



## Tips for People Moving from a Nursing Home Back into the Community

“Nursing home transition” is a term used when people who live in a nursing home return to the community. Most states provide some type of assistance to nursing home residents who wish to move back home or into a new home in the community. This assistance often comes from a state nursing home transition program.

### Whom do you talk to if you want to move out of your nursing home?

- Start by telling the social worker in your facility that you would like to move back to the community.
- Contact your local Area Agency on Aging (AAA). AAAs coordinate and often provide a range of services to assist older adults and frequently younger persons with disabilities maintain their independence and dignity. To find your local AAA, call 202-872-0888 or go to <http://www.n4a.org/about-n4a/?fa=aaa-title-VI>
- Contact your local Aging and Disability Resource Center (ADRC). ADRCs can help you learn about local programs and services. To get a list of ADRCs in your area, call (202) 401-4634 or visit <http://www.adrc-tae.acl.gov/tiki-index.php?page=HomePage&view=ADRC&submitter=Select+Program>
- Contact your local long-term care ombudsman. Ombudsmen work to resolve complaints on behalf of long-term care residents; they can answer questions, give suggestions, offer assistance and support, or address issues you may have. To find your state ombudsman program, go to <http://www.ltombudsman.org/ombudsman> or call the Consumer Voice at (202) 332-2275 or toll free at (866) 992-3668.

### What does the nursing home transition process involve? What should you expect?

- Eligibility determination. The state decides if you are eligible to move out.
- Review. A member of the transition program does a review to learn about your needs and goals. You should participate actively in the review process and involve anyone you would like, including family members, friends, or the ombudsman.
- Transition plan.

#### Creating the plan

- Information gathered during your review is used to create your transition plan. A transition coordinator - with your involvement - helps you create your plan; make sure to participate as much as you can! Here are just some of the areas your plan should address:
  - *Affordable, accessible housing.*
  - *Personal Assistance.* What assistance do you need with activities such as bathing, dressing, positioning, shopping, laundry and more? How many hours of care/service are necessary?
  - *Accessible, affordable transportation.*
  - *Access to health care providers and medications.* Do you already have a doctor in the community or do you need to find one? Do you have a plan in place for getting your medications once you leave the nursing home?

- *Home modification/assistive technology/durable medical equipment.* What do you need in order to live comfortably in your home and to function as independently as possible in all aspects of your life?
- *Programs in the community.* What kind of support would help you live in the community successfully?
- *Finances.* What do you have to do to support yourself financially? Many individuals will have to take care of the following:
  - Applying for Social Security Disability Insurance (SSDI) or Supplemental Security Income (SSI).
  - Setting up a monthly budget.
  - Applying for community Medicaid.
  - Applying for food stamps, utility assistance, or other benefits as needed.
  - Filling out change of address forms.

**\*Your social worker should help you with these tasks.**
- *Roles of Family and Friends.* Do you have family, friends or others you can ask to support you once you are back in the community? If not, what are some ways you can connect with people who will support you?
- *Community Connections.* Are you interested in participating in a faith community or recreational activities, going to a senior center, volunteering, or being a member of a club or service organization?

#### **Carrying out your plan.**

- Get as involved as you can in carrying out the transition activities.
- If you qualify, money may be available through the Money Follows the Person grant program to pay for the security deposit, first month's rent, setting up utilities, and other items such as furniture.
- Your transition coordinator can help you get furniture, move your possessions into your new home, make sure you have food and necessary medications, and other aspects of the move.
- Before you move out of the nursing home, there should be a discharge planning meeting. Use that meeting to make sure everything is in place.

#### **What happens after you move out?**

- In many cases, your transition coordinator works with you for a year after you leave the nursing home. Call your coordinator with any questions or concerns.
- Ask your local ombudsman if he or she is available to help people living at home.
- At some point, a case manager replaces the transition coordinator.

#### **Additional Resources**

- For more in-depth information on these and other related topics, see the *Piecing Together Quality Long-Term Care Guide* produced by the Consumer Voice [http://www.theconsumervoice.org/piecing-together-quality-long-term-care/pdf#National\\_Guide](http://www.theconsumervoice.org/piecing-together-quality-long-term-care/pdf#National_Guide).