



## VALUE OF AN IN HOME ASSESSMENT

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Think you need home care? If so, how much home care? Who can provide it?

Wondering whether you (or someone you care for) should move from home to a higher level of residential care? Or from the nursing home back to the community? Have you considered a Family Care Home, a Boarding Home, an Adult Care Facility, or a Nursing Home? If so, which one is the most appropriate place? When is the most appropriate time?

Most importantly for many people, how much does each of these choices cost?

Before you go any further, your most important need is for an **independent** and **comprehensive** assessment. This assessment is the primary component of the care plan and serves as a guide to long term care decision-making and should be the first step in that process. The benefits in terms of reduced stress and anxiety will be evident as the person and family travel the unfamiliar route of long term care with confidence and control.

A call to the **Broome County CASA/EISEP at 778-2420** can arrange for an assessment of this kind. Any resident of Broome County is eligible for such an assessment regardless of financial resources. The initial conversation will be with a registered nurse who will request some basic personal information, medical history, family involvement, apparent problems and Medicaid eligibility. Within two days another nurse or case manager will call to schedule an appointment for the in home assessment. This is scheduled within two weeks, however, if the situation requires it can be scheduled much sooner.

The in home assessment will take about one hour. Family or friends who are caregivers can be present. It is important to determine the willingness and ability of these informal supports to continue to provide care. Questions will be asked concerning the level of chronic decline, medical conditions, medications, cognitive functioning, condition of the home and basic financial strength of the client.

The purpose of the interview is to determine the unmet needs of the client and develop a plan of care that will address those needs. This care plan will offer possible solutions to the problems experienced in daily living. Specific advice and direction will be offered that will inform the individual and family in order to make the best possible decisions regarding the choice of care. Often clients and families are surprised to learn of the existence of the many supportive services available in our community. They are also pleased to know how minimal supports can effectively increase the ability to remain independent. When care at home is no longer feasible the assessment team provides valuable information about alternative residential options that emphasize a person's independence in the least restrictive setting.

Often when an elderly person and family are considering long term care services, whether in the home or a facility the idea of an assessment may be far from mind. It should not be. This assessment can be the most valuable tool in helping to decide the best route to travel on a very confusing and bumpy highway.

