

How to Choose a Residential Care Facility for the Elderly

Quick overview of residential considerations

Living Conditions

- √ Is the facility near family and friends?
- √ Is the facility near the proposed resident's old neighborhood?
- √ Is the facility near public transportation or is transportation included in the rent?
- √ Does the facility provide a private place for receiving visitors?
- √ Ask other residents how they like living there and whether they have any complaints.
- √ How do the other residents appear? Are they alert or confused, active or sedentary?
- √ Observe a mealtime and sample the foods.

Services

- √ What services are covered by the basic monthly fee?
- √ What services are available at extra cost?
- √ What arrangements does the facility make for residents to attend medical and dental appointments?
- √ Ask for a description and calendar of planned activities and *then verify that the activities actually take place.*
- √ Look at the license of the facility (which must be posted in a public place) and note the number of residents allowed, whether the facility is licensed for ambulatory, non-ambulatory or both, and when the license expires.

Staff

- √ Is there sufficient staff to attend to the needs of the type of population within the facility?
- √ Does the staff speak the proposed resident's language?

House Rules

- √ Ask to see a copy of the house rules.
- √ Are these rules with which you and the proposed resident would be comfortable?

- √ Can the proposed resident use his/her own furniture, bring pets, or accommodate other personal needs?

Safety

Inspect the physical plant for such safety and maintenance features as:

- √ Sprinkler systems
- √ Good lighting
- √ Cleanliness
- √ Room temperature
- √ Railings and stairs in good repair
- √ Bathroom handrails