

Getting started: How to choose an Assisted Living provider

Speak with an advisor who is knowledgeable; they can help you gain an understanding of the topics important to you and will help ensure that you are making good plans for both the short- as well as the long-term.

Although most people walk into one or more communities that they've driven by or have heard about, this is not necessarily the best way to go about your search for senior living. You should be prepared to ask the right questions and gather specific information about each community you would visit. You will definitely want to know whether the community suits you and your needs.

If you do choose to drop in on a senior living provider, you'll likely be introduced to the marketer or general manager of the building; or in their absence, you may be introduced to a nurse or other appointed representative. These individuals each have different titles, depending upon what the businesses choose to call them. Here are common titles for the people you will encounter:

This person provides tours, information and helps you decide if this property may be a good match:

- Admissions
- Community Relations
- Community Services
- Marketing
- Move-in Coordinator
- Retirement Counselor
- Sales Representative

This person oversees the staff and operations of the building:

- Administrator
- Executive Director

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- General Manager
- Manager

This person oversees the care of residents:

- Care Coordinator
- Care Manager
- Director of Care
- Director of Nursing Services
- Health Care Director
- Health Care Director
- Nurse
- Wellness Director

Gone are the days when people thumbed through the Yellow Page ads to get their information. Nowadays, people frequently turn to the internet for resources. Although you can view information and see where some communities are located, you aren't necessarily going to get a clear picture of what a community will and will not offer. And always keep in mind that you are viewing advertising material. The information posted on community web sites is intended to inform, but it is also intended to sell you on the idea that this is a good move for you.

Keep in mind as well; there are dozens of people working in the senior housing industry who present themselves as community resource experts. In reality, it takes a person years to visit all of the options and to be fully aware of the multitude of factors involved in making a decision to move.

The very best way to select a community is to work with a referral agency. Look for one who is reputable in the community and who will listen to your specific and individualized needs. Then you'll be able to rely on the professional advisor to act as your sounding board and support you

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throughout the process of selecting a community. For the most part, advisors don't make the selection for you, but they do narrow the scope of choices to communities which actually meet your specific criteria and interests. The majority of referral agencies are contracted with the housing communities, so there is little or no cost to you for accessing their assistance.

[Referral & Placement Agencies](#)

Another option is to work with a fee-for-service case manager to support you. Not all case managers can assist in defining the specific housing and care options for you, but they can help you define your needs so that you can be better informed as to which community type best meets your need.

[Geriatric Assessments, Counseling Care & Case Management](#)

Once you have a more refined list of options, then it is time to meet with the admissions representatives of the communities. You will want to discuss your specific needs and interests, and you will want to listen to the presentation of services offered to you. The State of Washington has now implemented a specific document that outlines the services the assisted living community will and will not offer. You should ask for a copy of this document when you visit a community.

Keep in mind that you are simply getting a one-sided view of the community by talking to the admissions representative. Without a doubt, people working in these positions have your best interests in mind; however, it is their job to represent their community and to encourage the move-in to occur.

To know what is available in our community, call to arrange a time to meet with a CHOICE Advisor by calling **800-361-0138**. We're available 7 days a week, 365 days a year by appointment or by phone.

Unique solution ID: #1004

Author: Tech Support

Last update: 2007-05-05 21:57