

Memory Care Checklist: What To Ask & What To Look For

To determine the best option for your loved ones who suffer from dementia and Alzheimer's, visiting different communities and homes that provide care for these diseases is important. With choosing assisted or independent living communities, it commonly involves service and amenity availability. Whereas, choosing a memory care location needs to focus on the care quality and interactions viewed when your visits. This provides confidence that your loved one gets treated as you expect.

To help guide you, the following checklist are things you should remember during the tour and after the tour. It will enable you to make the best choice based on the different options, while remaining organized.

Care Provider Name: _____

Date Visited: _____

Atmosphere, things to look for

1. Is the community layout simple to navigate? Will the hallways lead residents into public areas? Are hallways identifiable by color or art to help recognize their living area or hallway?
2. Is adequate privacy provided to residents for toileting, bathing, and personal hygiene? These are significant aspects to maintain the residents' dignity and understanding personal boundaries and space could become compromised from frequent wandering.
3. Is furniture kept maintained? Do they use special upholstery to avoid stains due to spills or incontinence?
4. Do they keep exterior doors locked, do they have alarms to make sure wandering residents are safe?
5. Are residents provided an outdoor walking area and/or patio that's simply accessible, but enclosed for preventing them from wandering off?

Questions for the Care Team and What to Look For

1. What are the licensure requirements of care team key members? How many hours is a licensed nurse (RN or LPN) staffed? Is the Director licensed as a nurse?
2. Is specialized training provided to caregivers to help effectively communicate and care for the residents suffering from dementia or Alzheimer's? Do caregivers go through a state/national background screening?
3. Is the staff professionally dressed or wear appropriate uniforms with name tags that make them easy to distinguish from a visitor?
4. Are residents interacted with by caregivers in a professional and comforting manner? Do residents maintain respect and dignity?

The Residents: What to Watch For

1. Do residents participate in activities which are interesting and/or appropriate to those with dementia or Alzheimer's? Do residents have the opportunity to contribute to the community, in an appropriate manner, such as folding towels, clothing or placing napkins?
2. Focus on residents' hygiene, is their hair brushed/combed, cloths matching, clean-shaven, free of incontinence or other orders?
3. Does it appear other residents have a similar dementia level that's consistent with the level of your loved one's needs and behavior? Usually, a community will specialize in specific levels of acuity, and may not be the appropriate stage when searching options. When resident is unable to interact and relate well with the other residents, it can lead to depression and isolation.

Other Considerations

1. Is the community's location convenient to friends and family members, encouraging frequent visits?
2. Is there a positive rapport associated with the care team and management? Do you feel comfortable they have the ability to offer the needs required by your loved one?
3. Are the rates of the community affordable for the foreseeable future? Lifestyle changes commonly result in further decline in seniors suffering from dementia or Alzheimer's, this makes it important to choose a community that will allow them to stay as long as possible.

Find Memory Care Near You

Browse the highly compassionate and quality memory care communities offered by SLS Communities in Arizona. Seniors living in our memory care communities enjoy the care of staff specifically trained for memory care. There are also more staff members per resident in our memory care areas. Residents living in communities enjoy a safe environment where they can keep active and have fun.