Nursing Homes

What do Nursing Homes provide?

Nursing homes may provide a full range of care needs, including acute care and long-term care. You and your family should determine what criteria are most important to you when looking for a nursing home. We recommend that you contact the Long Term Care Ombudsman at 1-800-365-3112 prior to making any final decisions. Acute care rehabilitation is short-term care offered for people with injuries, illness or post-operative care needs who will eventually be able to recover outside a hospital. Longterm care is provided to individuals who require longer stays. Medicare may pay for some nursing home care, but only if certain qualifications and conditions are met.

Questions to ask when choosing Nursing Homes:

The facility

- Is the facility licensed by the Ohio Department of Health?
- Is the facility certified by Medicare or Medicaid?
- Can residents stay if their payment source is converted to Medicaid?
- Does the facility provide the appropriate level of care needed, i.e. skilled, intermediate and dementia care?
- Ask to see a copy of the most recent survey. Check deficiencies and ask about their plan for correction.
- Are there any openings in the facility? If not, how long is the waiting list?
- What are the admission qualifications?
- If there is a prolonged hospital stay, will the bed need to be paid during this time? How long will the bed be held?
- How much notice is given for rate increases for board, services, etc.?
- What type of billing process does the facility use?
- What services and supplies are included in the basic daily rate? Which services are charged above the daily rate? Ask for a written schedule of charges.
- How are concerns and complaints resolved?
- How do residents and families participate in care plan development? Is there a social worker available to help with planning?
- What is the policy for use of physical or chemical restraints?
- Are nurse and emergency call buttons located and operational at each resident’s bed and bathroom facilities? Are they being answered in a timely fashion?

Atmosphere

- Is the atmosphere and attitude of the staff members warm, pleasant and cheerful?
- Do the residents look well cared for and generally content?
- Speak with residents, families, volunteers and staff about the facility: how happy are they?
- Are guests allowed? What are visiting hours? Is there a private space for get-togethers?
- Does staff treat residents with dignity and respect? Are residents rights posted? Does the facility promote person centered care?
Staff and Services

- Determine the facility’s rules regarding physician coverage. Is there a physician on staff or call and, if so, how often are they available?
- Is the facility staffed with at least one RN or LPN on each shift? Are licensed nurses assigned to each floor or wing?
- What is the ratio of support staff per resident? What is the ratio of nurses? Is it the same for evenings and weekends?
- Are aides certified and fully trained before they are hired?
- Does the facility offer special therapies such as mental health services, physical therapy, occupational therapy, speech therapy, or respiratory therapy? Are these services provided by a licensed professional?
- Is there an activities director? What types and how often are the activities? Are there activities for residents confined to their rooms?
- Are religious activities offered and for which faiths? Do residents have an opportunity to attend religious services and talk with clergy?
- Does the facility arrange for transportation for residents?

Dining

- Will the facility meet food preferences and prescribed diets? □ Is there a menu selection offered?
- Are residents’ ethnic and cultural food preferences honored?
- Observe a meal. Does the food look appetizing and is it served on time and at the proper temperatures? Are the meals varied daily?
- Do residents who need it get help eating, whether in the dining room or in their own room? □ Are nutritious between-meal snacks available? Can snacks be kept in rooms?

Alzheimer’s Concerns

- Is there a separate unit for persons with Alzheimer’s disease?
- Is it a secure environment with space to wander?
- Is the staff trained specifically in Alzheimer’s care and how to handle specific behaviors? What kind of training is provided and how often?
- Are there activities designed specifically for residents with dementia?
- Does the dining room environment support the person with dementia’s remaining abilities and allow them to feel success during the dining experience?

For additional resources contact:

Alzheimer’s Association website (Community Resource Finder)   www.alz.org
Area Agency on Aging (Ashtabula) 800-686-7367   www.aaa11.org
Area Agency on Aging 216-621-8010   www.aaa11.org
(Cuyahoga, Geauga, Lake and Lorain) Medicare   www.medicare.gov
The Ohio Department of Aging website   www.ltcohi.org
Yellow Pages   www.yellowpages.com

Disclaimer: Listing in this resource list does not constitute an endorsement, referral or statement of qualification by the Alzheimer’s Association, nor does the Association screen or evaluate those listed. Users of this resource list should determine for themselves the qualifications of any nursing home facilities prior to utilizing services. This list is not all-inclusive.