

AUSTIN MEMORY CARE COMMUNITY GUIDE

Your Comprehensive Resource for Finding the Right Memory Care in Austin

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UNDERSTANDING MEMORY CARE

What is Memory Care?

Memory care is a specialized form of long-term care designed specifically for individuals living with Alzheimer's disease, dementia, and other memory-related conditions. These communities provide 24-hour supervised care in a secure environment with staff specially trained in dementia care.

How Memory Care Differs from Assisted Living

Feature	Assisted Living	Memory Care
Security	Open environment	Secured entrances/exits to prevent wandering
Staff Training	General care training	Specialized dementia/Alzheimer's training
Staff-to-Resident Ratio	Moderate	Higher staffing levels
Activities	General social activities	Cognitive stimulation & memory programs
Environment	Standard layout	Designed to reduce confusion & agitation
Cost	\$\$\$	\$\$\$\$ (Higher due to specialized care)

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Types of Memory Impairments Served

Memory care communities in Austin typically serve residents with:

- **Alzheimer's Disease** (most common)
- **Vascular Dementia**
- **Lewy Body Dementia**
- **Frontotemporal Dementia**
- **Parkinson's Disease-related Dementia**
- **Mixed Dementia**
- **Mild Cognitive Impairment** (in some communities)



IS IT TIME FOR MEMORY CARE?

Warning Signs That Memory Care May Be Needed

Safety Concerns:

- ✓ Wandering from home or getting lost in familiar places
- ✓ Leaving stove/appliances on, creating fire hazards
- ✓ Forgetting to take critical medications
- ✓ Falls becoming more frequent
- ✓ Unsafe driving or getting lost while driving
- ✓ Wandering outside at night

Caregiver Burnout:

- ✓ Primary caregiver is physically or emotionally exhausted
- ✓ Caregiver's health is suffering
- ✓ 24-hour supervision is needed but unavailable at home
- ✓ Family relationships are strained due to caregiving stress

Behavioral Changes:

- ✓ Increased aggression, anxiety, or paranoia
- ✓ Sundowning (late afternoon/evening confusion) is severe
- ✓ Significant personality changes
- ✓ Wandering or exit-seeking behavior
- ✓ Resisting care from family members

Activities of Daily Living (ADL) Challenges:

- ✓ Unable to bathe, dress, or toilet independently
- ✓ Forgetting to eat or drink
- ✓ Significant weight loss
- ✓ Poor hygiene despite reminders
- ✓ Incontinence becoming unmanageable at home

Stages of Dementia & Care Needs

Early Stage (Mild):

- May still be appropriate for independent or assisted living with supervision
- Memory lapses and mild confusion
- Can often participate in decision-making

Middle Stage (Moderate):

- **Memory care is typically appropriate at this stage**
- Significant memory loss and confusion
- Increased need for supervision and assistance
- Behavioral changes become more pronounced

Late Stage (Severe):

- Advanced memory care or skilled nursing may be needed
- Requires total assistance with ADLs
- May need specialized medical care
- Communication becomes very limited



AUSTIN MEMORY CARE LANDSCAPE

Overview of Austin-Area Memory Care

Number of Memory Care Communities: 40+ specialized memory care communities in the Greater Austin area

Geographic Coverage:

- **Central Austin:** Downtown, Hyde Park, Tarrytown, Clarksville
- **North Austin:** Round Rock, Cedar Park, Georgetown, Pflugerville
- **South Austin:** South Congress, Circle C, Sunset Valley, Buda, Kyle
- **East Austin:** Mueller, East Riverside, Manor
- **West Austin:** West Lake Hills, Bee Cave, Lakeway, Dripping Springs

Average Costs in Austin (2025)

Memory Care Monthly Costs:

- **Low Range:** \$4,500 - \$5,500/month (basic care, shared rooms)
- **Mid Range:** \$5,500 - \$7,500/month (most common, private rooms)
- **High Range:** \$7,500 - \$12,000+/month (luxury communities, specialized care)

Austin vs. Texas Average:

- Austin memory care costs are approximately 15-20% higher than the Texas state average
- National average: \$5,500/month
- Austin average: \$6,500/month

What Influences Cost in Austin?

