alzheimer's association

Southeastern Wisconsin Chapter

Nursing Home Check List

If you are selecting a nursing home, you will be faced with additional considerations. Since you will not be around 24 hours a day to observe care, it's important to make sure that the environment and services will be a good fit.

It is also important to see the care firsthand. Ask to take a look around and talk with the staff, as well as residents and families who use the service. Again, examine the environment to see if it's clean, if residents seem content and to gauge your general sense of the residence.

Stop by one evening or weekend and see if the residence is any different than during the day. You may even want to make an unannounced visit.

- Family Involvement:
  - Families are encouraged to participate in care planning
  - Families are informed of changes in resident's condition and care needs
  - Families are encouraged to communicate with staff

- Staffing
  - Personal care and assistance is provided to the extent that it is needed
  - Staff recognize persons with dementia as unique individuals, and personalize care to meet specific needs, abilities and interests
  - Staff trained in dementia care

- Programs and Services
  - Appropriate services and programming based on specific health and behavioral care needs
  - Planned activities (activities on weekends, evenings, and meet the specific needs, interests and abilities of residents)
  - Transportation for medical appointments and shopping for personal items

- Meals
  - Regular meal and snack times
  - Appetizing food
  - Pleasant dining environment
  - Family and friends able to join at meal time
  - Staff have a plan for monitoring adequate nutrition
  - Staff provide appropriate assistance based on person abilities
  - No environmental distractions during meal time

- Environment
  - Indoor space the promotes independence and allows for freedom of movement
  - Safe and secure indoor and outdoor areas
  - Easy to navigate
  - Designated family visiting area

- Policies and procedures
  - Family and friends able to participate in care
  - Visiting hours
  - Discharge policy (learn about any situation or condition that would lead to a discharge from the facility)
  - Registration in Alzheimer's Association Safe Return program strongly encouraged

- State Inspection Results – If the facility is licensed, ask for recent inspection survey results; administrators are required to provide this information if asked.
  - Report should be dated within 9-15 months
  - Compare the number of deficiencies cited to the state average
  - If a facility has received a citation in a particular service area, be sure to ask questions about this area when you visit
  - Beware of choosing a facility with a very high number of deficiencies compared to other facilities in the area and the state average

Go to the Nursing Home Compare web site to learn how a facility compares to the national average at: www.medicare.gov/NHCompare/Home