



Domiciliary Care Business 101:

The Ultimate Checklist for Starting
and Maintaining a Home Care Business





The Ultimate Checklist for Starting and Maintaining a Home Care Business

In this checklist, we'll break down the basics of what domiciliary care agency owners need to know about launching and maintaining their own business in the United Kingdom. We'll cover the steps towards launching such a business, as well as key tips for maintaining your business overall.



Do the Right Research

Before you begin the planning stage, it's vital to do your research. There are many legal requirements involved in operating a domiciliary care agency. Your research should involve a few key things. These include:

- Information about UK regulations and registration for domiciliary care
- Costs associated with renting or owning a building or location for your business
- Potential zoning and business laws
- Ongoing costs associated with employing carers and nurses

Some laws vary across the UK, so it's vital to have a well-rounded understanding of what your domiciliary care business can do in your specific area.

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Create a Perfect Plan

Once you're armed with knowledge, it's time to start planning. Consider the tasks involved in your business that will take up a majority of your time and your employees' time. From there, you can compile a necessary to-do list that will outline how to go from planning to launching your business. Consider potential to-do tasks you will need to include in your specific location, such as required site visits or licencing. In the UK, all domiciliary care businesses need to be registered-- but we'll explore that a bit later.

Every home care business will require a group of administration specialists, carers, managers, and sometimes nurses. Consider when and how you will start searching for such employees and how you will background cheque them. We recommend doing this after you have officially registered as a domiciliary care business.

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Make a Budget and Pick Your Location

With a bit of research and a plan in mind, it's time to consider how much money you will need to run your domiciliary business. Consider things like the cost to register (for the most part, UK businesses can register for free), the cost of land or building rentals, the cost to pay your staff, etc. You will need startup capital, meaning you will likely need to procure a business loan to get started.

Once your budget has been thoroughly drafted and you have researched all the possible costs involved, it's time to consider the location you will be operating from. It is very important to have your location selected and possibly reserved ahead of time, as you will need to note your location when you apply for a licence.

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Apply for a License

Once you've picked a location and thoroughly examined your budget, it's time to apply for a license. In order to run a domiciliary care business in the UK, you'll need to register with the Care Quality Commission or CQC.

"The service provider - which can be an organisation, partnership or individual - must register," notes the UK Government's page on domiciliary care registration, "If you are registered as an organisation or partnership then the person responsible for managing the services must also register. If you are registering as an individual, you don't need to have a separately registered manager unless you don't intend to be in charge full-time."

Depending on the category your business falls into, there are a number of registration forms you will need to fill out that can be found on the CQC's website. You won't have to pay an application fee, which is quite nice. However, you'll have to pay yearly fees once your domiciliary care business is registered for the purpose of compliance monitoring. If you decide to make any changes to your registration, you may be subject to fees as well.

When you choose the correct application, you will need to provide a few key pieces of information. These include:

- Your business location
- A thorough list of activities your carers and overall business will be conducting on a regular basis
- Verification that you can meet the federal standards of care quality and safety protocol
- A declaration of compliance

Note: It's worth noting that the domiciliary care industry is part of the medical industry, and is thus heavily regulated. If you carry out a particular activity that is considered regulated, such as medication administration, without proper registration, you are considered to be committing an offence that could lead to heavy fines or even prison time.

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Invest in the Right Software

Using the right software is the key to running a competitive, successful, and scalable domiciliary care agency. Unfortunately, far too many companies in this sector tend to avoid the adoption of new technology. This is a huge problem, as many home care agencies are still using pen and paper for things like scheduling, client documentation, time management, bookkeeping, etc. Not only is this obsolete method of document management extremely insecure when it comes to protecting client and employee information, but it is just too messy. This is where home care agency software comes in.

You should invest in all-in-one platforms like [Nursebuddy](#) that are specifically designed to help domiciliary agencies. Such platforms offer a wealth of tools and benefits, including:

A dashboard to store staff records, such as payroll, clock-in sheets, gas mileage for on-premise vehicles, and more. Nursebuddy can easily be integrated with a number of HR and payroll platforms, making this process even simpler.

Time management capabilities. Nursebuddy is a scheduling platform designed specifically for home care agencies and nurses, so it is built with the unique scheduling needs of those in the health care industry in mind.

Better and more efficient ROTAs. Many companies will still use pen and paper for tracking when different employees conduct a certain task, and it can be a compliance and management nightmare. Home care software organises ROTAs and other task lists through easy-to-access dashboards that are compatible with on-premise devices and mobile devices alike.



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GPS tracking. Home care workers often use their own vehicles or company vehicles to travel from client to client on a daily basis. GPS tracking software that is connected to the worker's smartphone device can be beneficial for a number of reasons. For one, it can be synced with a home care agency software platform that clients and management alike can use to view ETAs and locations of workers at any given time. Just as well, if there is a care issue or compliance issue, GPS tracking can provide proof of where a carer was at any given time.