1. **Location:** Central Austin communities cost more than suburbs
2. **Room Type:** Private rooms cost \$1,000-2,000 more than shared
3. **Level of Care:** Advanced dementia requires higher staffing
4. **Amenities:** Luxury communities with resort-style amenities cost more
5. **Size of Community:** Smaller, boutique communities may charge premium prices

WHAT TO LOOK FOR IN A MEMORY CARE COMMUNITY

Essential Features of Quality Memory Care

1. Security & Safety

- ✓ Secured entrances and exits (but not institutional-feeling)
- ✓ Monitored outdoor spaces where residents can safely walk
- ✓ Emergency call systems in all rooms and common areas
- ✓ Well-lit hallways and rooms to reduce confusion
- ✓ Non-slip flooring throughout
- ✓ Wanderguard or similar technology to prevent elopement
- ✓ Secure outdoor gardens or courtyards

2. Specialized Staff Training

- ✓ All staff trained in dementia care techniques
- ✓ Understanding of validation therapy and redirection
- ✓ Ongoing education on latest dementia care research
- ✓ CPR and first aid certified
- ✓ Medication management training

- ✓ Crisis intervention training
- ✓ Low staff turnover (ask about this!)

3. Staffing Ratios

- ✓ **Minimum acceptable:** 1 caregiver to 8 residents during day
- ✓ **Better ratios:** 1:6 or 1:5 during day
- ✓ **Night staffing:** At least 1:10, preferably better
- ✓ 24/7 awake staff (never sleeping overnight staff)
- ✓ RN or LVN on-site or on-call 24/7

4. Memory-Supportive Environment

- ✓ Clear signage with pictures and words
- ✓ Color-coded hallways or themed neighborhoods
- ✓ Memory boxes outside resident rooms
- ✓ Circular walking paths to reduce frustration
- ✓ Reduced noise levels
- ✓ Natural lighting throughout
- ✓ Homelike atmosphere (not institutional)
- ✓ Contrast in colors to help with depth perception

5. Meaningful Activities & Programming

- ✓ Daily structured activities appropriate for cognitive levels
- ✓ Small group activities (not overwhelming large groups)
- ✓ Music therapy programs
- ✓ Art therapy or creative expression
- ✓ Reminiscence therapy
- ✓ Light exercise programs (chair yoga, walking groups)
- ✓ Sensory stimulation activities
- ✓ Pet therapy or resident pets
- ✓ Activities calendar that's actually followed

6. Dining Experience

- ✓ Nutritious, appealing meals
- ✓ Assistance with eating as needed
- ✓ Accommodations for swallowing difficulties
- ✓ Finger foods available for those who wander
- ✓ Dementia-friendly dining room (calm, not overstimulating)
- ✓ Flexible meal times
- ✓ Adaptive utensils and dishes available
- ✓ Snacks available 24/7

7. Healthcare & Medical Services

- ✓ Medication management by trained staff
- ✓ Regular monitoring of health changes
- ✓ Coordination with physicians and specialists
- ✓ On-site or regular visits from healthcare providers
- ✓ Hospice care partnerships (if needed)
- ✓ Physical therapy available
- ✓ Ability to age in place through disease progression

8. Family Involvement & Communication

- ✓ Open visitation policy
- ✓ Family support groups
- ✓ Regular care conferences
- ✓ Transparent communication about changes
- ✓ Family education programs about dementia
- ✓ Portal or app for updates and photos
- ✓ Family events and activities

? QUESTIONS TO ASK DURING TOURS

Staff & Training Questions

1. **What specialized dementia training does your staff receive?**
 - o *Look for: Specific programs like Positive Approach to Care, Montessori for Aging, or Validation Therapy*
2. **What is your staff-to-resident ratio during the day, evening, and overnight?**
 - o *Look for: 1:6 or better during day, 1:10 or better at night*
3. **What is your staff turnover rate?**
 - o *Look for: Under 30% annually (lower is better)*
4. **Is there always a nurse on-site or on-call?**
 - o *Look for: RN or LVN available 24/7*
5. **How do you handle residents who become agitated or aggressive?**
 - o *Look for: Redirection techniques, not medication as first response*

