

## Guide to Visiting a Facility/Community/Nursing Home

- **Is the community fresh and clean?** Look past the furnishings. Look at details. Also ask how often housekeeping is provided in each room or apartment.
- **How does the community smell?** Odors may indicate a lack of cleanliness or a temporary problem that was caused by a recent incident. If the odors are primarily in one area, it may indicate the problem is temporary and a single incident. Ask about the cause. Don't forget to ask about the laundry service. Who does the laundry and what does it cost? Is there a personal laundry room on site?
- **Busy residents are happy.** Ask to watch activities And observe if they are well attended. Is the staff enjoying the activity also? Look at the community calendar and see if the activities match your loved one's interests. Ask about religious services if this is important.
- **Happy staff!** Staff attitude and friendliness are Important. How does the staff interact with residents? Do they listen and make eye contact? Do you feel welcomed while on a tour? How do staff members interact with each other?
- **Access to being outdoors!** What outdoor areas exist? Does the area feel safe and secure? Is the area shared with staff? Are activities planned for outdoors?
- **Dining!** Ask about entrée choices, dining hours and procedures. If at all possible, bring your loved one in for a meal to taste the food and meet some of the residents. Ask what happens when someone doesn't come to the dining room for a meal?
- **Safe and sound.** Safety and security are important. Are the bathrooms equipped with grab bars? Are there tubs in the bathrooms? Is there an emergency call system in the bathroom/bedroom? How is this monitored and who responds? Ask about staffing? Who will be there if someone needs help? How are medications managed?
- **Care with dignity.** Observe residents on your tour. Are they clean-shaven and well-groomed. Look at their hair and nails – how do they look? Discuss bathing options and your loved one's preferences.
- **When it's time to leave.** No senior likes to move a lot. Ask about specific move-out criteria. Under what circumstances is a resident asked to move? What type of notice is give by them, or by you. In most cases a 30 day written notice is required.

**Trust your instincts.** This is a personal decision. As you tour, can you imagine you or your loved one living there and being comfortable? Did you feel at ease while touring? Was the staff friendly and inviting? The property doesn't have to be the most beautiful to be the best place for them, although you can have it all! Follow your instincts and your heart.