



Caregiving Glossary

Each industry has its own unique language. For insiders, this is helpful as precise language allows for quick and easy conversation. For outsiders, though, it can make understanding new territories difficult. Caregiving has a dictionary of its own. Luckily, we've created a helpful glossary that defines some important components of home health care.

Home Health Agency: Alliance Homecare is a home health agency. We are defined as an organization that provides a range of home care services, including skilled nursing care (LPNs or RNs) and care by home health aides (HHAs). We differ from other agencies because we partner with many unique specialists to provide comprehensive care.

Agency Services:

Registered Nurse (RN): A registered nurse is a licensed entity with an independent scope of practice. RNs can assess and diagnose many home health concerns. RNs work closely with physicians to provide quality care in acute situations. RNs can administer medications, monitor vital signs and dress wounds.

Licensed Practical Nurse (LPN): A licensed practical nurse works under the supervision of an RN. LPNs cannot work independently but can administer medications and monitor vital signs and report those findings.

Home Health Aide (HHA): A home health aide provides services that support an RN. This includes help with personal care such as bathing, using the toilet or getting dressed. These types of services do not require the skills of a licensed nurse. Training or certification requirements vary from state-to-state, but typical services include assistance with activities of daily living (ADLs), assisting with medications and some household tasks.

Geriatric Care Management (GCM): Geriatric care management involves the planning and coordination of care for the elderly and disabled, with the goal of maintaining their independence for as long as possible and to improve their quality of life. Normally, GCM is provided by a licensed RN or Social Worker.

Important Terms:

Activities of Daily Living (ADLs): The day-to-day activities that make up a life. The ADLs for which a client requires assistance become part of a client's Plan of Care (POC). The POC is initiated by an RN and guides any caregiver through an individual's routine. ADLs include:

- Dressing
- Grooming
- Eating
- Bed mobility
- Transferring
- Toileting
- Walking



Advance Directives: Prepared ahead of time, an advance directive is a written document that states how medical decisions are to be made if you lose the ability to make decisions. They can protect your rights regardless of mental or physical status. Living Wills, Durable Power of Attorney for Health Care and Health Care Proxy are all examples of advance directives.

Assistive Equipment: A range of products and technology designed to help older adults or people with disabilities lead independent lives. Examples include walking aids (wheelchairs, walkers, canes), elevated toilet seats, communication devices, and more.

Dementia: Dementia is characterized by the loss of intellectual functions (vocabulary, abstract thinking, judgment, memory loss, physical coordination). It is not a disease in itself, but rather a group of symptoms which accompany certain diseases or physical conditions. Some of the well-known diseases that produce it include:

- Alzheimer's Disease
- Multi-infarct Dementia
- Parkinson's Disease

Hospice: Medical and social programs for terminally ill patients and families either at home or in a facility. This includes physical care and counseling and support services but does not attempt to cure any illness.

Long-Term Care: Services that include medical and non-medical care provided to people who are unable to perform basic activities of daily living such as dressing or bathing. Long-term supports and services can be provided at home, in the community, in assisted living or in nursing homes. Individuals may need long-term supports and services at any age. Medicare and most health insurance plans don't pay for long-term care.

Long-Term Care Insurance: Insurance that is purchased by an individual to cover nursing care provided in a nursing home or assisted living facility; home health care or personal care services for activities of daily living (ADLs); or dementia care via home health, respite care, hospice care, and adult daycare.

See, you're getting the hang of it, already. At Alliance, we understand that navigating the home care world can be daunting. We're here to help! If you or someone you know needs help defining what home care would look like for you, don't hesitate to contact us at 1.877.687.7380 (NURSE80).

About the Author: Gregory Solometo

Gregory Solometo co-founded Alliance Homecare in 2006 and serves as the Chief Executive Officer. Gregory oversees the sales and marketing team and is the lead visionary behind the company's short and long-term strategic initiatives.

Gregory started the company after he took care of his grandmother for five years when she was suffering from Alzheimer's and created The Grandma RuleSM hiring philosophy. Gregory's firsthand experience of searching for caregivers showed him that there were limited resources that met his high level of standards of client care and customer satisfaction. Since that time, Gregory has been committed to providing all clients with an elite and highly qualified team of healthcare professionals that exceed industry standards.