Safety & Security Questions

6. **How do you prevent wandering and ensure residents don't leave unsupervised?**
 - o *Look for: Multiple safety systems, not just locked doors*
7. **What safety features are in place throughout the community?**
 - o *Look for: Emergency systems, non-slip floors, good lighting*
8. **Can residents access outdoor spaces safely?**
 - o *Look for: Secured courtyards or gardens with shaded areas*
9. **What happens during an emergency or natural disaster?**

- o *Look for: Detailed emergency plan, backup power, staff training*

Care & Services Questions

10. **What levels of dementia care do you provide?**
 - o *Look for: Ability to care through progression of disease*
11. **How do you handle residents with challenging behaviors?**
 - o *Look for: Person-centered approach, not punishment-based*
12. **Can residents age in place here, or will they need to transfer later?**
 - o *Look for: Hospice partnerships, skilled nursing availability*
13. **How do you manage medications?**
 - o *Look for: Trained staff, locked medication storage, detailed records*
14. **What medical services are included in the monthly fee?**
 - o *Look for: Clear list of included services vs. additional costs*
15. **Do you have relationships with local hospitals and physicians?**
 - o *Look for: Established partnerships for coordinated care*

Activities & Daily Life Questions

16. **What does a typical day look like for residents?**
 - o *Look for: Structured but flexible routine*
17. **How are activities tailored to different cognitive levels?**
 - o *Look for: Small groups, modified activities for various abilities*
18. **What happens if a resident doesn't want to participate in activities?**
 - o *Look for: Respect for individual preferences, alternative options*
19. **Can residents maintain their routines and preferences from home?**
 - o *Look for: Personalized care plans*

Dining Questions

20. **What are mealtimes like? Can I observe a meal service?**
 - o *Look for: Calm environment, staff assistance, resident dignity*
21. **How do you accommodate special diets or swallowing difficulties?**
 - o *Look for: Modified textures, nutritionist involvement*
22. **Are snacks available throughout the day?**
 - o *Look for: 24/7 access to food and drinks*

Financial Questions

23. **What is included in your monthly fee?**
 - o *Get specific list in writing*
24. **What additional costs should we expect?**
 - o *Look for: Transparency about level-of-care fees, medication management fees*
25. **Do you require a long-term contract or offer month-to-month?**
 - o *Look for: Flexible options*
26. **What is your refund policy if we need to leave?**
 - o *Look for: Clear, written refund policy*
27. **How often do fees increase, and by how much typically?**

- o *Look for: Predictable annual increases*

Family Involvement Questions

28. **What is your visitation policy?**
 - o *Look for: Open visitation, 24/7 access*
29. **How do you keep families informed about their loved one's care?**
 - o *Look for: Regular updates, care conferences, technology tools*
30. **Do you offer family support groups or education programs?**
 - o *Look for: Ongoing family support*

Red Flag Questions

31. **What is your process for handling complaints or concerns?**
 - o *Red flag: Defensive responses or lack of clear process*
32. **Can I speak with family members of current residents?**
 - o *Red flag: Unwillingness to provide references*
33. **May I visit unannounced after move-in?**
 - o *Red flag: Restricted or appointment-only visiting*
34. **Have you had any regulatory violations in the past two years?**
 - o *Red flag: Multiple violations or serious issues*



COST & PAYMENT OPTIONS IN AUSTIN

Average Monthly Costs by Area (2025)

Central Austin:

- Range: \$7,000 - \$12,000/month
- Average: \$8,500/month

North Austin (Round Rock, Cedar Park, Georgetown):

- Range: \$5,500 - \$8,000/month
- Average: \$6,500/month

South Austin (South Austin, Buda, Kyle):

- Range: \$5,000 - \$7,500/month
- Average: \$6,000/month

West Austin (Lakeway, Bee Cave):

- Range: \$6,500 - \$10,000/month
- Average: \$7,500/month

East Austin:

- Range: \$5,500 - \$7,500/month
- Average: \$6,200/month

What's Typically Included in Monthly Fee?

