

Checklist for Finding a Care Community

I know this is a crazy long list. But after a not so good experience with a very “pretty” place, I started to write down ever question I could think of. You may not feel like going this deep, but I say why not?

Looking for a place can be very stressful. Take a deep breath. Don’t feel pressured. And do something good for yourself after you visit the prospective community. Like an ice cream cone.

You can go to the government website and check out any care community: <https://www.medicare.gov/care-compare/>

Checklist for Care Communities				
	FIRST QUESTIONS	Y	N	NOTES
1	Are they accepting new residents?			
2	Is there a waiting list?			
3	Is it Medicare certified?			
4	Is the Department of Health inspection posted?			
5	Is the Ombudsman’s phone number posted?			
6	How long has the Administrator been there?			
7	How long has the Director of Nursing been there?			
8	What is the turnover rate of direct care workers?			
9	Did you receive a list of everything that is included and NOT included in the fee?			
10	Is there a plan for weather emergencies?			

11	Is there a plan for health emergencies?			
12	What type of care is available? Nursing? Therapy? Dental? Vision? Podiatrist?			
13	Does a doctor regularly visit?			
14	Is there a hair salon onsite or available?			
15	Who comes to care plan meetings?			
16	Does staff receive regular training? Can they give you a list of trainings for the year?			
17	What reputation does the facility have in the community? Ask around.			
18	Does the Community's mission and values align with yours?			
19	Do they use consistent assignment for staff? Same staff for the same resident as much as possible.			
20	Do they do background checks on all staff & volunteers?			
21	Is there a resident council?			
22	Is there a family council?			
23	Do they have volunteers?			
24	Do they have Essential Caregivers?			

	FIRST IMPRESSION	Y	N	Notes
25	Is the location convenient?			
26	Can you visit whenever you wish?			
27	Does it look/feel like a Home or like a facility when walking to the front door?			
28	How does it smell when you enter?			
29	Are you greeted when you enter?			
30	Are you introduced to staff on your visit?			
31	Are you introduced to residents on your visit?			
32	Can you speak to residents about how they like it there?			
33	Do you see staff on your visit? Are they with one another or residents?			
34	Do the Staff wear nametags? Readable to older eyes?			
35	Do you see joy? Hear laughter?			
36	Do residents look clean? Groomed?			
37	Do residents appear content? happy?			
38	Do they use non-respectful language? Wander/Diaper?			
39	Are they speaking to residents appropriately?			

	DAILY LIFE	Y	N	Notes
40	Can residents make choices about their daily life? When to get up? Go to sleep? When to eat?			
41	Is their activity calendar filled with real life things to do?			
42	Do you see “things to do” for the residents as you visit? Self-led activities?			
43	Does the community have a garden?			
44	Does the community have a pet?			
45	If not, do they allow pet visits?			
46	Are there exercise classes? Are they modified for everyone no matter their abilities?			
47	Do they have religious services?			
48	Do the residents engage in normal home activities? Help with setting the tables? Sweeping? Dusting? If they want to.			
49	Are activities tailored to individual preferences?			
	ENVIRONMENT	Y	N	Notes
50	Does it look/feel home-like?			
51	Are the floors non-skid?			

52	Is there plenty of lighting?			
53	Is it clean? Is there dust?			
54	Do you see smoke detectors and fire extinguishers?			
55	Are there handrails in hallways?			
56	Do they use fake door coverings?			
57	Do residents have access to a phone?			
	DINING	Y	N	Notes
58	Do they have a choice of what to eat?			
59	Can residents get a snack whenever they want?			
60	Can a resident eat in their room if they wish?			
61	Can they sit wherever they want in the dining room?			
62	If residents need assistance eating, is the person paying attention to them (not talking to someone else)			
63	Do the residents seem hurried or does it feel relaxed?			
64	Are residents included in menu planning?			
65	Is the kitchen clean and organized?			
66	Visit for a meal. Is what is being served on the Menu?			

67	How does the food taste?			
68	Is the food fresh or seem all from a can or frozen?			
69	Do you see an assistance devices, adaptive silverware or plates?			
	BEDROOM	Y	N	Notes
70	Does each room have a window?			
71	What do you need to supply for the room?			
72	Are rooms personalized?			
73	Is there a comfortable chair?			
74	Is there a nightstand or room for a nightstand?			
75	Are the resident's laundry hampers full?			
	BATHROOM	Y	N	Notes
76	Can the bathroom be seen from their bed?			
77	Are their adequate handrails?			
78	Is there a labelled call button near the toilet?			
79	Do they have a choice of shower or bath?			

80	Do they have a choice of when?			
81	Is there a bathroom for residents in common areas?			
82	If so, does it have proper signage?			
83	Are there night lights to find the bathroom in the dark?			
	OUT & ABOUT	Y	N	Notes
84	Can residents go outside on their own?			
85	Can residents using wheelchairs easily go outside on their own?			
86	Do they take field trips?			
87	Can you pick up your loved one anytime to go for an appt., out for dinner, etc.			
88	Is there a place to visit outside?			
	OTHER FAMILIES	Y	N	Notes
89	Can you speak to any family members? If not, ask for your phone # or email to be given to a family member to connect with them.			
90	Do they get their clothes back after laundry?			
91	Was their loved one incontinent when they moved in?			
92	If not are they now? How long was it after they moved in?			

93	Who and How do they go to for questions?			
94	Are their questions answered promptly?			
95	Have they had their your loved one had items go missing? Were they returned?			
96	What would the family change in how they operate?			

COMMENTS: