

Your Care ~ Your Way

Have you or a loved one been informed of a serious diagnosis? Have you or your loved one had a recent injury or illness that caused hospitalization? Do you feel that you needed additional care beyond your hospital stay? Do you wonder if in-home services would be beneficial? Referral sources are influenced by many external issues, such as provider ownership, financial incentives, lack of awareness of various providers and the services they offer, and pressure to refer due to personal relationships. But what about what is best for the patient and their loved one? Who knows best? **You!**

You need to be an advocate for yourself and for your loved ones. To advocate:

- Ask questions about the true nature of the injury/illness
- Ask healthcare providers what are the identified needs to care for this person at home
- Ask if there is a list of providers in your community that can meet these needs
- Seek provider references from people you trust
- If familiar with a healthcare provider not listed or mentioned, suggest the provider as an option for care

Prior to establishing the care, interview the provider(s). Here is a list of potential questions:

- Within your 24/7 after-hour coverage, do you respond to calls with a visit?
- What will the visit frequency be for each discipline involved in the care?
- Am I able to keep my family physician as Attending Physician?
- What makes your program an expert in controlling pain and other distressing symptoms?
- How can you help me or my loved one from needing to go back into the hospital?
- Are your physicians Board Certified in Hospice and Palliative Medicine?

- Do you provide general inpatient and respite care? Where are those services provided?
- What services do volunteers provide?

Here are some key indicators that will help you to identify the quality of an in-home care program:

- Response time to meet with you (should contact you within 1 hour of referral and meet with you per your request)
- Sought your goals and wishes for care
- Described to you how the care team is best suited to meet your goals
- Person's warmth and compassion genuinely felt by you during meeting ✨

