



Guide to Choosing an Assisted Living Facility

Choosing an assisted living facility is a very personal choice. The residence must be able to meet all of your care needs (physical, emotional and psychological) and ideally will allow you to “age in place”. Above all, it should be where you will feel most at home! However, there are five top criteria we recommend you consider to ensure you are making the best choice.

1. Staff Qualifications

Are all clinical staff licensed personnel? Quality of care is critical for your physical, emotional and psychological wellbeing. Ideally, all clinical staff will be licensed personnel. In NH, this includes Registered Nurses (RN), Medication Nursing Assistants (MNA) and Licensed Nursing Assistants (LNA). In addition to ensuring all clinical staff are licensed, validate which staff are on-site during which shifts and whether the RNs are on-call if not present on site for every shift. Of critical importance is whether medication administration is available 24 hours a day. Only RNs and MNAs may administer medication. If you require pain medication or are diabetic for example, it is imperative that RNs or MNAs are on site 24/7 to administer your medication.





2. Staff-To-Resident Ratios

What is the typical staff to resident ratio during each shift? In addition to licensure, the number of staff on site is the second key component to the quality of care you will receive. Will staff be available to assist as needed at any time? Are enough staff scheduled on each shift such that they will have sufficient time to spend with you to get to know you and your interests, beyond just meeting your care needs?

3. Size of Residence and Atmosphere

Assisted living communities vary widely in size and the number of residents. Are you extra amenities such as fitness centers and multiple dining options or a more personal home-like setting? This is truly personal preference but there are some factors to consider that are impacted by the size of the residence. In a larger facility, will you have consistent staff caring for you? The more consistent the staff, the more comfortable you may feel with them. In addition, they will be better able to identify even minute changes in your physical, emotional and psychological state, providing for more timely and thorough care. In a larger facility, will they provide personal, individualized care? In a larger facility, will you feel comfortable participating in activities or withdraw more to your bedroom? Research has shown that participating in activities and socializing have positive benefits on your overall health and decrease the likelihood of depression. In a smaller facility, will they provide all of the activities and services you would like?



4. Pricing

It is very important to determine what is included in your monthly pricing. Many assisted living facilities in NH charge additional fees for such services as laundry, meals delivered to your room and participation in activities while others offer all-inclusive pricing. In some cases, you may be responsible for paying the monthly fee for an additional month after vacating the residence. Ensure that you fully read the Resident Agreement or Resident Contract and are aware of all of the potential costs or fees you may be responsible for paying to determine a true cost comparison between residences and to budget accordingly.



5. Availability of Senior Management

For both the resident and family members, how accessible will members of senior management be to answer any questions or concerns you may have? How involved are they in the daily management of the residence and in the care planning for each resident. Senior Management includes the Administrator, Director of Nursing and key RN staff involved in your care or the care of your loved one. It is important to feel comfortable and confident that Senior Management will be accessible to you as needed and highly involved in the daily operations of the residence.

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Summary

Choosing an assisted living facility can be challenging. These five areas are of most importance when comparing residences to ensure you are making an appropriate and informed decision. Above all, it involves personal choice of where you believe you will feel most at home and have your needs met! If you would like additional information about our residence or assisted living facilities in New Hampshire in general, please do not hesitate to contact us at (603) 343-4475.

About Carriage Hill

From the very start, Carriage Hill was designed to be a small assisted living facility that would offer intimate, highly individualized attention and a friendly, family style atmosphere in the style of true Yankee hospitality. Each of the 24 residents enjoys his or her own room and private bath with walk-in shower. For more information visit www.carriagehillassistedliving.com.