



How to Find the Right Nursing Home

When it's getting harder to live alone and looks like they might need 24 hour care begin looking for the right nursing home to best meet their needs. Many people have a mistaken impression of these services, so it is important that you gain as much knowledge about them as possible. Choose a facility close to your home so that you can visit often and be an advocate for them. Go check them out on the weekend or in the evening. This is the truest time to see how they take care of residents.

Is the staff friendly and attentive? – The staff is what makes it more like home, not a pretty place.

Are there alarms going off, unanswered for extended periods of time?

Is the building, grounds and rooms clean? – This is often an indication of how the management expects staff to care for residents, as well as there are regulations governing this.

Do people look happy and well cared for? – Dressed and clean

Ask people, families or your friends what they think about the facility.

Ask employees how long they have worked there and what they like about working there. Longevity of staff indicates good leadership.

Read their annual state inspection or at www.medicare.gov Nursing Home Compare once you've narrowed it down. Remember no facility is perfect but they should strive to be.

Visit the therapy department and ask if they provide restorative therapy to help keep their patients independent as long as possible.

If you're just going to need skilled nursing care short term for rehab, many of the facilities now offer private suites with cable television and phones included. Don't choose a facility on this alone, the care is the most important thing.

Does the food smell and look appetizing? Do they season food unless someone has a dietary restriction? How much do they spend on food per person per day?

Do the residents have a water pitcher and glass in their room?

Do they allow smoking? This could put your family member in jeopardy of a fire and the staff takes time away from their care to supervise or assist smokers.

Do you see the Administrator walking around and checking on things?