Usually Included:

- ✓ Room and board
- ✓ Three meals daily plus snacks
- ✓ 24-hour staffing and supervision
- ✓ Assistance with activities of daily living (ADLs)
- ✓ Medication management
- ✓ Housekeeping and laundry services
- ✓ All activities and programming
- ✓ Basic utilities
- ✓ Emergency response systems

Often Additional Costs:

- ✗ Higher level of care fees (as needs increase)
- ✗ Incontinence supplies
- ✗ Personal care products
- ✗ Transportation to medical appointments
- ✗ Beauty salon/barber services
- ✗ Cable TV or phone in room
- ✗ Guest meals

Payment Options for Memory Care in Austin

1. Private Pay (Most Common)

- Personal savings and assets
- Retirement accounts
- Home equity (sale or reverse mortgage)
- Life insurance policy loans or viatical settlements

2. Long-Term Care Insurance

- Check your policy details - many cover memory care
- May have waiting period (often 90 days)
- Usually requires doctor's certification of need
- May have maximum benefit amount or time limit

3. Veterans Benefits (VA Aid & Attendance)

Eligibility:

- Veteran must have served during wartime
- Need help with ADLs
- Asset and income limits apply

Benefit Amounts (2025):

- Veteran alone: Up to \$2,295/month
- Veteran with spouse: Up to \$2,713/month
- Surviving spouse: Up to \$1,474/month

Austin VA Resources:

- VA Outpatient Clinic: 2901 Montopolis Drive, Austin, TX 78741
- Phone: 512-389-1010

4. Medicaid (Limited Options in Texas)

Important Note: Most memory care communities in Austin do NOT accept Medicaid. However, some nursing homes with memory care units do.

Texas Medicaid for Long-Term Care:

- Must meet financial eligibility (very limited income/assets)
- Medical necessity must be established
- Community First Choice (CFC) program may help in certain situations

Austin Medicaid Resources:

- Texas Health and Human Services: 1-877-541-7905
- Medicaid Waiver Programs office

5. Life Plan Communities (CCRCs)

Some continuing care retirement communities in Austin offer memory care and may use entrance fee model:

- Large upfront entrance fee
- Lower monthly fees
- Guaranteed care through life stages

Financial Planning Tips

Before Touring:

1. Calculate total available resources
2. Project how long assets will last at different price points

3. Consider if Medicaid planning is needed
4. Review any long-term care insurance policies
5. Check VA benefit eligibility

During Search:

1. Get itemized fee schedule from each community
2. Ask about rate increase history
3. Understand level-of-care fee structure
4. Review contract carefully (consider having attorney review)
5. Ask about financial assistance programs

Important: Many families find they need to plan for 3-5+ years of care costs.

THE ADMISSION PROCESS

Typical Timeline

Week 1: Assessment & Application

- Initial inquiry and tour
- Submit application
- Medical assessment scheduled

Week 2-3: Evaluation Period

- Physician completes medical forms
- Community reviews medical history
- Financial arrangements finalized
- Background checks (if required)

Week 3-4: Approval & Move-In Preparation

- Approval or denial received
- Move-in date scheduled
- Care plan developed
- Prepare loved one's room

Move-In Day:

- Final paperwork signed
- Belongings moved in
- Family orientation
- Transition support

Required Documentation

Most Austin memory care communities require:

Medical Documents:

- ✓ Physician's statement/medical exam (within 30 days)
- ✓ TB test results (within last year)
- ✓ Current medication list
- ✓ Medical history
- ✓ Diagnosis of dementia/memory impairment
- ✓ DNR or advance directives (if applicable)
- ✓ HIPAA release forms

Financial Documents:

- ✓ Proof of income
- ✓ Bank statements (if applicable)
- ✓ Insurance information
- ✓ Long-term care insurance policy (if applicable)
- ✓ VA benefit eligibility (if applicable)

Legal Documents:

- ✓ Power of attorney (healthcare and financial)
- ✓ Guardianship papers (if applicable)
- ✓ Living will or advance directives
- ✓ Photo ID

Reasons for Denial

Communities may decline admission if:

- Medical needs exceed their capability
- Severe behavioral issues they can't safely manage
- Infectious disease concerns
- Financial qualification not met
- Criminal background issues

Making the Transition Smoother

Before Move-In:

- Visit the community multiple times if possible
- Bring familiar items from home (photos, blankets, furniture if allowed)
- Label all belongings with name
- Create memory book with family photos and life story

- Coordinate with family about visit schedule

First Week:

- Visit frequently but at varied times
- Bring favorite snacks or treats
- Participate in activities with your loved one
- Build relationships with staff
- Stay positive and reassuring

Ongoing:

- Regular visits (consistency is key)
- Attend care conferences
- Stay involved in care decisions
- Communicate concerns promptly
- Join family support groups



AUSTIN-SPECIFIC RESOURCES

Local Support Organizations

Alzheimer's Association - Central Texas Chapter

- Address: 3520 Executive Center Drive, Suite 100, Austin, TX 78731
- Phone: 512-241-0420
- 24/7 Helpline: 800-272-3900
- Services: Support groups, education, care consultations, clinical trial information

Travis County Services

- Austin/Travis County Area Agency on Aging: 512-854-9181
- Provides information about local senior services

Austin Public Library - Memory Cafe

- Monthly gatherings for people with memory loss and caregivers
- Multiple library locations participate
- Free and open to community

Local Dementia Care Physicians

Neurologists Specializing in Memory Disorders:

- Dell Medical School - Mulva Clinic for Neurosciences

- o 1701 Trinity St, Austin, TX 78712
- o 512-324-7000
- Seton Brain and Spine Institute
 - o Multiple locations in Austin
 - o 512-324-0000
- Austin Neurology
 - o Multiple locations
 - o 512-533-5100

Emergency Resources

Crisis Situations:

- Austin Police Department (non-emergency): 311
- Emergency: 911
- Dell Seton Medical Center ER: 512-324-7000
- St. David's Medical Center: 512-476-7111

Silver Alert (for missing seniors):

- Contact local police immediately
- Texas Silver Alert: Notify law enforcement to activate

Transportation Services

Medical Appointments:

- Ride Austin (discounted rates for seniors)
- Capital Metro Access (for eligible riders)
- Senior transportation services through local communities

Legal & Financial Planning Resources

Elder Law Attorneys in Austin:

- State Bar of Texas Lawyer Referral Service: 1-800-252-9690
- Elder Law Section of Travis County Bar Association

Financial Planning:

- Texas Legal Services Center (free for eligible seniors)
- AARP Texas - Austin Office: 866-227-7443

Adult Day Programs (Before Full-Time Memory Care)

- Senior Activity Center programs
- Faith-based day programs

- Private adult day services with memory care programming

HOW TSL TOUR SENIOR LIVING CAN HELP

Our Free Services for Austin Families

1. Personalized Consultation

- Assessment of your loved one's specific needs
- Discussion of budget and preferences
- Education about memory care options
- No-cost, no-obligation

2. Community Matching

- Access to 40+ memory care communities in Austin area
- Matching based on location, cost, services, and personality fit
- Insider knowledge of each community's strengths

3. Tour Coordination

- Schedule tours at multiple communities
- Accompany you on tours (we ask the hard questions!)
- Help you know what to look for
- Take notes so you can focus on the experience

4. Application & Admission Support

- Help gather required documentation
- Coordinate medical assessments
- Review contracts and agreements
- Navigate financial options

5. Move-In Assistance

- Create transition plan
- Coordinate moving logistics
- Provide emotional support
- First-week check-ins

6. Ongoing Advocacy

- Available for questions after move-in
- Help address concerns with community
- Support during transitions in care

- No-cost for life of placement

Why Families Choose TSL

- ✓ **Local Expertise:** Deep knowledge of every Austin memory care community
- ✓ **No Cost to You:** Communities pay us, never the families
- ✓ **Unbiased Guidance:** We represent your interests, not the communities
- ✓ **Personal Experience:** Stella has walked this journey with her own mother
- ✓ **Available 7 Days/Week:** Including evenings for working families
- ✓ **Crisis Placement Help:** Fast response for urgent situations
- ✓ **Real Talk:** Honest assessments of each community's pros and cons

What Families Say

"Stella made the impossible possible. She helped us find the perfect memory care community for my dad in just three days when we were facing a crisis discharge from the hospital. Her knowledge of each facility and honest guidance was invaluable." - Maria T., Round Rock