Client communications. One common struggle that home care agencies face is proper communication with clients and their families. Families and guardians of senior clients want the most transparent experience possible when it comes to domiciliary care. They want to ensure your agency is doing its job and properly caring for their loved ones. Using domiciliary and care-specific software can provide a level of transparency that even clients can use. With a mobile app, users can see where carers are, ensure they are on time, and keep an eye on what tasks they've completed in relation to their loved ones' care. Just as well, this type of software is great for rescheduling appointments, adding notes from the guardian or family's side, and sending out feedback from the client. Communication is key, and software can make it happen.

Clinical and medical records. Organising documentation can be a logistical nightmare if you're using paper and filing cabinets. Home care software provides a secure and user-friendly platform for scanning and uploading client and staff documents. You can easily sort through documents to make them easier to find, as well. Less clutter and a whole lot less paper!

Billing and claims. Payroll software can be easily synced with home care agency software, making the process of bookkeeping and claims much more accurate and organised.

Once you've selected a vendor and implemented your software into your company's systems, it's time to move on to the actual hiring stage. Now that we understand the benefits of implementing the right home care agency software, let's consider consulting firms and staff that will become the foundation of your agency.

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Invest in the Right Consulting Firms and Staff

Now that your business is set up and ready to go, it's time to find the people that will truly make it thrive. Begin conducting interviews and posting on job boards to find potential candidates for your staff. Even if you are not ready to open yet, having your staff selected and hired is key to having a successful first day on the job. The administration staff you select can help you prepare for launch day, and you can spend this time before launch training your staff. (More on that in the next section.)

You might also want to invest in the right consulting firm as well. Many home care companies will begin looking for consulting firms when they have already been operating for a bit and are struggling with different roadblocks. Your best bet is to get on board with a good consulting agency from the get-go.

A consulting agency will help you with a number of tasks, such as policy writing, employee training guides, and human resources or payroll needs. Choosing a consulting agency from the beginning is a great way to ensure that everything goes smoothly right from the start.



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Launch the Right Training Practices

Even if your employees are experienced when it comes to home care or medical care, you'll need to train them to operate within your specific business. Develop a training plan or work with a third-party organisation to provide training to your new carers, administration, managers, nurses, and everyone in-between.

With NurseBuddy, you can access a tonne of in-app support and resources for training your employees to use the platform. This is very helpful, as new employees may struggle with using totally new software on a regular basis. NurseBuddy is designed to be at the core of domiciliary agencies, so training is very important from the beginning.

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Conduct an Audit or Survey

You should do this shortly after opening, and you should continue to do this regularly to maintain your home care agency. You can conduct an audit or survey by having a third-party professional or colleague in the home care industry evaluate your company. This is a very important part of maintaining your company, as you can identify issues or potential pain points before inspectors.

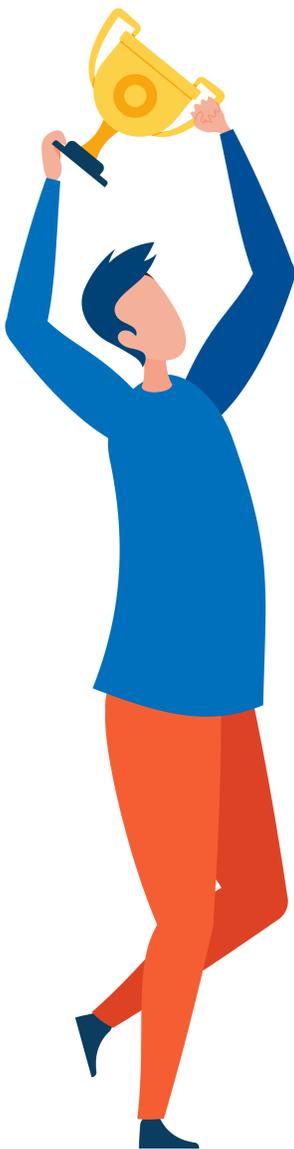
It's perfectly normal for home care companies to run into problems here and there – it's simply the nature of running a business. An audit is an excellent way to see where your company is struggling and apply the right solutions as quickly as possible. From here, it's time to launch! Once you've launched, there are a few best practises to continuously do to maintain your domiciliary business.

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Ensure Your Agency is Part of the Community

One way domiciliary agencies can maintain their business's growth is by ensuring they are part of their local communities. Consider participating in local events, such as marathons, volunteer opportunities, or setting up public stations where you can connect with your community. Seniors and those in need of care are not really limited by geographic location – they're everywhere, but they can be hard to reach unless your organisation is part of the greater local community in a personable way. By getting involved, you are saying to your potential clientele and their families that you care about supporting the local community. Add community participation strategies into your overall business plan for the most success.

