What Home Health Aides Can Do—and What They Can’t
(Some May Surprise You!)
Introduction

The following describes tasks the Home Health Aide is permitted and also **not** permitted to perform.

This is only a guideline and the actual tasks you may perform will be identified by the Field Nurse Supervisor.

You are part of the **Home Care Team** and play a major role in the care of your client.
A Home Health Aide (HHA) CAN do the following:

1. Bathe client
2. Shampoo and comb client’s hair
3. Clean and file nails
4. Provide or assist with oral care
5. Provide skin care (on unbroken skin only)
6. Assist the client with getting dressed
7. Take and log vital signs
8. Assist client to ambulate
9. Transfer client from your bed to a chair
10. Assist with toileting
11. Position client in bed house
12. Prepare client meals
13. Feed or assist client in eating
14. Assist with therapy exercise plan
15. Change linens
16. Tidy up immediate surroundings
17. Do light housekeeping
18. Do dishes and laundry
19. Accompany client outdoor for errands and appointments

HHA Can / CANNOT

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A Home Health Aide *CANNOT* do the following:

1. Perform nursing duties
2. Perform glucose testing
3. Cut client fingernails or toenails
4. Apply heat or cold of any kind
5. Prepare or administer medications
6. Interpret medical information
7. Do banking or assist with writing checks
8. Open mail if client is not present
9. Perform heavy housework
10. Assist in the preparation / or be a witness to a Will
In Summary...

The client’s **plan of care** will be customized to meet his/her individual needs and will be formulated by the client (and/or family) and the nurse.

The nurse communicates frequently with the home health aide and if necessary, client’s physician, to update the plan of care.

The aide may not perform any task not listed on your Plan of Care.
HHA Job Description

There are many misconceptions about what a HHA actually does.

Home health aides take care of clients (sometimes referred to as patients) who may be afflicted with an illness and/or disability; clients may also be the elderly who may need care – but in all these cases the clients are in their homes.

Staying at home for these individuals reduces medical care costs such as nursing homes and allows them to stay in a familiar and comfortable environment.

The job description, developed by the employer (usually the home health agency), briefly outlining the duties and responsibilities.

For example, if it left off the fact that you need to change soiled bed sheets and day one you find yourself having to perform this task, it may be a bit unsettling; if it was on the job description then you would have known what to expect.

Here are some examples of HHA job descriptions to use as a guideline!

In its simplest form the purpose of a job description, it manages your expectations as you perform your responsibilities.

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Important Components Of The Job Description:

**HHA Job Description**

**POSITION SUMMARY**
The Home Health Aide (HHA) is part of the home care team, providing personal care, and companionship to the client in their residence.

**HHA RESPONSIBILITIES**
- Maintain a comfortable, safe and clean environment
- Provide companionship to patients
- Dress patients; needs vary from minimal assistance to totally dependent
- Bathe patients: bed baths, tub baths or showers
- Toilet patients and assist with bedpans and urinals; may also help transport patients to the bathroom
- Make beds and change linens
- Ensure that non-ambulatory patients are turned regularly; for comfort and prevent bedsores
- Provide emotional support to patients and/or family members
- Administer medications per nurse or physician
- Record patient vital signs
- Provide catheter care; empty and record intake/output
- Report all changes of a patient (physical and/or mental)
- Complete daily documentation on each patient, accurately and completely, in the appropriate format/forms

**HHA REQUIREMENTS**
- High school graduate (or GED) preferable
- Successful completion of approved training program
- Current HHA license, in good standing
- At least eighteen (18) years old
- Able to read and write consistent with job requirements: cognitive skills as related to the position
- Proficient interpersonal relations and communicative skills

**WORKING CONDITIONS**
- Working nights, weekends and holidays
- May perform tasks that are unpleasant
- Long hours of standing
- Exposure to chemicals/diseases
- Uncooperative patients

**PHYSICAL DEMANDS**
- Ability to lift at least fifty (50) pounds
- Enough [muscle] force to lift and carry patients
- Good vision
More Information, Please!
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