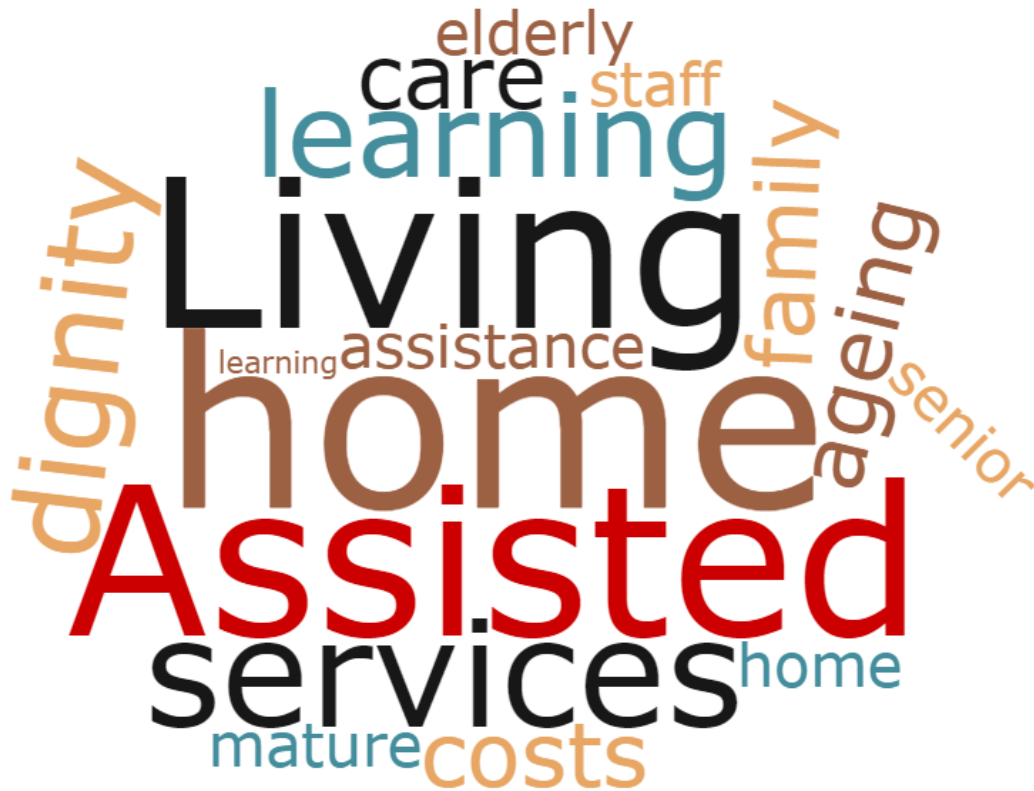


How to Choose an Assisted Living Residence



2019

CO Department of Public Health & Environment
Health Facilities & Emergency Medical Services Division

Health Facilities and Emergency Medical Services Division Mission Statement:

“Protect the health, safety and welfare of all health care system users and ensure access to quality healthcare for everyone in Colorado”

How to Choose an Assisted Living Residence

This brochure was designed with the assistance of the Assisted Living Advisory Committee to help consumers choose the most appropriate assisted living residence for themselves or loved ones. Remember to use all five senses when visiting and making your selection. Trust your initial feelings and reactions. These questions will assist you in your decision making process.

Resident Agreement Policies

1. Do I have a restriction that would prevent my admission, as detailed in section 11.2 of the Chapter VII regulations?
2. Have I reviewed the terms of the resident agreement?
3. Does the resident agreement detail charges, refunds, fees to hold a bed, and security deposit reimbursement?
4. Are the specific services offered clearly identified in the resident agreement?
5. Do I have a choice in the selection of medical/health care providers if additional services are needed?
6. Have I reviewed the house rules?
7. Have I reviewed all of the reasons for which I may be transferred or discharged?

License/Certification

1. Is the residence licensed by the state and in good standing? Have I checked the Colorado Department of Public Health and Environment's website for inspection results?
2. Is the residence Medicaid certified?

