

## **“Best Practices for Providing Homecare Services”**

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Since 1986 the Massachusetts Rehabilitation Commission has provided homecare services to individuals 18-59 years of age in need of cooking, cleaning, shopping and preparing meals. Throughout this time, consumers informed the MRC how these services have functioned to improve their overall quality of life, enhanced their independence and prevented institutionalization.

This desired outcome is possibly only through the hard work and dedication of the homecare agencies and the homecare workers who provide this needed service every day. The following article highlights four homecare vendors who scored highest in our statistical measures. It outlines their mission, philosophy, process and procedures. Our goal in writing this article is to formulate a summary of best practices for providing homecare services.

From a list of 161 vendors that includes satellite offices, four vendors were selected that scored highest in our analysis. The four agencies were:

1. Family Services of Central MA, 31 Harvard Street, Worcester, MA
2. Habilitation Assistance Corporation, 10 Water Street, Plymouth, MA
3. Geriatric Assistance Corporation, 4 Punchard Avenue, Andover, MA
4. Supportive Care with offices in Malden and Lawrence, MA

### **Statistical Methodology**

The statistical measures utilized in this analysis were derived through the use of the Massachusetts Rehabilitation Commission's Provider Reports Database. This database calculates responses from consumers that measure the following areas: quality of cooking, light housekeeping, cleaning, shopping, laundry, communication, quantity of services, new placement transfer and safety. These areas are each graded using a scale of: excellent, good, fair and poor to form a record. Each vendor record is then joined to other records to produce the vendor's final average. Since the needs of the consumers vary, mean averages are not weighed. A decision to use un-weight averages was made to account for consumers who receive less than the full complement of services that are offered.

Three criteria were used to distinguish these vendors:

1. A vendor average of 90% or better.
2. A record entry rate greater than 100% of the total number of consumers served.
3. An active list of 25 or more consumers being served. To avoid skewed data the information gathered in this analysis spans a four year period.

The full article outlining the strengths of these vendors is due late 2012.