

Home Health Care Guide

Chapter 3

Common Terminology

Activities of Daily Living (ADL)

Basic actions of normal life activities, to include:

- Bathing
- Dressing and Undressing
- Eating
- Transferring from bed to chair, and back
- Voluntarily controlling urinary and fecal discharge
- Using the toilet
- Walking (as opposed to being bedridden)

Medicare Certification

The certification process is different for each accrediting organization; however, the process generally includes undergoing an on-site survey by the organization's surveyor. Following the on-site survey, the organization will receive an accreditation report outlining the findings and any follow-up requirements. These requirements include improvement, supplemental findings, and organizational strengths. The organization acts as a representative for the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS). All Medicare Certified home health care agencies must be certified by CMS.

Intermittent

Medicare does not pay for health care staff to stay with patients for an extended period of time, thus the skilled care giver will only stay for the length of time it takes to provide the specific treatment ordered by the doctor.

Patient Choice

When a patient has been recommended by a physician to receive home health care, they have the right to choose which Medicare Certified home health care agency to use. The patient has the right to choose any Medicare Certified home health care agency, even if the doctor makes a recommendation.

Plan of Care

A plan of care describes what kind of services and care the patient receives for his/her health problem. The doctor will work with the home health care staff to decide on things such as the types of services needed, and how often these services are needed.

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Primary Care Doctor

A primary care doctor is a doctor who has been trained to give a patient basic care. A patient's primary care doctor is the doctor the patient sees first for most health problems. He or she makes sure that the patient gets the care that the patient needs to keep healthy.

Skilled Care

Skilled care is a type of health care given when a patient needs skilled nursing or rehabilitation staff to manage, observe, and evaluate a patient's care.

Skilled Nursing Care

Skilled nursing care is a level of care that includes services that can only be performed safely and correctly by a licensed nurse (either a registered nurse or a licensed practical nurse).

Telemedicine

Telemedicine is a professional service given to a patient through an interactive telecommunications system by a practitioner at a distant site.

Unskilled Care

A type of home health care service that provides non-professional care to assist a person's activities of daily living such as walking, getting in and out of bed, bathing, dressing, eating, toileting, and taking medications.