



HOW SECURE WILL MY LOVED ONE BE?

External doors should be locked at night. Whether or not your loved one is a wander risk, the facility should have the necessary security in place to prevent an elopement. The external doors should be alarmed. Wander guards should be available. Two call alarms should be available in each apartment (one in a living area, one in a bathroom). Staff should be able to check residents every two hours during the night.



This checklist compliments of:


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WHEN IS IT TIME FOR ASSISTED LIVING?

It is easy to overlook the signs of decline in seniors, especially when they are your parent. You still see them as you did when you looked up to them. The following cues may give you a sense that they need assisted living.

- ❑ Look in their refrigerator. While they say they are eating, is there a lot of food available or going bad?
- ❑ Look at their clothing. Are they wearing the same clothes as last time you saw them?
- ❑ When you look at the house or the yard, is it as neat and clean as it should be?
- ❑ Are they taking their medications correctly? Can they explain to you when they take their meds and what they currently should be taking? Have they expired?
- ❑ Do they respond appropriately to an emergency?
- ❑ Have they fallen? Look for bruises, even ones they may be trying to cover up.
- ❑ Are they able to operate appliances correctly? Do they remember to turn them off when finished?
- ❑ Are there stacks of paper or bills lying around?
- ❑ They are more and more isolated from friends and family.
- ❑ No longer able to drive.
- ❑ Bathing and dressing are increasingly difficult.
- ❑ Mobility is decreasing.

Please remember, it is always difficult to give up independence, but the safety of your loved one takes greater importance.

10 Items to Consider when Shopping for an Assisted Living for a Loved One.



Transitioning a loved one to an Assisted Living Facility is an emotional process. We have provided you with a step-by step checklist of questions you should ask when you are touring Assisted Living Facilities to care for your loved one.

ARE YOU STATE LICENSED?

It is **not** necessary for Assisted Living Facilities to be state licensed in Michigan. There are a number of facilities that are providing “assisted living-like” services without a license, potentially compromising the safety of their residents. Licensed Assisted Livings are held up to high standards, and are enforced by a 3rd party. Make sure to ask to see the license. You are also able to go online and look at the state reviews including complaints investigated at:

www.dleg.state.mi.us/brs_afc/sr_afc.asp

**IS THE OWNER/
ADMINISTRATOR “HANDS ON”
AND ON-SITE DAILY?**

The License for the Assisted Living is placed in the owner’s name. Are they “hands on?” Do they know each resident? Do they know what shape their apartment is in? Do they have an office on-site that you can drop-by if you have a concern? The greater the involvement of the administrator, the greater insurance you have that your loved one is receiving better care.

HOW DO WE PAY FOR CARE?

Facilities may charge extra for meals, snacks, aide/ nursing visits, maintenance, housekeeping/ laundry, etc. These charges may be called “a la cartes.” These charges will add up quickly and will result in varying monthly bills, making it difficult to manage funds. Closely tally your total anticipated costs. When you add in all the “a la cartes” on top of the monthly rent, your costs may be significantly more than the originally quoted monthly cost. One flat monthly charge is easier to manage.

**ARE THE APARTMENTS ON ONE
FLOOR AND BARRIER FREE?**

When balance is getting compromised due to age and health conditions, steps, in any form, create a potential fall-risk. The bathroom is the most important area that needs to avoid anything with a rise/ step.

According to a new CDC study published in the *Morbidity and Mortality Weekly Report (MMWR)*, an estimated 234,000 people ages 15 and older were treated in U.S. emergency departments in 2008 for injuries that occurred in bathrooms. Four out of 5 of these injuries were caused by falls—which can have especially serious consequences for older adults. Approximately 80% of all bathroom injuries were caused by falls, with the highest injury rates in the oldest age groups. For adults aged ≥65 years, falls often cause serious injuries, such as hip fractures, attributed in part to osteoporosis, a metabolic disease that makes bones porous and susceptible to fracture. This study found that older adults had the highest fracture rates and were hospitalized most often. For all ages, the most hazardous activities were bathing, showering, or getting out of the tub or shower. Approximately two thirds of all injuries occurred in the tub or shower, and approximately half were precipitated by bathing or showering, slipping, or getting out of the tub or shower.

**CAN I LOOK AT YOUR DIETARY
PROGRAM?**

Are there three meals a day, plus an evening snack? Licensed facilities are required to provide food consistently throughout the day. Ask the residents about how good their meals are. Are there seasonal menu changes? Is water available throughout the building? Are meals adjusted as health conditions change (i.e.: cardiac, renal, diabetic, pureed, etc.)?

**WHAT IS YOUR STAFFING
RATIO?**

The staffing at a Licensed Assisted Living should frequently be reviewed based on resident acuity levels. Look at the staff while you are touring. Pay attention to their demeanor, and how they relate to the residents.

**HOW DOES THE INTERIOR AND
EXTERIOR LOOK?**

It should not look “institutional.” It should smell clean. The décor should match the style of your loved one. This will become their home, it should feel like it.

**DOES A GERIATRIC PHYSICIAN
VISIT ONSITE? OR IS
TRANSPORTATION OFFERED TO
OFF-SITE APPOINTMENTS?**

Your loved one should be able to pick their physician of choice, however, it does create convenience when geriatric physicians are available on-site. Ask about additional specialists like Psychiatry, Podiatry, etc. You should also have your choice of health care providers, no matter if its physical therapy, home care or hospice.

FREQUENT ACTIVITIES?

There should be several activities per day centered around resident preferences. Preferably, there should be a Resident Council to provide input. There should be varied activities based on all levels of cognition. Family should always be welcome to participate and have access to a schedule.