



Which Senior Living Options is Right For You or a Loved One?

With the variety of senior housing options available today, selecting the one that is right for you or a loved one can be an overwhelming task. Planning ahead, evaluating your needs and becoming educated on your options can reduce some of the anxiety and stress associated with the process.

Independent (Residential) Living—is a housing arrangement designed exclusively for older adults where, in general, the homes (which can range from apartments to free-standing homes) are maintenance free. Residential living provides the freedom to still live independently, without the hassle of home maintenance.

When choosing a residential living community, keep in mind some of the amenities that might be important to you such as availability of transportation, security, accessibility to community resources and support, and opportunities for socialization.

If, however, you are finding that your activities of daily living are becoming increasingly more difficult to manage on your own, a personal care facility may be a good choice to consider. Residents in personal care receive assistance with bathing, dressing, medications and minor health issues if needed, while still being encouraged to remain as independent as possible.

The personal care facility you choose should offer health care services you need now and those that you anticipate in the future and have a manageable staff to patient ratio to ensure personalized care. Opportunities for socialization should be offered and encouraged. Keep in mind that health insurance does not generally cover this level of care.

Nursing facilities are all-inclusive care homes for adults requiring constant, continuing assistance with activities of daily living and medical care. Residents in nursing care will have their daily medical, physical, social and psychological needs met with the help of nursing staff. Nursing facilities



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Should also offer ample opportunities for socialization and participation in activities that are physically, mentally and socially stimulating.

Nursing care, however, is not necessarily a long term need. Some people access nursing care as a bridge to getting strong enough to go back home such as after a knee replacement, for example. It can also be used to treat short term clinical interventions such as intravenous therapy or wound care.

Continuing care retirement communities are best prepared to deal with healthcare issues that arise as you age. These communities provide residential living, personal care and nursing care at a central location so that if a resident's health needs change, they can get proper treatment without having to move to a different facility.

As you do your research, remember that any senior living residence should be safe, clean and having a caring and dedicated staff. Spend time at the facility before making any commitments. Talk to current residents and staff, enjoy a meal and browse the common living areas.

For additional reassurance, ask to see the facility's most recent state inspections. The Better Business Bureau or Eldercare Locator can inform you of any complaints, deficiencies or legal actions that have been filed against a specific facility.