

GUIDE FOR SELECTING A LONG TERM CARE FACILITY*

2004

The Council on Aging of Ottawa
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* Ce guide est aussi disponible en français

Guide for Selecting a Long Term Care Facility

Introduction

This guide, developed by The Council on Aging of Ottawa, is presented as a resource to the people of Canada. Its purpose is to assist older people and their families to choose an appropriate long term care facility when they need more care than they can get at home.

Information about services available in your own home should be considered in your decision about placement. These services vary from province to province and community to community. For instance in Ontario, all admissions to LTC facilities are made through the local Community Care Access Centre. There may be significant differences in the placement of patients, depending on whether they are in hospital or at home. For information on services available in your particular province, you may contact your local health department, Home Care program, your doctor, local hospital, Community Information Centre, your municipal representative or any other health and social service organization.

Like neighborhoods, each long term care facility has a unique atmosphere. It is important to consider if the “feel” of the home is right for you or your family member. You will want to consult informed individuals and professionals in the field of aging as well as rely on your own observations in attempting to select the most appropriate place.

Facilities offer differing types of care and support. It is essential to make sure that the facility you choose can respond to the changing personal and health care needs of you or your family member. A thorough assessment is an important step in the placement process.

Clients are encouraged to visit several facilities providing the type of care needed, prior to making a choice. The following list some of the points you may want to take into consideration in comparing various facilities. Most questions can be answered with a check mark or a number in some instances.

Every effort has been made to present accurate information in this document. The Council on Aging of Ottawa however, assumes no responsibility for any unsatisfactory results experienced by individuals selecting a Long Term Care Facility based on the information here provided.

INFORMATION ON FACILITY

Facility #1

Name of Facility

Address

Facility #2

Name of Facility

Address

Facility #3

Name of Facility

Address

I. Lifestyle

Facility

#1 #2 #3



Physical Facilities

How many residents live in the building?

There is a covered entrance to the building.

The home is bright, clean, and tastefully decorated.

The home is free from offensive odors.

There is an approved smoking area.

There is a pleasant outdoors area which is appropriately furnished.

There is an outdoors area designed for the safety of the residents yet readily accessible to all.

Facility

#1 #2 #3



Safety



Exits and access ramps are well marked.

There are continuous handrails in halls and bathrooms.

There are accessible and readily visible emergency call devices at bed areas and in bathrooms.

The facility has good lighting.

Stairwells and doors are secure and alarmed where required.

Exit doors which are locked can be unlocked from a central point or are automatically released on the sounding of a fire alarm.

The facility has been inspected by local fire authorities in the past year and meets all applicable fire safety codes.

Fire drills are held regularly, on day, evening and overnight shifts.

The facility has an approved disaster/evacuation plan which has been rehearsed with all participants (internal and external) in the past year.

Signs are bright and clear.

Emergency procedures for those with special needs are in place.

There is a policy regarding the use of physical restraints of any kind.

The facility has adaptations and aids for people with hearing or visual impairments .

Facility

#1 #2 #3

**Hygiene**

The home has specialized equipment in the bathrooms to assist people with disabilities.

_____ How often are residents given a tub bath?

_____ How often do they have their hair washed?



There are hairdresser and/or barber services available on site on a regularly scheduled basis.



There is an adequate supply of clean laundry every day.



There are facilities for personal laundry readily available.



There are mechanical lift devices available for baths.

Facility

#1 #2 #3

**Bedroom**

Private rooms (1 resident to a room) are available.



There is a private bathroom with each private room.



There is a policy concerning the assignment of private rooms.



Semi-private rooms (2 residents to a room) are available.



There is a policy for determining what constitutes semi-private accommodation.

_____ How many residents are there in a non private or semi private rooms?

_____ How many people share each bathroom?



Shared accommodation is available for couples.



There is ample room for maneuvering wheelchairs.



The windows provide adequate lighting and ventilation.



There is individually controlled, adequate lighting for each bed.



Personal telephones and cable television connections are available.



There is comfortable furniture for each resident.



There is a policy concerning the introduction of personal furniture.



There is ample storage for summer and winter clothing.



Room temperature is controlled individually.



Air conditioning is available during the summer.



There is a policy that considers care requirements when assigning rooms.

Facility

#1 #2 #3

▼ ▼ ▼ **Privacy** 

- Locked drawers are available for residents.
- Staff knock before entering a resident’s room.
- There are privacy curtains in all shared rooms.
- There is a policy regarding bedroom door locks.

Facility

#1 #2 #3

▼ ▼ ▼ **Food and Beverage**  

- There is a qualified food supervisor on staff.
- Food is prepared on the premises.
- The public health authorities have inspected and approved the kitchen facilities within the past year.
- The areas for meals are pleasant.
- Residents requiring assistance with meals have access to appropriate eating areas.
- If there is more than one sitting per meal adequate time is provided for each sitting.
- There is an adequate interval between scheduled meal times.
- The menu is displayed.
- There is variety in the menu.
- Choices are available on the menu.
- Special diets are available.
- Snacks are served between meals.
- There are policies about visitors bringing in food.
- There are policies regarding alcohol use in the home.
- The facility policies permit serving meals in the residents rooms.
- There is a room or area for private dining service.
- There is a policy covering food preparation by residents.

