

Small Biz

SACRAMENTO BUSINESS JOURNAL

STREETWISE GROWTH STRATEGIES

Revenue or no, H.O.M.E puts client first *Serving the community since 1995*

Housing Options Made Easy for elders is a free referral service to seniors and the community. The client receives free referrals to a care facility, which pays H.O.M.E. a finder's fee. However, a unique aspect of H.O.M.E. is that facilities are not required to pay the fee. If the facility is within H.O.M.E.'s qualifications (clean, good care, reputation, caring with good state records), H.O.M.E. will recommend the facility regardless of compensation. We want our clients to see all of their options. Owner, Janet Kelly, developed her approach because of her own experiences several years ago. "I was faced with looking for a place for my mother. At the time I was not aware of referral services. I went to the state and received a list of homes which was very overwhelming." Kelly did end up using a referral service but she did not feel she was really being told all of her options.

H.O.M.E.'S optional pay structure is designed to assure clients and the care providers that the service bases its recommendation on how well the care provider fits the client's needs. That can include level of care, cost and geography. H.O.M.E works with more than 800 facilities providing various levels of care in a four county area around Sacramento. Kelly will refer a client to several providers, so the client does not know if the final choice has paid or fee or not. Kelly's offer to forego compensation helped break through some skepticism when she started the business 5 years ago. In one case, it led to an agreement with a care provider who had never before used a referral service. He liked her work so much that he offered to pay anyhow. Kelly was able to get off to a smooth start with her referral service because she has



worked in the healthcare field since 1978, primarily in customer service and as director of marketing for urgent care. Thus, she was already a familiar face to many of the places where she began to market H.O.M.E.

Kelly has added to her qualifications by obtaining a degree in gerontology at American River College and is currently attending classes to receive her Community Care Administrators License. She is also active in the California Association of Placement Services for Seniors and several other community based organizations specializing in the needs of seniors.



Housing Options Made Easy
for elders

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