

HOSPITAL CRITERIA FOR HOMECARE REFERRALS

Key Findings

- When asked how often hospitals provide patients with tools to screen homecare agencies, **80% responded "Never"**, 10% responded "Sometimes", and only 10% replied "Often".
- 70% of hospitals **neither** screen agencies, **nor** provide patients with tools to screen agencies.
- Hospitals overwhelmingly use **no** set of tools to screen homecare agencies they refer to. When asked to respond to the statement "Your facility utilizes pre-determined screening tools in order to select non-medical homecare agencies to refer to", **90% responded "Definitely Not"**, and 10% responded "Probably Not".
- In response to the question "What information about non-medical homecare companies do you provide patients and families upon discharge?", 80% of hospitals give patients a hospital prepared list.
- While 80% of surveyed hospitals compile a list of agencies for patient distribution, **none** of those facilities screen the agencies they add to their list.
- Of the hospitals surveyed, 80% provide patients with hospital prepared lists, yet 87.5% of those hospitals **do not provide** the patient with any tools to screen the agencies on that list
- The number of case managers at a hospital showed no statistical bearing on whether or not the hospital screens the agencies whose information it provides to patients.
- There was no statistical relationship between the number of patient beds at a responding hospital and the answer to any other question (other than # of case managers employed by hospital). This shows that hospital size has little statistical bearing on their methods or procedures used to screen homecare agencies. (*Responding hospitals for this study ranged from less than 50 beds to more than 450 beds*)
- Of hospitals surveyed, 80% of hospitals are unsure if Non-Medical Home Care is licensed in California (30%-Not Sure, 50%-Prob not) , and 20% incorrectly think that it is. Yet, 100% **do not screen** the agencies they refer (90%-definitely not, 10%-probably not). (3-11)

- When asked, “Does state licensing currently exist for Non-Medical homecare services within California?”, 80% of hospitals that answered “Unsure” or “Probably Not”, of which 75% **never** provide patients with tools to screen homecare agencies. (3-12)
- Although 60% of hospitals responded that they **do** have written protocols that determine resources provided to patients, **none** of those hospitals provide patients with tools to screen agencies.
- When asked to respond to the statement: "Families are exposed to legal and/or financial risks when hiring a caregiver through a registry", 30% of hospitals responded "Strongly Agree", 50% responded "Neutral", and 20% chose "Disagree". The fact that 70% of hospitals responded "Neutral" and "Disagree" to inherent registry risk shows a level of ignorance of the dangers known to exist for families when hiring through a registry.
- According to the data, 80% of respondents indicated that homecare is either "Probably Not" licensed (50%), or "Not Sure" (30%) if California requires licensure. In spite of this uncertainty about regulation existing for non-medical homecare, **none** of the unsure respondents utilize any tools to screen the agencies to which they refer families. ["Definitely Not" (87.5%) or "Probably Not" (12.5%)]

KEY CONCLUSIONS

- “The deficiencies found among hospital discharge planning and case management departments with respect to homecare referrals are fairly universal, regardless of hospital size, or case manager count.” (p.38)
- “While it is true that the hospital provides patients with multiple care options, most of the hospitals polled provide patients these resources on a hospital produced list, which carries with it an implicit hospital endorsement of the listed agencies' trustworthiness. To summarize this concern: the hospital provides the patient with a hospital prepared list of homecare companies; the hospitals don't screen agencies they add to the list, nor do they provide the patient with screening tools to avoid the legal and financial risks that come with hiring unscrupulous companies (who may be on the list provided).” (p.39)
- “The facet of this study that dealt with hospitals’ understanding of registry risks yielded mixed results, with only (30%) of hospitals responding with any level of agreement that "families are exposed to risk through registries." (p.39)