"We were overwhelmed by all the options. Stella listened to our needs, our budget, and our concerns, then narrowed it down to three perfect matches. She toured with us and asked questions we didn't even think of. Mom has been thriving in memory care for six months now." - David & Susan K., Austin

Getting Started is Easy

Step 1: Contact Us

- Call or text: 737-389-2130
- Email: stella@tourseniorliving.org
- Website: tourseniorliving.org

Step 2: Initial Consultation (30-45 minutes)

- Phone or in-person meeting
- Discuss your situation and needs
- Review options and pricing
- Create search plan

Step 3: Community Matching

- We identify 2-5 best-fit communities
- Provide detailed information on each
- Schedule tours at your convenience

Step 4: Tour & Decide

- We accompany you on tours

- Help evaluate each option
- Answer questions throughout process
- Support your final decision

Step 5: Move-In Support

- Guide through admission process
- Help with transition
- Check in after move-in
- Ongoing support as needed



QUICK REFERENCE CHECKLIST

Your Memory Care Search Checklist

Before Starting:

- [] Assess loved one's current care needs
- [] Calculate available financial resources
- [] Gather important medical documents
- [] List must-haves vs. nice-to-haves
- [] Determine preferred geographic area
- [] Contact TSL for consultation: 737-389-2130

During Tours:

- [] Observe staff interactions with residents
- [] Check cleanliness and odors
- [] Ask about staff-to-resident ratios
- [] Review activity calendar
- [] Observe a meal service
- [] Check security features
- [] Meet residents if possible
- [] Get itemized fee schedule
- [] Request references from current families
- [] Review state inspection reports

After Tours:

- [] Compare notes from all communities
- [] Review financial details
- [] Check online reviews (with grain of salt)
- [] Visit finalists a second time (unannounced if possible)
- [] Have attorney review contract
- [] Make decision

- [] Begin admission process

Move-In Preparation:

- [] Complete all required paperwork
- [] Gather required medical documents
- [] Label all belongings
- [] Prepare room with familiar items
- [] Create memory book/life story
- [] Schedule move-in day
- [] Coordinate with family about visits
- [] Plan transition strategy

FINAL THOUGHTS

Choosing memory care for a loved one is one of the most difficult decisions families face. There's no perfect community, no perfect timing, and no way to make this choice without some heartache.

But here's what I know after helping hundreds of Austin families:

- ✓ **You're not giving up** - you're getting help
- ✓ **Guilt is normal** - but not deserved
- ✓ **The right community exists** - we'll help you find it
- ✓ **Your loved one can thrive** - in the right environment with professional care
- ✓ **You'll still be their advocate** - just with a team supporting you

You don't have to navigate this alone. That's exactly why TSL exists.

CONTACT STELLA WILLIAMS

Stella Williams - Senior Advocate
 TSL tourseniorliving.org | Austin Metro Area

Call or Text: 737-389-2130
Email: stella@stellawilliamstx.com
Website: stellawilliamstx.com

Available: 7 days a week, including evenings
Service Area: Austin and all surrounding communities
Services: 100% free to families

Remember: Every journey is different. Every family is unique. Every loved one deserves dignity, safety, and quality care. Let's find the right memory care community for your family together.

Last Updated: October 2025

Created with love and expertise by Stella Williams

APPENDIX: AUSTIN MEMORY CARE COMMUNITY AREAS

North Austin Area

- Round Rock
- Cedar Park
- Georgetown
- Pflugerville
- Leander
- Liberty Hill

Central Austin Area

- Downtown Austin
- Hyde Park
- Tarrytown
- Rosedale
- North Loop
- Mueller
- Clarksville

South Austin Area

- South Congress
- Circle C
- Sunset Valley
- Buda
- Kyle
- San Marcos
- Manchaca

East Austin Area

- East Riverside

- Manor
- Elgin

West Austin Area

- West Lake Hills
- Lakeway
- Bee Cave
- Dripping Springs
- Spicewood
- Marble Falls

 **TSL Tour Senior Living** - Because every family deserves expert guidance and every senior deserves exceptional care. 