

Assisted Living: Special Care Units

If your loved one is considering a move to assisted living, you need to find out about any special care services offered by the facility.

Note: These checklists have been developed by The Consumer Consortium on Assisted Living (CCAL), a national, nonprofit organization dedicated to representing the needs of consumers in assisted living facilities and educating consumers, professionals, and the general public about assisted living issues.

Special Care Units

This section is directed to family members or other interested persons, because it would be unusual for the person who needs a special care unit to be asking these questions. These questions should be asked in addition to previous questions.

Is there a separate area specifically for people with dementia?

How do services in the special care unit differ from services in the rest of the facility?

What is the difference in staff training? The staff-to-resident ratio?

Do residents go out of doors regularly? How often? Where do they go?

How do you ensure that the resident is getting proper nutrition? Are finger foods available? Do you offer decaffeinated drinks throughout the day?

Look at a calendar of activities. Do they appear appropriate for the resident?

Do the residents on the unit seem as disabled as the prospective resident?

What is the facility's policy on restraints, both chemical and physical?

Is there space to walk around on the unit?

What are the room arrangements?

If there will be a roommate, does he/she have any habits or mannerisms that would be difficult for the prospective resident to handle, e.g. staying up late at night, yelling, going through personal possessions of others?

When rooms are shared, what does the facility do if problems such as those in the previous question arise?

What is the cost difference between special care and regular units?

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