

From time to time I have witnessed elders assisted in their homes. In all cases I witnessed family members able to privately hire staff at pay rates at or below the \$18 per hour charged by home-care enterprises, which often pay care-giving staff only \$8 per hour. When agencies take keep the lion's share of their fees for administration, I wonder if care-givers resent their comparatively low pay.

When a charity spends more than fifteen percent on administration we look for more productive charities! Perhaps this formula reveals an appropriate ratio for administrative and direct care costs in the home-care field.

Please consider how Indiana can promote excellent home-care with lower administrative price tags.

Private-duty care-givers I've known are sensitive, practical and productive. They conscientiously follow prescribed routines and keep homes clean and inviting. They earn between \$8-18, according to the level of difficulty of care given, and the budget available. They make a point to support patterns of appropriate and adequate rest, exercise, frequent hydration and the best possible diets, and usually respect an elder's taste preferences, too. Institutions are hard-pressed to match such excellent care, at this price.

I know of care-givers who've provided:

1. Adjustment to life after a stroke such as building a wheel-chair appropriate desk, assembling new shelves, cleaning and organizing, preparing meals twice a week, that were stored in a new way so that the elder could see and re-heat balanced meals easily, suggesting low-cost outings with educational and cultural benefits, and lots of cheerful companionship, and hat elder still lives at home, now with live-in, care-giving housemates,
2. Assistance for elders with dementia at home in the last year of their lives, providing relief care when their full-time, live-in caregiver needed a family vacation, providing personal care, preparing healthful and appetizing meals that were eaten with gusto, and bringing artifacts and activities for enrichment meaningful to each,
3. Personal-care relief, for morning, afternoon or evening shifts when another worker became ill or had important family or personal needs, allowing an elder to die at home as she wished, at peace at age 96,
4. And providing relief care during a 24-hour week-end shift for a distinguished gentleman, no longer able to speak due to aphasia; this former Assistant Dean of Technology at Purdue enjoyed our brief outings, whether to a fabulous art fair where he previously showed wood turnings, or to the zoo a week before he died at home at 95, while under the care of hospice.

When families need to manage limited financial resources, they may need help finding well-educated, caring individuals to help their elders live at home.

Is there any state-wide, coordinated service providing referrals for private-duty caregivers?

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