

# What Is Home Healthcare?

**H**ome healthcare agencies provide services to nearly 3.5 million Medicare beneficiaries who are homebound and require skilled care to treat illnesses related to acute, chronic or rehabilitative needs. Medical care that was once offered only in a hospital or a clinical setting can now be safely and effectively provided in a patient's home by skilled healthcare professionals. Data show that skilled home healthcare is less expensive, but just as clinically effective, as care provided in an inpatient healthcare facility.

## SKILLED CARE AT HOME

- *Cardiac & Pulmonary Care*
- *Neurological Rehabilitation*
- *Intravenous (IV) Therapy*
- *Wound Care*
- *Pain Management*
- *Chronic Disease Care*
- *Medication Management*
- *Physical Therapy*

"The home health benefit provides a valuable service to beneficiaries and the Medicare program, particularly when it is an element of an efficient coordinated care delivery system."

**MedPAC Report, 2014**

## ■ COST EFFECTIVE

Home healthcare can reduce healthcare costs by managing disease and preventing hospitalizations

- The average cost of care in a skilled nursing facility is \$449 per day or \$26,940 for a 60 day stay compared to \$2,674 for a 60 day home health episode.<sup>1</sup>
- The Veterans Administration reduced health spending by 24% using in-home interdisciplinary care.
- Home health helps prevent avoidable hospital readmissions through better care transitions and effective management of chronic conditions.<sup>2</sup>

## ■ CLINICALLY ADVANCED

Skilled home healthcare effectively manages chronic conditions and provides post-acute care

- In 2014, 1.1 million medical professionals including registered nurses, licensed practical nurses, home healthcare aides and other practitioners provided skilled home healthcare to patients.
- Home healthcare provides patients with the same quality therapy, wound care and skilled nursing that is found in hospitals or institutional settings.

## ■ PATIENT PREFERRED

Home healthcare allows patients to receive care with dignity in the comfort of home

- Nearly 90 PERCENT of American seniors say they want to age in place and remain in their home.<sup>3</sup>
- AARP: "the vast majority of people over 50...want to live in their homes as long as possible."<sup>4</sup>
- In the absence of home-based care, many seniors, especially those in rural areas, will have no choice but to seek care in institutional settings.

1. A Data Book: Healthcare Spending and the Medicare Program. Medicare Payment Advisory Commission. June 2015

2. Clinically Appropriate and Cost Effective Placement Project. Baseline Statistics of Patient Pathways by Episode Type for Select MS-DRGs and Chronic Conditions. May 2012.

3. Clarity/PrinceMarketResearch2007AginginPlaceStudy.Retrievedfrom<http://www.marketingcharts.com/direct/seniors-fear-loss-of-independence-nursing-homes-more-than-death-2343/clarity-aging-in-place-importance-living-independently-seniors.jpg>

4. Nancy LeaMond. AARP Executive Vice President