Selecting a Nursing Home

The following guidelines may help you in your selection:

GENERAL
- Does the home have a license from the NYS Department of Health?
- Is the administrator licensed by the NYS Department of Health?
- Is a written statement of Resident’s Rights clearly posted?
- Are visiting hours convenient for residents and visitors?
- Has the home corrected all deficiencies on latest NYS survey?

GENERAL PHYSICAL CHARACTERISTICS
- Is the nursing home clean, orderly, and well-maintained?

ATTITUDES AND ATMOSPHERE
- Is the general atmosphere of the nursing home warm, pleasant, and cheerful?
- Are staff members cheerful, courteous, respectful, and enthusiastic?
- Do residents look well groomed and cared for and generally content?
- Can residents choose their own clothes to wear, decorate their rooms, and keep a few prized possessions in their rooms?
- Do residents, other visitors, and volunteers speak favorably about the home?
- Does the home perform background checks on all new staff?

NURSING, MEDICAL, & OTHER SERVICES
- Is nursing staff adequate to meet residents' needs?
- Is there a physician on staff?
- Does the home have an arrangement for dental services?
- If a resident requires special services, such as rehabilitation therapy or a therapeutic diet, does the home provide them?
- Are resident and/or families involved in care planning?

PHARMACEUTICAL SERVICES
- Does a qualified pharmacist maintain and monitor a record of each resident's drug therapy?
- Do residents receive preventive care, such as flu shots?

DINING SERVICES
- Do residents have a choice of food at each meal?
- Does the food look and smell appetizing?
- Are snacks available on request?
- Are there special meals for people on therapeutic diets?
- Is the dining room attractive and comfortable?
- Do residents who need it get help in eating?

SOCIAL WORK & RESIDENT ACTIVITIES
- Are social work services available to residents and their families?
- Does the nursing home offer a varied program of recreational, cultural, and intellectual activities for residents?
- Do residents have an opportunity to attend religious services and talk with clergy both in and outside the home?
- Does the home have an active volunteer program?

RESIDENTS’ ROOMS
- Are there curtains in semi-private rooms to provide privacy for each resident?
- Do bathrooms have adequate privacy?
- Are nurse and emergency call buttons located at each resident's bed and bathroom?
- Is there a comfortable lounge where residents can chat, read, play games, watch television, or just relax?
- Does the nursing home have an outdoor area where residents can get fresh air and sunshine?

FINANCIAL CONSIDERATIONS
- Is the home certified to participate in Medicare and/or Medicaid programs?
- What services are included in the basic charge?
- Does the contract between the resident and the home clearly state costs, date of admission, services to be provided, discharge, and transfer conditions?

Information provided in part by the American Association of Homes and Services for the Aging.