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Refer to Home Health for:

- Skilled Nursing
- New Diagnoses or Existing Conditions
- Post Surgical Care
- Wound Care
- Ostomy Care
- Rehabilitation Therapies (Physical, Occupational, Speech)
- Disease Management
 - Heart Failure Program with Telemonitoring
 - Diabetes
 - COPD
- Medication Management
- Tube feedings or TPN
- Pain Management
- Home Safety Evaluations

Or refer for specialty programs:

- Palliative Care for pain and symptom management
- Hospice Care for those facing end of life

We accept Medicare, Medicaid, and most major insurances.

Feedback

If you have any comments on this issue or to be taken off our mail list, please email: ann.johnson@baystatehealth.org

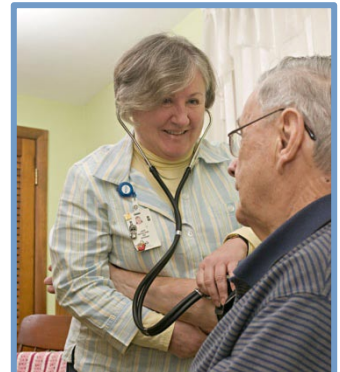
Homebound Status Criteria Less Restrictive than the Word Implies

Uncertainty around the definition of homebound may sometimes prevent eligible patients from receiving beneficial home health services. Medicare's definition of homebound is less restrictive than the word itself may imply. Some of your patients may be eligible for medically-necessary home health services that they are not currently receiving.

Medicare Definition of Homebound: "There exists a normal inability to leave home and, consequently, leaving home would require a considerable and taxing effort." "Absences from the home are infrequent and of short duration."

Characteristics of people who may be homebound include:

- People requiring the use of crutches, canes, wheelchairs, or human assistance to leave the home
- Patients with dementia or severe memory impairment
- Patients who have lost the use of an upper extremity and may be unsafe to use stair handrails
- Patients with limited ability for ambulation due to pain and/or weakness
- Patients with severe heart disease who must avoid stress
- People for whom outings may be medically-contraindicated as determined by the physician



Jane Beckland, RN,
Baystate Visiting Nurse
Association & Hospice

Did you know that none of the following outings will necessarily disqualify a person from home health services?

- Any religious service
- Occasional trips to the barber or salon
- Absences to receive certain outpatient health care treatments
- Adult day care services
- Family reunions, funerals, graduations

Medicare even allows for temporary increases in the number of outings a patient may have. For instance, if family visits from out of town and provides an unusual opportunity for the patient to get out more often, the activity does not disqualify the patient from home health services. Medicare instructs care planners to consider a patient's ability to leave the home as it exists over the entire plan of care and to allow for short-term exceptions.

If you have concerns about whether or not a patient will meet home health criteria, call Baystate Visiting Nurse Association & Hospice (BVNAH) for more information. BVNAH will be able to help determine if your patient would be eligible. You will also have the comfort of knowing that at BVNAH, an RN or therapist visits your patient at home and verifies program requirements *before* you are ever asked to sign a plan of care.

The BVNAH Advantage

Baystate Visiting Nurse Association & Hospice serves patients residing in Hampden, Hampshire and western Worcester counties. We accept Medicare and Medicaid but are also in-network with most major insurance companies. We work hard to maintain in-network status with many payors so we can serve you better. **Please keep us in mind should you feel home health care services may benefit your patients.**