

Checklist: Choosing a Nursing Center

	Did you feel welcome when you visited the nursing center? Were people friendly? Did you observe caring interactions?
	Were you given the opportunity to tour the building?
	Did staff members seem friendly and knowledgeable, and did they willingly answer questions?
	Is there a pleasant, positive atmosphere in the center?
	Are patients engaged in activities? Do you see a posted schedule of activities with several daily offerings?
	Does the center appear to be clean? Are there any unpleasant odors?
	Are patients treated with dignity and respect? Are they well groomed? In conversation, are they treated with respect?
	Do staff members knock on patient doors and wait before entering? Is patient care given in private?
	Are patient rooms personalized and “homelike”?
	Is a social worker available?
	In the admissions process, are patients and families informed of their rights?
	How are patients and their families involved in the planning of care?
	Do patients have the opportunity to worship in the center?
	Do patients have the opportunity to interact with the community?
	Does the center try to ensure roommate compatibility?
	Does the nursing center offer a full range of therapies?
	Is there a resident / patient council? Is there a family council?
	Do patients continue to vote?
	At meal time, does the food look appetizing? Is there a pleasant atmosphere in the dining room?
	Is the noise level in the center comfortable? Is it too quiet—or too noisy?
	Does the center promote a restraint-free environment?
	Are the buildings and grounds well maintained? In season, are flowers planted and flowerbeds well groomed? Is there trash in the parking lot?
	Are patients allowed to set their own rising and going-to-bed hours?
	Does the admissions director help you and your family understand nursing center costs and charges?
	Ask if the center is a drug-free workplace. Does the center do background checks on all employees?
	Is the nursing center’s annual survey readily available for your inspection?
	Is the nursing center certified for Medicare?
	If you have long-term care insurance or other insurance, will the nursing center work with you to explore your benefits?
	Have you reviewed the nursing center’s survey data?
	How does the center compare with others in the area in quality measures on the www.medicare.gov/NHCompare/home.asp website?
	Ask to see the center staffing schedule, which must be posted. How does this compare with other nursing centers in the area?
	Ask friends and medical professionals if they have had experience with the nursing center you are considering.
	Does the nursing center welcome visitors? Ask about visiting hours.
	If family members live far away, is there a volunteer visitor program?