## Can a home care agency ever administer medications?

A Home Care Agency can administer medications per the following scenarios:

- 1. The home care agency may provide, but not administer, medication set-up by a licensed nurse (RN or LPN).
- 2. An RN or LPN with a professional license in the Commonwealth (employed by the agency) may work pursuant to their scope of practice under the appropriate licensing board, so long as the work performed does not extend past the limits of licensure for the home care agency. For example, such things as respiratory treatments, wound care etc., are permitted under the home care license unless the care/service provided to the client rises to the level of "skilled nursing care", which is a level of care that is not permitted under the scope of a home care agency license.
- 3. If skilled nursing care is required, the nurse providing such care may not be an employee or independent contractor employed or retained by the home care agency. The nurse may be employed by the patient directly or may be employed by a home health agency. The home care agency may make arrangements for this service, but may not pay the nurse providing the skilled nursing care. Skilled nursing care may only be provided by a licensed home health agency or private duty nurse.
- 4. The home care agency may provide medication assistance by a direct care worker which includes: reminding the consumer to take medications, reading the label to the consumer, bringing the medication and any necessary supplies/equipment the consumer, opening the container, positioning the consumer for medication administration, providing appropriate liquids for swallowing medication, storing, cleaning and disposal of used supplies/equipment and storing medications properly.

What needs to be remembered is that under home care regulations/definitions, a home care agency provides non-skilled services to individuals in their homes or other independent living environments.

An RN or LPN employed/contracted by the consumer may provide care and services as permitted under their nurse practice act.