

Eli's Rehab Report

Explore Visiting Physicians for Your HHA

Although this wouldn't fall under the home health agency (HHA) license, your home health organization might benefit from contracting physicians for house calls or spinning off physician house calls as a separate business division.

For instance, an occupational therapist on a regular episodic visit finds that his patient is walking a fine line with a pulmonary condition during therapeutic activities. The situation is worrisome but not bad enough to require an ambulance immediately. The therapist consults with his supervisor and requests a home visit from a physician affiliated with the HHA.

The physician sees the patient later that day and is able to diagnose the problem and alleviate it with a new prescription. In the end, the patient has avoided an unnecessary ER visit.

Another perk: "House call payments can drum up very good money, particularly if you're using nurse practitioners," says **Fran Fowler, FAAHC**, managing director of Health Dimensions Group in Atlanta. Plus, the house call physician could communicate with the attending physician about the patient's status.