

# Client Risk Assessment Guide

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Home care agencies operate at the intersection of healthcare and the client's home environment. While in-home services promote independence and reduce institutionalization, they also introduce risks. Unlike hospitals or nursing facilities, homes vary widely in safety features, caregiver support, and environmental hazards.

A **Client Risk Assessment Template** is a critical tool for home care agencies. It integrates evidence-based domains—physical, medication, environmental, infection, psychosocial, and emergency preparedness risks—into a structured form that supports safety, compliance, and individualized care planning.

Agencies that consistently use and review this template reduce preventable harm, protect staff and clients, and align with state and federal standards

## Key Components of a Client Risk Assessment

A complete **Client Risk Assessment Template** should cover the following domains:

- **Physical Risks**
  - *Fall history in past 12 months*
  - *Mobility and gait status*
  - *Vision and hearing impairments*
  - *Chronic conditions (e.g., diabetes, CHF, dementia)*
  
- **Medication Risks**
  - *Polypharmacy ( $\geq 5$  medications)*
  - *High-alert medications (anticoagulants, insulin, opioids)*
  - *Medication management system (pillbox, caregiver support, electronic reminders)*

- **Environmental Risks**
  - *Home hazards: rugs, stairs, poor lighting, clutter*
  - *Fire safety: working smoke detectors, heating sources, oxygen use precautions*
  - *Accessibility: grab bars, railings, mobility aids*
- **Infection Control Risks**
  - *Open wounds or indwelling devices (catheters, PICC lines)*
  - *Immunization status (flu, COVID-19, pneumonia)*
  - *Hand hygiene and surface cleaning practices in the home*
- **Psychosocial Risks**
  - *Cognitive status: dementia, delirium, mental illness*
  - *Social support: presence/absence of family, risk of neglect or abuse*
  - *Financial insecurity or food insecurity*
- **Emergency Preparedness Risks**
  - *Awareness of emergency plan*
  - *Access to phone/alert systems*
  - *Backup power or evacuation plan for clients on oxygen or medical devices*

## Sample (Client Risk Assessment Template) - Home Care Agency

### Client Information

- Name: \_\_\_\_\_
- Date of Birth: \_\_\_\_\_
- Date of Assessment: \_\_\_\_\_
- Assessor: \_\_\_\_\_

### A. Physical Risk Factors

- History of falls in past 12 months (Y/N): \_\_\_\_\_
- Uses assistive device:  Cane  Walker  Wheelchair
- Impaired vision/hearing: \_\_\_\_\_
- Chronic medical conditions: \_\_\_\_\_

### B. Medication Risks

- Takes 5 or more medications
- High-risk medications (list): \_\_\_\_\_
- Medication management system:  Pillbox  Family-managed  Electronic reminder  None
- Concerns with adherence: \_\_\_\_\_

### C. Environmental Risks

- Loose rugs/clutter  Poor lighting  Unsafe stairs  No grab bars/railings
- Fire/smoke detectors present & working (Y/N)
- Oxygen in use  Safety precautions in place

### D. Infection Control Risks

- Open wounds  Catheter/IV device  Chronic infection risk
- Immunization up to date (Y/N)
- Hand hygiene observed  Adequate cleaning supplies

## E. Psychosocial Risks

- Cognitive impairment  Depression/anxiety  History of neglect/abuse
- Lives alone  Supportive family/caregiver  Financial/food insecurity

## F. Emergency Preparedness

- Emergency contact updated  Access to phone/alert system
- Evacuation plan in place  Backup power source if medically required

### Overall Risk Level (circle one):

Low  Moderate  High

### Care Plan Recommendations:

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### Assessor Signature/Date:

#### **Example of Completed Risk Assessment (Fictional Client)**

**Client:** Mary Johnson, 82 years old

**Assessment Date:** 10/18/2025

**Assessor:** A. Smith, RN

- **Physical:** Two falls in past year; uses walker; impaired vision due to cataracts; comorbid CHF and diabetes.
- **Medication:** 7 medications, including warfarin (anticoagulant). Uses pillbox but reports missed doses.
- **Environmental:** Loose rugs in hallway; no grab bars in bathroom; smoke detectors working.
- **Infection:** Healing leg wound; vaccinations current.
- **Psychosocial:** Lives alone; limited family support; history of depression.
- **Emergency:** Has phone, no backup power plan for oxygen concentrator.

**Overall Risk: High**

**Recommendations:** *Install grab bars, remove rugs, schedule medication review, arrange social services referral, update emergency preparedness plan.*

**Agency Benefits**

- Reduces liability and supports regulatory compliance
- Improves client safety and satisfaction
- Provides data for quality improvement initiatives

**Limitations**

- Self-reported information may be incomplete.
- Homes vary in design and hazard exposure, requiring assessor judgment.
- Risk levels may fluctuate; assessments must be ongoing.