



CONSUMER-TO-CONSUMER: TIPS FOR GETTING GOOD CARE AT AN ASSISTED LIVING FACILITY

Choosing a Facility

This section gives you advice and recommendations from the experts – the people who are actually receiving care and services in an assisted living facility/group home. Each of the individuals quoted below is a long-term care consumer who was interviewed and asked what suggestions they had about choosing a provider.

From Consumer to Consumer

- *Look for a place where you can have your own room.* - Bill
- *Ask questions like, “Are there specific times for meals? Is there a specific time when you have to get up in the morning? How do you get the assistance you need in the morning when there are lots of residents who need to be helped at the same time? What happens if there is an emergency and your aide can’t come when she’s supposed to? Is transportation provided and is there a cost?”* - Fran
- *Find out what restrictions or policies they have. Ask for a copy of the policies. For instance, in one place I lived there was a policy that you couldn’t stay if you couldn’t give yourself your own insulin shot. Where I live now, the policies say the facility doesn’t provide special diets. If you’re on a diabetic diet, you need to know that beforehand.* - Jim
- *Find out if religious services are offered in the facility if that’s important to you.* - Joe
- *Check out the activities program. This is very important because activities get you out of your room and mingling with others. Look at the activities calendar.* - Mary Jean
- *Choose a place that has an active resident council. Find out what kinds of things the council does. Does the council work on resident concerns or just do things like bake sales to raise money for curtains in the dining room?* - Jim
- *Get written materials about the places you are interested in. You can ask them to mail them to you. Read through the materials before you go visit. That way you can ask better questions.* - Fran
- *Make sure the staff communicates in a language you can understand. It makes a whole lot of difference.* - Jim
- *Find out who provides transportation and where exactly you can go. I had a doctor in another county I needed to see, but the para-transit service I used wouldn’t go outside the county where the facility was located. This made it very difficult to get to appointments. You may want to choose a place where transportation isn’t a problem.* – Jim

For more information and resources, go to www.theconsumervoice.org

National Consumer Voice for Quality Long-Term Care (formerly NCCNHR) is a nonprofit organization founded in 1975 by Elma E. Holder to protect the rights, safety and dignity of American’s long-term care residents.