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# Home Health Care Presents New Payroll Challenges

✖ The growth of the Home Health Care industry has created a new set of payroll challenges for both employers and employees. How do we pay employees who work remotely in another city or state? How do we track the time spent at each patient's home? How do we provide workers comp insurance for both employees and independent contractors? And how can we do it in the most time-efficient, labor-efficient and cost-efficient manner?

Many of the solutions we've come up with are adaptations of products and services that have been around awhile. And most are green, eco-friendly, electronic alternatives to paper,

toner and gasoline-powered delivery systems. For example, direct deposit is an accepted payment method, but how do we deliver pay stubs safely (and cheaply) to people thousands of miles away? The answer is Employee Self Service (ESS).

ESS provides a secure online portal where employees can login to view, print or save their pay stubs whenever they wish. Pay stubs (and W-2's) are archived as far back in time as there is data in the system. Employees can view and update their personal information and access their time off accruals. There's no need to contact HR to get a copy of a pay stub or W-2, to find out how much PTO is available, or make changes to an employee's file. It can all be done online by the employee at any time day or night.

The ESS portal is also a gateway to company web links that can take employees directly to the company intranet, HR contacts, benefit providers, insurance plans, retirement plans, forms, resources, etc. The employer has control over which links are made available. Also included is space for company announcements that acts as a bulletin board of events of interest to the employee.

Home Care workers travel to their patient's home and they may visit several patients during the course of the pay period. The employee wants to know they were paid for their hours at each location and the employer wants to know the exact labor cost. Both can be accomplished by entering the hours into the payroll system by patient. For example, they would enter 8 hours with Mr. Smith, 10 hours with Mrs. Jones, and so on. Instead of the total aggregate number of hours worked per pay period, the employee's pay stub would reflect the exact number of hours paid per patient. From the employer's point of view, their reports would provide the exact cost of labor (including taxes and benefits) for each patient.

One of the biggest challenges faced by employers is providing workers compensation insurance for their home care workers. To this day, many insurance carriers will not insure Home Care firms because they see it as an unacceptable risk to cover a worker when they perform their duties in a patient's home. The

situation is even more difficult when workers are both W-2 employees and 1099 independent contractors. Thankfully, we have identified insurance carriers who have adapted and are willing to not only insure home care companies, but also cover both their employees and 1099's.

As we face new challenges brought on by growth, we look for ways to create solutions that will save us time, labor and money.

South Florida Hospital News and Healthcare Report's number one goal is top quality healthcare journalism written and edited for the region's most successful, powerful healthcare business executives and professionals.



Phone : [561-368-6950](tel:561-368-6950)

Fax : [561-368-6978](tel:561-368-6978)

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