
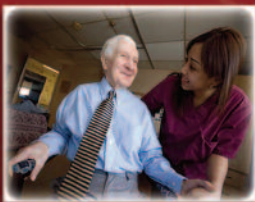


CHOOSING A NURSING FACILITY



A  Checklist
To Complete
Before
Selecting
the
Proper
Facility



State Senator
XX

XX Senatorial District

Choosing a nursing home is a difficult and important decision. To help you make a good choice, I have compiled this checklist, which you can take with you on visits before you select a facility.



LICENSING

- Does the facility have a current Pennsylvania license?
- Does the administrator have a current Pennsylvania license?



CERTIFICATION AND QUALITY

- If Medicare and/or Medicaid coverage is needed, is the facility certified to provide it?
- Does the facility have a formal quality assurance program?



LOCATION

- Is the facility pleasing to the potential resident?
- Is it convenient for the resident's personal physician?
- Is it convenient for the resident's family and friends?
- Is it near a hospital that serves facility residents?
- Is it near a hospital where your personal physician practices?



SAFETY

- Does the facility meet state and/or federal codes?
- Are written emergency evacuation plans with floor plans posted throughout the building?
- Are exits clearly marked and unobstructed?
- Are exit doors unlocked on the inside?
- Are doors to stairways kept closed?
- Are fire drills held periodically?
- Are there hand rails in hallways and grab bars in restrooms?
- Is the facility well-lighted inside?



- Is it free of hazards underfoot?
- Are chairs sturdy and not easily tipped?
- Are warning signs posted on wet/waxed floors?



CLEANLINESS

- Does the facility meet your standards for cleanliness?
- Is it free of unpleasant odors?



BEDROOMS

- Do bedrooms open into halls?
- Does each resident have a room with a window?
- Are rooms limited to four beds?
- Is there a privacy drapery for each bed?
- Is there a nurse call bell by each bed?
- Is fresh drinking water available at each bed?
- Is there at least one comfortable chair per resident?
- Is there a clothes closet or separate set of drawers for each resident?
- Is there room for a wheelchair to maneuver?
- Is care used in selecting roommates?
- Is there easy access to each bed?



LOBBY

- Is the atmosphere welcoming?
- Is the furniture attractive and comfortable?
- Is there a bulletin board with activities posted?
- Are certificates and licenses on display?



HALLWAYS

- Are the hallways wide enough for two wheelchairs to pass easily?
- Are they well-lighted?

(Continued Inside)

DINING ROOM

- Is the dining area attractive and inviting?
- Are tables convenient for those in wheelchairs?
- Is food tasty and attractively served?
- Is time adequate to eat meals?
- Do meals match posted menus?
- Are those needing help receiving it?

FOOD

- Does a dietician plan menus for residents on special diets?
- Are personal likes and dislikes taken into consideration?
- Does the menu vary from meal to meal?
- Are snacks available?
- Is food delivered to residents unable or unwilling to eat in the dining room?
- Are warm foods served warm?



KITCHEN

- Is the food preparation area separated from dishwashing and garbage disposal?
- Is food needing refrigeration put away promptly?
- Does kitchen help observe sanitation rules?

ACTIVITY ROOMS

- Are rooms available for resident activities?
- Are supplies and equipment available? (games, yarn, kiln, etc.)
- Are residents using equipment?

SPECIAL PURPOSE ROOMS

- Are rooms set aside for physical examinations or therapy?
- Are rooms available for private visits with family and friends?



ISOLATION ROOMS

- Is a room set aside to house those with a contagious illness?

BATHROOMS

- Are toilets convenient to bedrooms?
- Are they easy for a wheelchair-bound person to use?
- Is there a sink in each bathroom?
- Are nurse call bells located near each toilet?
- Are hand grips on or near toilets?
- Do bathtubs and showers have non-slip surfaces and hand grips?



GROUNDS

- Is there easy access for the handicapped?
- Is outdoor furniture available for residents and visitors?
- Are the grounds free of hazardous objects?

RELIGIOUS OBSERVANCES

- Are arrangements made for residents to worship as they please?

MEDICAL INFORMATION

- Is a physician available in an emergency?
- Are personal physicians allowed?
- Is regular medical attention assured?
- Are medical records kept on file?
- Are residents involved in plans for treatment?
- Is confidentiality of records assured?
- Are other medical services (dentist, podiatrist, etc.) available?
- Will the resident's personal physician be notified in an emergency?
- Does the facility report periodically to the resident's personal physician?

CARE PLANNING

- Does the facility provide services for terminally ill residents and their families?
- Does the facility have an Alzheimer's disease program?
- Does the facility care for mentally ill residents?

HOSPITALIZATION

- Does the facility have an arrangement with a nearby hospital?
- Is emergency transportation readily available?



NURSING CARE

- Is a registered nurse responsible for the nursing staff in a skilled nursing facility?
- Are licensed nurses on duty around the clock?
- Are trained nurse aides and orderlies on duty in homes providing nursing care?

PHARMACY

- Are routine and emergency drugs available?
- Does a pharmacist review resident drug regimens in a skilled nursing facility?
- Is a pharmacist available for staff and resident consultation?

THERAPY

- Is there a physical therapy room available under the direction of a qualified physical therapist?
- Is therapy available to meet special needs?
- Are services of an occupational therapist or speech pathologist available?

ACTIVITIES

- Are resident preferences observed?
- Are group and individual activities available?
- Are residents encouraged to participate?
- Are outside trips planned?
- Do volunteers work with residents?

SOCIAL SERVICES

- Is a social worker available to help residents and families?

GROOMING

- Is assistance with bathing and grooming available?
- Are barbers and beauticians available?



STAFF ATTITUDES

- Does the staff show interest in and affection for individual residents?
- Is the staff courteous?
- Is the administrator available to answer questions, hear complaints or discuss problems?
- Does the staff respond quickly to resident calls for assistance?
- Does the staff know residents by name?

RESIDENT RIGHTS

- Does the facility have a written description of resident rights and responsibilities?
- Is the staff trained to protect resident dignity and privacy?
- Does the facility have a resident council?

COSTS

- Are all services covered in the basic daily charge?
- If not, is a list available of specific services not covered in the basic rate? (Some facilities have rate schedules covering linen, personal laundry, haircuts, dental care, etc.)
- Are advance payments returned if the resident leaves the facility?



YOUR ROLE

- If you are selecting a nursing facility for someone else, are you:
 - Involving this person in the decision?
 - Prepared to ease the transition by going along on admission day and staying a few hours during the "settling in" period?
- Ready to visit frequently and encourage friends to make similar visits?
- Willing to provide the same amount of love in the nursing home as you would at home?

