



Sutter VNA & Hospice

A Sutter Health Affiliate

Community Based, Not for Profit

## When is it time to call for Home Health Care?

Home Health Care is a service provided in the comfort and privacy of the patient's residence by licensed or certified professionals. The goal of Home Health Care is to provide skilled medical services to help patients regain independence as they recover from, or live with, an illness or injury.

Home Health Care coordinates necessary medical equipment and supplies, as ordered by the patient's physician. Care at home may also require the availability of a designated caregiver to assist in the patient's recovery or rehabilitation.

Many patients actually improve more rapidly if they are in a familiar and comfortable environment, and are surrounded by caring family or loved ones. Home Health Care has become an important factor in a patient's recovery due to the trend to discharge patients relatively quickly from hospitals or skilled nursing facilities.

### Examples of patients receiving Home Health Care include those who have, or have had:

- A recent hospitalization
- Outpatient surgery
- Hip or knee replacement
- Stroke, heart attack, heart surgery, high blood pressure, cancer, or diabetes
- Chronic illness
- Diseases of the nervous system
- A colostomy or catheter
- Temporary or long-term disability
- The problems of aging
- Terminal illness

### To qualify for Home Health services, the following must occur:

- A physician's order must be present.
- The patient must be in need of skilled, professional Nursing Care or Physical Therapy and/or Speech Therapy (primary services) on a part-time, intermittent basis.
- Occupational Therapy, Home Health Aides and Social Workers' Services are available as adjuncts to the primary services.
- The patient must consent to receive the prescribed services and be willing to follow the plan of care as prescribed and monitored by the patient's physician.
- Medicare patients must be "homebound."
- Some insurers require patients to be homebound, others do not.

### What "Homebound" means

- The patient is regarded as legitimately confined to the home when leaving home involves a significant and taxing effort. Any absences must be infrequent or of relatively short duration.
- Homebound does not mean "bed bound." A patient can go to a physician's office, adult day health center, hair appointment or religious services and still be considered homebound. Absences from the home for the purpose of participating in therapeutic, psychosocial or medical treatment in a licensed or certified adult day care program does not disqualify an individual from being considered homebound.
- On the other hand, if patients are able to drive independently, shop, or engage in normal outdoor activities, they are NOT considered homebound.

*We welcome your patient referrals.  
Please call (800) 557-9777.*