

HOME HEALTH CARE MYTHS AND THEIR REALITY
BY: Melissa Jeremiah, RN, CHCE
Director of Operations Hoosier Uplands Home Health and Hospice

Yesterday while waiting for a prescription at my local pharmacy I overheard a conversation that struck me as quite sad. The pharmacy tech and daughter, who was caring for her mother, were having a conversation about the need for someone to be able to help the patient once they came home from the hospital with their medications and other needs. I did not feel it appropriate for me to interrupt this conversation, as I had gotten in on this conversation at the end, did not know the daughter, or the specifics related to this situation. It however made me wonder how many others do not understand how Home Health Care can assist them or their loved ones.

November is National Home Health Care & Hospice Month, and there is no better time to dispel Home Health Care myths.

“I cannot afford Home Health Care.” - Home Health Care is covered 100 percent by Medicare and the VA. Your Medicaid spend down would still apply. Commercial Insurance would spell out any copays or deductibles they may require.

“If I sign on for Home Health Care through my Medicare I have to be bedridden.” - Medicare does have a homebound stipulation, which states leaving your home requires a taxing effort, requires you to have assistance to leave your home or is not medically advised. You may leave your home for medical appointments, and to attend religious services. You may leave your home for non-medical purposes such as an occasional trip to the barber, a walk around the block or a drive, attendance at a family reunion, funeral, graduation or other infrequent or unique events , as long as these absences are infrequent or are of relatively short duration.

“If I sign on for Home Health Care through Medicare they will pay for someone to come in just to check on me and give me a bath.” - In order to qualify for Home Health Care through Medicare you need to have a Skilled Nursing need such as: giving IV medications, injections, tube feeding, dressing changes and teaching about prescription drugs or diabetes care. OR require the need of in home Physical Therapy or Speech Therapy.

“If I sign up for Home Health Care I will probably never get better.” - The goal of Home Health Care is to keep our patients as independent as possible, in their own home, or the home of a family member. It is our goal to control the patient’s symptoms so repeat hospitalizations are not required.

“Medicare is the only pay source that pays for Home Health Care.” - Indiana Medicaid, Commercial Insurances and the VA also have a Home Health Care benefit.

If you have further questions about Home Health Care or have someone you would like to refer to Home Health Care services please feel free to contact Hoosier Uplands Home Health Care & Hospice at 800-827-2219 or 812-849-4447 and ask for Michelle Shipman, RN, Intake Coordinator.