life.
9. **Accessibility to the Leadership of the Company** - It is important that you feel comfortable contacting the leadership with any comments, questions, complaints, or concerns. The leadership should return your call within twenty-four hours.
10. **The Bottom Line Should Never Be More Important Than The Patient’s Care** - The decisions made by the caregiver and office staff should be motivated by genuine

compassion and love. After some time, you should feel like your caregiver is your family!  
The agency shall always look out for your best interests and not their bottom line.