

care and perform tasks as outlined by a registered nurse. If home health aides experience any problems or see any changes in a patient's condition, they are responsible for immediately notifying the supervising nurse. Home health aides are supervised by a registered nurse. Home health aides are an important part of the home care team and keep accurate notes on the everyday progress of the patient.

Home health aides are required to participate in a 75-hour training program. The training program includes classroom training and laboratory/in home training. Home care agencies and vocational schools offer these training courses across New York State. Upon completion of the training program, the trainee is awarded a certificate of completion. This certificate allows the individual to work as a home health aide anywhere in New York State.

Home health aides have a very rewarding job. They make a big difference in the lives of people who want to remain in their homes.

More Information


If you would like more information on becoming a personal care or home health aide, or more information about home care, please call Community Health Care Services Foundation, Inc., toll-free at 877/201-7166. Your message will be given to one of our professionals who will contact you directly to provide referrals to training programs in your area.



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Paraprofessional Careers in Home Care



*You could be a
"Hero in the Home™"*



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This booklet is intended for people who enjoy taking care of others. If that description fits you, you will be able to turn your caring and your skills into a new career in the important and growing field of home care.

In this booklet, we talk about the duties of the various home care jobs and what is required of someone who wants one of these jobs.

What is Home Care?

Home care is a growing part of the health care industry. It allows people who otherwise would have to live in a nursing home, remain in hospitals or go to medical facilities to receive care, to stay in their own homes. Many elderly people face the possibility of having to leave their homes and live in a nursing home or stay in the hospital for a long period of

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subjects as working with the elderly, safety and accident prevention, mental illness, care of the home, food, nutrition and meal planning, just to name a few. All of the personal care tasks are also taught in the training course. As a trainee, you would be required to demonstrate that you knew how to do all of the above tasks prior to completion of the course. **Training is offered at no cost to the employee.** At the end of the training course you will be awarded a certificate of completion. This certificate will allow you to work as a personal care aide in any part of New York State. After completion of the basic training course, the agency provides ongoing in-service training. This on-the-job training gives you the opportunity to continue to learn and improve your skills. Some experience in personal care tasks may be substituted for training.

Home Health Aide

The home health aide is the highest level of paraprofessional in home care. It requires a higher skill level than the personal care aides. The job of a home health aide is very important and it's not an easy job. It requires training, patience and a willingness to help others. A cheerful frame of mind is also important when working with the elderly and the disabled.

Home health aides are responsible for health-related tasks as well as personal care tasks. The health-related tasks are unique to the home health aide. (Personal care aides are not allowed to perform health-related tasks.) These tasks include taking the patient's temperature, pulse and respiration rate. Home health aides are also responsible for such things as helping patients take their medicine, applying medicated creams to the patient's skin, and changing bandages on certain wounds. The home health aide also takes the patient's blood pressure.

The home health aide performs basic health tasks that allow the patient to remain in the home. They must follow a plan of

PCA Level I

Level I personal care aides (PCA I) perform homemaker services. Homemaker services include such tasks as making and changing the patient's bed, cleaning the kitchen and bathroom and running any necessary errands for the patient. Other responsibilities may include helping the patient pay the bills or grocery shopping. **PCA I employees do not have any physical contact with the patient.** Training is provided as needed and the aide must demonstrate understanding of the tasks at hand.

PCA Level II

Level II personal care aides (PCA II) have a higher level of responsibility than PCA I. Level II aides are responsible for all of Level I functions as well as personal care tasks. Personal care tasks involve contact with the patient. Personal care tasks include:

- Bathing the patient, whether in the shower, tub or sponge bath.
- Skin care and grooming (shaving, shampooing, oral hygiene).
- Assisting with dressing.
- Assisting patient with toileting (bedpan, commode, etc.).
- Assisting patient with walking.
- Assisting with transferring patient from bed, chair or wheelchair.
- Assisting patient with using equipment such as a wheelchair, or artificial arm or leg.
- Assisting with basic wound care.

PCA II employees are required to attend a 40-hour basic training course. The course includes training on such

time. Home care is the solution. Home care workers provide these patients with the services they need to remain in their warm, secure, familiar home environment.

In addition to the elderly, home care workers also help people who have just been released from the hospital. This may include people who just had surgery or are recovering from a short-term illness. These people may need that extra bit of help that will allow them to go home. For example, a person recovering from surgery may need help for a short time to bathe and get dressed in the morning.

Home Care Heroes

Good personal care and home health aides—home care paraprofessionals—are highly valued by their employers, their patients and their patients' families. Here are a few comments that have been made about individual home health aides in New York. They come from nominations for "Heroes in the Home™," a recognition program honoring home care nurses and aides that is sponsored by the New York State Association of Health Care Providers, Inc.

- "She has demonstrated extraordinary care and is always willing to go above and beyond."
- "He takes pride in working as a home health aide and looks to enhance his skills and knowledge."
- "Always looking for ways to make life easier for the patients."
- "She makes people feel she is there to help them and takes an extra few minutes to listen to them."
- "Presents herself with the utmost professionalism at all times."
- "A dedicated and committed caregiver, she has motivated

her patients to attain a positive outlook during their rehabilitation.”

- “Warmly welcomed by patients and families.”
- “A consummate professional who is very committed to the patient’s needs.”
- “Nurses breathe a sigh of relief when she is assigned to their cases.”
- “She knows that ‘home is where the heart is’ and that is where her clients are the happiest.”
- “Began his career as a Personal Care Aide and rapidly progressed up the career ladder as a Home Health Aide, Licensed Practical Nurse, Registered Nurse, Training Program Coordinator, Quality Assurance Director and, finally, Director of Clinical Services.”

Career Opportunities in Home Care

Home care provides a wide variety of important jobs. **Home health aides and personal care aides are in great demand.** As the American population continues to live longer and the elderly population is increasing, there is a greater need for these services. This can mean exciting opportunities for workers looking to join the home care field. A career in home care provides many chances for growth. **Training** in all areas of the State is offered through home health agencies, as well as various vocational schools.

Home care provides a **career ladder** to move from entry level to the highest skill level of a paraprofessional, based on where you want your career to go. Some people have joined the home care field as a personal care aide and have remained in that position for many years. Others have decided to attend further training and become a home health

aide. The learning opportunities are endless, with formal training classes in home care, as well as continued on the job training provided at the home care agency. There have also been home health aides that have gone back to school and have pursued a **career in nursing**. The decision rests with you.

Careers in home care are attractive to individuals looking for flexibility and independence in their work schedule.

Employment in home care can provide part time hours, or flexible work schedules set around your child care schedule, other family needs, or transportation restrictions. Weekend hours are also available for those people looking for extra money in addition to their full-time jobs.

Caring people are at the heart of home care. It is a job for those who want to work with people, especially the elderly. It provides a great sense of satisfaction to be able to help people who are having difficulty helping themselves.

Choosing a career in home care may be the right decision for you. Below is a description of the various job opportunities in home care and the tasks and training involved.

Personal Care Aide

Personal care aides provide services to homebound persons needing some or total assistance with everyday tasks. Some of these tasks include assistance with personal hygiene, dressing, feeding, walking, meal preparation, light housekeeping and laundry. Personal care aides provide the services to help the patient stay in the home and live independently. To be a personal care aide, you must be able to work well with the elderly and disabled population. Also, being in good physical condition is important to be able to handle the specific tasks assigned.

There are two levels of personal care aides. A description of both levels and the job qualifications are listed here.