If you're struggling to find ways to support the community, consider hosting team volunteer events with your staff. This can help get your agency's name out, but will also allow your actual staff to reach out to potential clientele. We recommend hosting such events once every three months. This event doesn't need to be mandatory for your staff, but ensure that it is a paid opportunity for your staff to volunteer.



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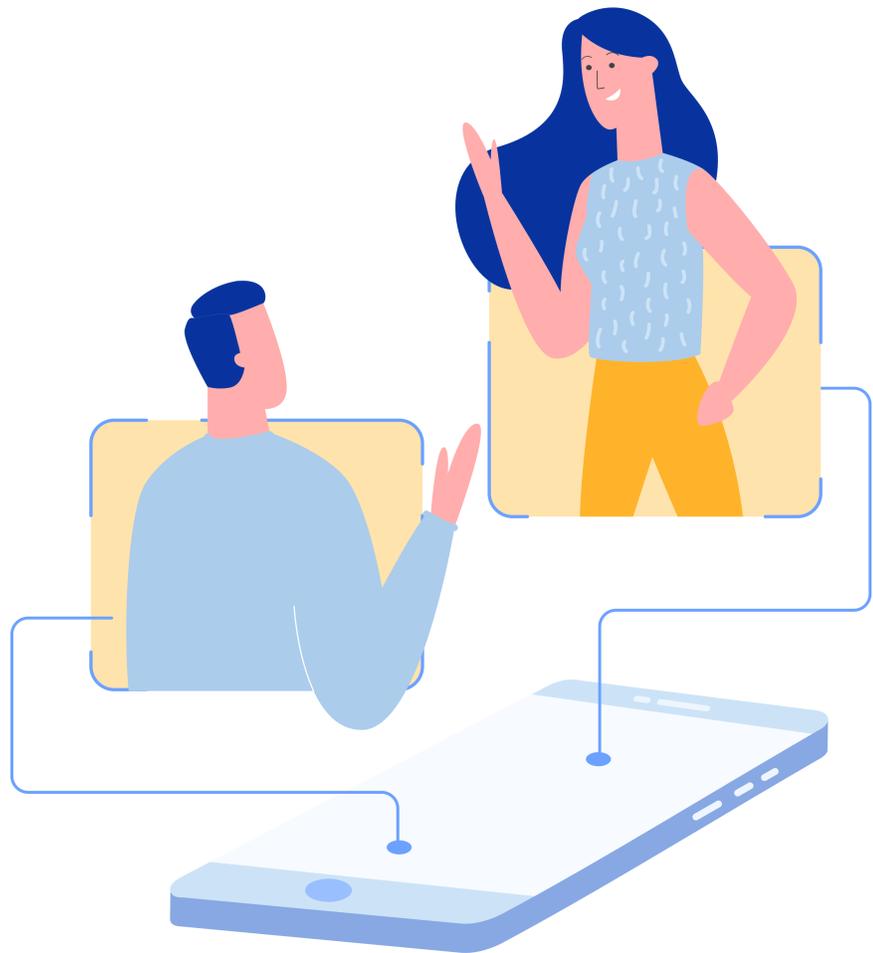
Utilize the Internet

As we've mentioned before, many home care agencies are stuck in the past when it comes to adopting technology. You should have a home care agency platform like Nursebuddy in place to manage the internal operations of your business. However, you should also branch out and use the internet to properly market and maintain your business's growth.

Social media is an excellent and inexpensive way to market your company, but it's also an incredible way to connect with your local community and build trust. Simply launch accounts on platforms like Facebook, Instagram, or LinkedIn to start increasing your reach.

Keep in mind that many clients and their families or caregivers are looking for domiciliary care options by searching the internet. By having an established presence in your geographic location by reaching out to relevant local potential clients online, you are putting yourself ahead of the competition.

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Consider Implementing Regular Team-Building Activities

A domiciliary agency is only as good as its staff. To run a business full of people who care about their work and their clients, it's vital to ensure an excellent company culture. This is the key to maintaining your domiciliary care agency in the long term.

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One way to establish a culture of trust and passion is to implement team-building activities. We're not talking about morning dance routines or costly team outings. Rather, we're talking about giving your carers the opportunity to voice their wants, needs, and suggestions for running the company better. Your carers are directly involved with your clients and have a better perspective on how to provide better care. Consider hosting monthly (paid) meetings with your care staff to create an open dialogue about the pain points your agency may be facing. Perhaps there isn't enough training currently, or staff hasn't properly transitioned from traditional bookkeeping to a platform like Nursebuddy. Either way, this is an opportunity to listen to your staff and bond together as the foundation of your agency.

Start by choosing the right software for your domiciliary care company!

Request a demo of Nursebuddy to get started at nursebuddy.co/pricing

