

CHECKLIST

Do you need/want assistance with?

- personal care
- domestic care
- both
- Have you considered asking your family/whanau and/or friends to offer assistance?
- Have you arranged an assessment or spoken with a health professional such as your doctor about your needs? (An assessment helps identify any underlying, treatable health problems, gives an understanding of what can be done to improve things for you and determines your eligibility for subsidised services.)
- Do you know if you will have to pay for services yourself or if they will be subsidised or part subsidised?
- Do you know how long you might need these services and support for?

NOTE: If you are receiving DHB funded care you may be automatically assigned a home support agency. You do have the right to change to another provider if you're not happy with the service you receive. Your choice may be limited to a small number of contracted agencies.

- Have you decided which agency you'd like to use? (You may want to consider meeting several agencies to see who offers you the 'best fit'.)
- Does the agency have a DHB or ACC contract? (Those with contracts are regularly audited and required to meet minimum standards)
- Is the agency a member of the Home and Community Health Association? (An overarching organisation providing leadership and advocacy for the home and community health sector)
- Can the agency provide you with references?
- Are there services you require or would like that the agency cannot, or will not, perform? (Some DHB contracted agencies have a defined range of tasks they can do.)
- Does the agency offer a programme that will help you make the most of the skills you have? *
- Will you have the same caregiver or support worker coming to you, or will this person change? What will happen if your regular caregiver or support worker is ill or on holiday?
- Does the agency employ qualified, professional staff to put together, monitor and review your support plan? (e.g. If you require or receive personal care a Registered Nurse should have oversight.)
- Does the agency screen all employees thoroughly e.g. a police check?
- Is on-going training provided for staff?
- Can the agency deliver culturally appropriate care, if required?

- Has the agency worked with you to establish a clear support or care plan (a document outlining your goals/what needs to be done, why, how it will be done and how success will be measured)?
- Do you understand and agree with this plan? Has it taken your feelings and skills into consideration?
- Does this plan make it clear if you need to pay for anything?
- Do you know what will happen if your health needs change? (A reassessment is advisable. It will help determine what needs to be done and how your services might need to be restructured.)

Practical things

- Do you check new support workers ID before you let them into your home?
- Are you careful about your financial practices (e.g. not giving a blank signed cheque to anyone, never giving anyone your bank card and PIN etc?)
- Can you easily access all your important documents? You may need to refer to them from time to time.
- Do you have an emergency plan? If there is an emergency such as an earthquake or flood what do you expect to happen regarding help from your home support service.

Your support worker

- Are you comfortable with the person who has been assigned to you? How do others who live with you or your family feel about them? There should be a comfortable 'fit' between you and your support person.
- What's your support worker's manner like? They should always be respectful, tell you in advance what they are going to do and when helping you with your personal care they should do this in a careful and considerate way.
- Will you have to do some things for yourself or with the assistance of your support worker? *
- Are you satisfied with the overall work done by your support worker?

Payment

- If you are partially or fully paying for the service do you have a clear plan of the fees? (Check to see that GST has been included.)
- What is the billing process? Are there minimum charges? If you live rurally or remotely will you be charged for travel?
- How often are you billed and how clear is the invoice?
- If you need to go to hospital or go on holiday do payments cease? Will you get the same worker back?

Problems

- Do you know who you can call if you have any questions or complaints about the service? (The agency should give you information about who to contact regarding questions, their own complaints process and details of independent organisations you can take your complaint to.)
- If you are not satisfied with your support worker have you spoken to the agency? If this has not resolved the issue you may contact the person coordinating your services (if receiving subsidised care), the Nationwide Health and Disability Advocacy Service 0800 555050 or Age Concern etc.
- If you wish to terminate the service, or change the agency, are you clear about how this should be managed? (If you are receiving a DHB subsidised or part subsidised service then the person coordinating the service should be contacted.)

* In some instances the support offered to you via a funding agency (e.g. the DHB) will be about helping you to get back to 'doing things for yourself' (often known as restorative care). This may mean that your support worker is more likely to ask you to do parts of the task with them. They should be able to demonstrate what skills they believe you could regain/retain. If you're unclear about how your service is delivered speak with the home support agency manager or, if receiving subsidised care, the person coordinating your services.