Comments: _____

Facility

#1 #2 #3



Language



In what languages are services available?

.....

#1

#2

#3



What is the predominant language of residents?

.....

#1

#2

#3



Written material is available in both official languages.

Other languages:

.....

#1

#2

#3



Religion



What religious services are available? How often?

.....

#1

#2

#3



All residents are given the opportunity to attend these services.



Arrangements may be made for residents to be accompanied to services if required (i.e. cannot remember or ambulate independently).



Provision is made for residents to attend services outside the facility.



There is pastoral visiting.



Family



Families are invited to be involved in the life of the residence.

How?



There are special private areas for visiting.



Parking is convenient for visitors.



The facility is close enough for family members to visit.



There is a family support group.

How often does it meet?



There is a social worker on staff.



There is mechanism to enable families to discuss concerns.

Facility

#1 #2 #3

**Community**

There is easy access to community facilities, e.g. shopping, parks, etc.



There is easy access to a convenient bus route.



Residents are encouraged to maintain involvement with the community.

How?

.....



Community volunteer participation is encouraged within the facility.



Guests are allowed for meals.

Comments:

Facility

#1 #2 #3

**Activities**

There is an activity director on staff.



Activities are posted.



They offer choice and variety to satisfy individual interest.



Residents are taken to activities if they cannot attend/remember to go on their own.



There is a specified activity room or areas.



Library services are available.



Activities are organized for day time, evenings and weekends.



Activities are organized for residents with special needs.



An Activity Bus is available for outings.



There is a policy concerning pets in the facility.

Comments:

Facility

#1 #2 #3



Resident Rights and Participation



Residents can “personalize” the room with their own furniture, pictures, and appliances, e.g. T.V., microwave, etc.



There is a policy concerning the safety and inspection of private items of furniture and appliances brought into the facility.



There is a statement of resident rights.



There is a Residents’ Council.



Representatives of the Residents’ Council meet regularly with senior administrative staff.



There are opportunities for residents to participate in planning activities.



The facility includes individual preferences in planning for daily needs.



Residents’ representatives/advocates can participate in Residents’ Council meetings.



What are the ways in which residents can express concerns?

.....

#1

#2

#3



There is a family/community consultation group which meets on a regularly scheduled basis.

II. Health Care

Facility

#1 #2 #3



A registered nurse is on duty 24 hours a day.



There is access to physiotherapy, speech therapy, and occupational therapy.



There are opportunities for the family and resident to have input in the plan of care.



In the event of a medical emergency, what arrangements are made for care:

Facility #1.

Facility #2.

Facility #3.

Facility

#1 #2 #3



- Qualified health practitioners provide regular footcare.
- There are separate floors or areas, not mutually accessible, for residents with physical limitations and those mentally challenged requiring intensive care.
- Residents have the choice of retaining their own physician.



Who are the physicians affiliated with the facility and what are their qualifications?

.....
.....
.....

#1

#2

#3



What hospital do they use?

.....
.....

#1

#2

#3

- Client/family wishes are taken into consideration e.g. living will, DNR.
- The provisions of a resident’s advance directives on the use of extraordinary measures to sustain life are recorded in a manner that they can be immediately accessed by staff in the event of an emergency.

Comments: _____

II. Administration

Facility

#1 #2 #3
 ▼ ▼ ▼

- The facility is currently licensed and accredited by the Canadian Council on Health Services Accreditation (Accreditation is a voluntary process.)
- I can obtain copies of the last inspection reports.
- A brochure outlining facility policies is available to residents.
- There are policies regarding theft and abuse.
- There is a readily understood process for residents/families/companions to call to the attention of the facility's management any matter of concern.

Facility

#1 #2 #3
 ▼ ▼ ▼

Financial Considerations \$ \$ \$

- I am eligible for subsidy.
 - The financial terms are clearly explained.
- _____ _____ _____ How often do rates change?



How and when are residents billed?

.....

N° 1

N° 2

N° 3

- There is a clearly worded contract to be signed.
- The terms of the contract have been explained.
- There is a banking service or interest bearing trust account for residents.
- There are charges for the time spent in hospital or on vacation.
- There is a written schedule of extra charges for services not provided for in the basic contract and clear method of payment for these charges.
- Monthly statements are provided by the accounts department.

Comments: _____

Facility

#1 #2 #3

▼ ▼ ▼ **Admission / Discharge**



How long is the waiting period for the type of care being asked for?

.....
N° 1 N° 2 N° 3

- The facility has a written admission and discharge policy.
- The facility will accept a transfer request to another room.
- Assistance is given in relocating the resident to another facility if required.

IV. General Atmosphere

Facility

#1 #2 #3

▼ ▼ ▼

- Overall impression of facility is positive.
- Residents are clean, well groomed, and dressed.
- The staff are friendly, helpful and courteous.
- Staff are neat and well groomed.

Comments: _____

GENERAL NOTES AND COMMENTS

Facility #1 _____

Facility #2 _____

Facility #3 _____

