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# Expertise Matters - How Do You Know the Person you Hire is an Expert?



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As in most professional fields, almost everybody serving the eldercare industry claims to be an expert. Can everybody really be an expert and, if so, what are they really experts at doing? What's the difference between a Certified Care Manager vs. Certified Senior Advisor? Or, Case Manager vs. Care Manager? Why is it important to understand the differences? How does it affect the care of the older person?

Someone recently asked me to explain the difference between a "Certified Care Manager" and a "Certified Senior Advisor." The public is rightly confused because the two sound alike. But these two designations are miles and miles apart.

Basically, a "Certified Care Manager" is someone who is not even allowed to take an exam unless he or she has four years' experience as a Care Manager under supervision and has an undergraduate degree and/or license related to being a Care Manager such as nursing, social work, gerontology or counseling. If the person has a Master's degree, two years' experience as a Care Manager is still needed before taking a "Care Manager Certified" exam. For more information on the qualifications of a Certified Care Manager, visit the website of the National Association of Professional Geriatric Care Managers [www.caremanager.org](http://www.caremanager.org).

Case managers are usually health and human service professionals who work in hospitals or for insurance companies

and are generally focusing on specific basic components of your health care. Certified Care Managers are professionals who are looking at you and your family's needs holistically. The Care Manager will help with elements of housing, home care, legal tools, entitlements, local resources, counseling for difficult decisions and can remain as an advocate for clients, sometimes throughout their life time – always working for the "client centered" plan that respects client values. Can a Certified Care Manager really do all of that? Yes, because of the many years of training and experience.

An expert is someone who is educated and experienced in his/her field of study. Many specialists in insurance, accounting, law and even real estate want to serve the senior population so they acquire more specific senior training, often by attending a forty hour class to become a Certified Senior Advisor. These professionals are experts in their field of licensure – however, they do not bring direct senior care skills the same way that a Professional Certified Care Manager does. I personally refer to many of these experts, not because they are "Certified Senior Advisors," but because they are experts in their field of specialty.

When a family has to make plans for the future and is confused with what options, resources, entitlements, costs, and sometimes who to manage behaviors related to mental health or dementia – the referral should be made to an EXPERT in the field of care management. If the question is explicit to another professional area related to that individual's training and/or license, you may get what you need from that professional.

However, keep in mind that solid education, experience and expertise always matters.

"Accreditation" by a vetted organization adds to the credibility of an organization and provides the public reassurance that the agency has met stringent standards for the care of their clients/patients. Not all "Certification" is the same and similarly not all "Accreditation" is the same.

Ask questions and know about the organization that awarded the accreditation. Eldercare Services recently received the "coveted" distinction of being a "Joint Commission" accredited home care company – one of only two in the local area. This accreditation used to be called "JACHO" and is the same accreditation hospitals often obtain to meet Medicare's criteria.

We are proud that all of our Care Managers have advanced degrees and/or are certified or in the process of becoming certified (meaning they have advanced degrees and more than enough experience and they are now just waiting for a test date). So, both our professional team and our home care team have the highest certifications possible – because we are the experts and want to ensure the safety and well-being of high quality of lives for our clients.

Earning the Joint Commission's Gold Seal of Approval demonstrates our commitment to excellence in all we do. We are proud to continuously meet national standards of health care quality and safety in home care. We welcome your suggestions and appreciate your support so that we can partner together to give the best to those we honor and love.



Eldercare Services has earned The Joint Commission's Gold Seal of Approval® for accreditation by demonstrating compliance with The Joint Commission's national standards for health care quality and safety in home care. The accreditation award recognizes Eldercare Services' dedication to continuous compliance with The Joint Commission's state of the art standards. The Joint Commission is best known as the accrediting agency for hospitals across the nation.

### **Community Classes**

#### **Walnut Creek**

**Alzheimer's: 101 & Alzheimer's: 102  
For Families Experiencing the Challenge**

**3rd Friday of every month from 10 am to Noon  
(Class topic alternates monthly)**

1808 Tice Valley Blvd., Walnut Creek, CA 94595

#### **Cost for Classes:**

**\$10 per person/\$15 per couple or 2nd family member**

*Proceeds benefit the Alzheimer's Association*

#### **Class Registration:**

**Please call at least 3 days ahead**

For more information regarding classes and support groups, visit

[www.EldercareAnswers.com](http://www.EldercareAnswers.com) or call (925) 937-2018

or email us at [Info@EldercareAnswers.com](mailto:Info@EldercareAnswers.com)

### **Support Groups**

When concerns for aging family members are part of every day life, or when they interfere with work, your health or other relationships, you need to join a support group.

#### **Caring for An Aging Family Member**

**2nd Thursday of every month from 6 to 7:30 pm**

1808 Tice Valley Blvd., **Walnut Creek**, CA 94595

**1st Thursday of each month from 5:15 to 6:45 pm**

Glen Park Library, 2825 Diamond St., **San Francisco**

**Cost for Support Groups: None**

**Support Group Registration: Not required**

**More Info: (925) 937-2018 or (415) 469-8300**



# **Eldercare Services**

**EXPERTISE MATTERS**

Accredited by The Joint Commission



**Eldercare Services provides Care Management, Counseling, Home Care and Support Groups. If you or someone you know could benefit from self-care, call (866) 760-1808 or email [Info@EldercareAnswers.com](mailto:Info@EldercareAnswers.com).**