



5 Questions to Ask When Hiring a Dementia-Focused Home Care Agency

Before you hire a New Jersey home care agency for your loved one living with dementia, consider asking the following five questions. It is important to know most home care agencies will mention they serve those living with dementia, the challenge is understanding what that means. We encourage you to dig deeper and learn what goes behind their dementia programs.

5 Questions to Ask a Home Care Agency Offering Dementia Care

1. Does the agency offer a “Dementia Program”?
2. If yes, does the “Dementia Program” focus on the quality of life for BOTH the person living with dementia and the family members?
3. What type of dementia-related training does the agency offer to their caregivers and the family members of the person living with dementia?
4. Are you hiring a home care agency or an individual (1099 employee)?
5. How do they structure a day for the person requiring dementia-related care?

As a home care agency that features our own Elite Dementia Care Program, we would like to share our answers with you along with a few things to keep in mind as you explore your options.

Learn more about Home to Stay in our answers below.

Q: Does the agency offer a “Dementia Program”?

Why this matters:

Caring for people living with dementia requires a unique set of skills that goes beyond the care requirements of people not living with dementia. At a minimum, the agency should have:

- A dementia specific assessment, which is far more detailed than a general home care assessment.
- A dementia specific plan of care that focuses on creating a meaningful day. This is not the same plan of care created for non-dementia clients.
- A coach or other senior member of the team who would be considered a dementia specialist. This person should be very involved in the oversight of the caregivers assigned to our case.
- Dementia specific activities that are appropriate for the person’s current stage of dementia.

Dementia Care Specialists

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Home to Stay's Answer:

Yes! Home to Stay is the exclusive provider of the AlzBetter Dementia Care Program, certified by the Alzheimer's Association.

Our program starts by providing a **dementia specific assessment**. This assessment focuses on where your loved one is today and acts as a guide as the disease progresses and care needs change. Both our caregivers and the families of our clients have access to a **certified dementia coach** to build a personalized care plan and make changes as care needs change.

At Home to Stay, we have the training and knowledge to create a true dementia-focused Meaningful Day for our patients, which emphasizes appropriate activities that meet the stages of care the person needs.

Q: If yes, does the “Dementia Program” focus on the quality of life for BOTH the person living with dementia and the family members?

Why this matters:

Unlike other diseases, individuals living with Alzheimer's and other forms of dementia eventually require support from care partners. These can be family members, friends, professional care partners such as home health aides, CNA's, or people from within the community.

A good **Dementia Care Program** should account for the ability of those people to provide care along with the areas that cause the greatest amount of stress. Check to see if the agency you are speaking with only assesses the needs of the care recipient or if it also takes into consideration the needs of the support team as well. This is extremely important as the wellbeing of care partners such as spouses and adult children is vitally important when it comes to the long-term care for a person living with dementia.

Home to Stay's Answer:

We proudly support our caregivers and their families by supporting their loved one living with dementia-related disease. Care is community, and the stronger the community, the better the care.

Caregiver burnout is real as a professional and a family caregiver.

Q: What type of dementia-related training does the agency offer to their caregivers and the family members of the person living with dementia?

Why this matters:

Because Alzheimer's and other forms of dementia are such a large reason people hire care at home, almost every agency will claim to offer specialized dementia care. It is important to really investigate what type of training they offer. Is it simply a video that their staff watches or a take-home pamphlet for caregivers to read, or do they really have in-depth training?

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Due to the complexities of dementia, caregivers should receive comprehensive training that has been reviewed by an accepted authority such as the Alzheimer's Association. Generally speaking, the training should include multiple modules and usually takes several hours to complete. Be sure to inquire about the training offered to the agency care staff.

Home to Stay's Answer:

All our Elite Caregivers are certified dementia caregivers via the AlzBetter program, which is recognized by the Alzheimers' Association. We have seen firsthand the value of ongoing care and support.

Home to Stay offers an in-house "LAB" for our caregivers. The LAB is located in our Cherry Hill office and our Director of Nursing holds in-person training sessions on proper care with medical mannequins.

Q: Are you hiring a home care agency or an individual (1099 employee)?

Why this matters:

While hiring individuals who are not part of an agency is very common, it comes with risk, especially when the care is for a person living with dementia. If that person calls out, who will be there to back them up?

Individuals often lack the required dementia training and likely do not have access to a dementia coach/expert.

Home to Stay's Answer:

We are an agency. We hire full-time and part-time caregivers, CHHA's, live-in's and companions to work with our clients and families. When working with care, scheduling and other questions, you will speak with the company and we will handle it for you.

Q: How do they structure a day for the person requiring dementia-related care?

Why this matters:

Sitting a person in front of a TV or allowing them to sleep all day can make the work of the care partner easy, but is it really creating a quality of life for the person they are caring for? In addition to making it easy, it also can have negative consequences. For example, a person who spends the day napping or in front of a TV may be more prone to what is called sundowning – a confused state of mind spanning from late afternoon into the night. Additionally, because they are sleeping during the day, they may have issues sleeping at night.

A person living with dementia has just as much of a need for their days to be filled with purpose and meaning. This means it should include activities that are appropriate to match their interest and their ability to perform those activities. When researching companies that offer dementia

services, it is important to ask what type of activities will be incorporated into the day and who adjusts the activities to assure they are appropriate.

Home to Stay's Answer:

We are proud to boast our **Dementia-Centric Meaningful Days** for our client's living with dementia. Our certified dementia coach takes the lead in planning and ensuring activities are of interest and appropriate for your loved one.

Get to Know our Certified AlzBetter Program, exclusively at Home To Stay

As you explore your dementia related home care agency we invite you to explore our ELITE Dementia Care Program at Home To Stay, powered by [AlzBetter](#).

Our AlzBetter program offers a comprehensive program focused on both the person living with dementia and their family. Each family has access to certified dementia coaches who are certified through the Alzheimer's Association. Additionally, our comprehensive training program helps care partners acquire the skills they will need in order to help support not only the person living with dementia, but also the family members who are involved in their care.

We would love the opportunity to speak with you directly and discuss our Elite Program with you and your family. We serve families throughout southern and central New Jersey with offices in Cherry Hill and Red Bank, New Jersey. Get started by calling our team today at [856-321-1500](tel:856-321-1500).

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