

## *Licensing and regulations: What can in-home care legally do for an older adult?*

Depending upon the license of the agency, the healthcare background, training and health care designation of the caregiver, in-home care can provide most any service offered by a senior housing or senior care community.

An agency which offers hands-on care such as assistance with grooming, taking a bath, getting dressed or transfer assistance (moving from place to place) must be a licensed home care or home health care agency.

If a provider offers nursing-type care, such as wound care or injections, the agency must have a home health care license.

Some nursing tasks are considered to be able to "delegated" to a non-licensed individual, provided the caregiver is overseen by a Registered Nurse or like healthcare professional; and presuming that the healthcare professional and the caregiver have taken a course in order to gain authorization to delegate a task and to accept responsibility for a delegated task. Examples of nursing tasks that may be delegated to non-licensed individuals are:

- Placing eye drops in an elderly person's eyes
- Measuring the blood sugar levels of a diabetic
- Changing the dressing or bandages on a wound

Caution must be taken when non-licensed staff is administering medications, therapies or treatments, as side effects or reactions to medications and therapies or treatments can cause harm, injury or even death to an older adult.

At the point that skilled nursing care is needed at unpredictable and random times of the day, a move to a skilled nursing care or private, residential care home (Adult Family Home) with medical experience may be advisable.

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