Space

1. Is the bedroom private or shared?
2. Is the bathroom private or shared?
3. Are the shared areas clean?
4. Is there space for my personal belongings?
5. Does the floor plan allow for easy mobility for me?
6. Are there private areas other than the bedroom for visits?

Safety

1. Is bathroom safety equipment installed or available if needed?(grab bars,raised toilet seat)
2. How do residents summon assistance when needed? Is there a call system
3. Is my physician or other external service agency involved?
4. Are the care plans updated to reflect changes in care needs?

Care Plans

1. Am I involved in the care planning process?
2. Is my representative involved in the care planning process?
3. Is my physician or other external service agency involved?
4. Are the care plans updated to reflect changes in care needs?

Personal Services

Does the residence provide?

- Assistance with dressing?
- Assistance with bathing? How often?
- Assistance with toileting and incontinence care?
- Assistance with transfers from wheelchair to bed, etc.?
- Assistance with ambulation?
- Assistance with medications?
- Assistance with getting to and from activities?
- Assistance with appliances, including: splints, braces, support hose?

Staff

1. Has the administrator been in place for a time? What experience and training has the administrator had?
2. Do staff receive training to work with special needs or behaviors, such as dementia?
3. Is there high staff turn-over?
4. What is the ratio of staff to residents? How does the residence determine its staffing ratios?
5. Are staff awake at night? What are their responsibilities at night?

Meals

1. Are specialized diets available?
2. Are cultural or ethnic preferences considered?
3. How are residents involved in menu planning?
4. Can residents help with meal preparation and have access to the kitchen?
5. Where can I find between meal snacks and beverages?
6. How would I get extra helpings and substitutions?

Socialization

1. What types of activities are available within the residence?
2. Does the residence take residents on outings?
3. Is somebody designated to conduct activities?
4. Would my interests match the level/type of activities provided?
5. Are there residents I can socialize with?
6. Is there a written schedule of activities?
7. Does the residence provide transportation?

Communication

1. Does the residence inform family/physician when an unusual event occurs?
2. Do you feel comfortable talking with the administrator, financial staff, direct care staff?
3. Is the residences' grievance procedure and complaint resolution easily understood?
4. Is telephone use accessible and conducive to privacy?

Facility Tour/Observations

1. Have I toured the entire residence?
2. Have I observed the kitchen and pantry?
3. Have I observed a meal?
4. Does the atmosphere seem pleasant?
5. Does there seem to be enough staff available?
6. Are pets allowed?
7. Do residents seem happy and engaged?
8. Do residents appear to be clean, groomed and odor-free?
9. Have I observed for appropriate staff/resident interaction?
10. Have I observed for cleanliness and odors?

Additional Resources

State Long-Term Care Ombudsman

Disability Law Colorado- Serves as an advocate for residents and families

303-722-0300 or 1-800-288-1376. dlcmail@disabilitylawco.org

State PACE (Program for All-Inclusive Care for the Elderly Ombudsman Program
Disability Law Colorado- Serves as an advocate for adults living in Assisted Living
Residences, who are in the PACE program
303-722-0300 or 1-800-288-1376. lmcmahon@disabilitylawco.org

Area Agency on Aging
Denver Regional Council of Governments
Serves as an advocate for residents and families in the Denver Metro area
303-480-6734 AreaAgencyonAging@drcog.org

Colorado Department of Public Health and Environment
Health Facilities and Emergency Medical Services Division
Responsible for the licensure and inspection of Assisted Living Residences
303-692-2836

We realize that making the decision to place a loved one in a care facility can be difficult.
When making your final selection keep these tips in mind:

- Trust your initial feelings and reactions.
- Try not to make a hasty decision. There are many residences from which to choose.
- Consider the location of the residence. Your presence and involvement in the residence is important to the care your loved one receives.
- Make an unannounced visit after your initial tour.
- Talk to residents.
- Ask for references.
- Call the ombudsman programs referenced above for additional feedback.
- Ask to take home copies of the admission packet, resident agreement, resident rights and house rules.
- Take the time to review the materials. Ask lots of questions!