

# **PRESBYTERIAN MANORS OF MID-AMERICA**

## *Skilled Nursing*

# **TOUR CHECKLIST**

**Take this handy checklist with you every time you visit a senior living community. It will help you ask the right questions, keep your notes together and it will be an easy way to compare communities side by side.**

When it comes time to choose a senior living community with skilled nursing or a specific level of care, you might feel overwhelmed by all the options available. When making a decision about what is right for you, remember that each short-stay patient or long-term resident has different needs, preferences and desires that should be taken into account when selecting a skilled nursing center.

If you are helping a loved one to select a community, you should involve that person in the process if they are able. At the end of the day, you want to make sure it is a campus where they feel comfortable. By planning ahead, you can ensure that your loved one will be provided with the highest quality of care and quality of life.

When choosing a skilled nursing center, consider all the options. Written materials or websites can be useful tools for comparing your options for skilled nursing. If possible, touring the senior living community and asking questions is the best way to determine a good fit. However, telephone interviews using this guide also can be effective. In the end, by researching and reviewing all aspects of care and services, experiencing success in recovery or transitioning to long-term care will be much easier.

**At a minimum, you should consider the following when making your decision:**

- **Where the campus is located**
- **How well it is decorated and maintained**
- **What the meals are like**
- **The tone and demeanor of employees**

**Enjoy your visit!**

## CARE SERVICES

Every skilled nursing center offers different levels of care in varying environments. Some skilled nursing centers focus solely on long-term care while others are geared toward post-hospital, short-stay care — and some cater to both. When deciding whether a senior living community can meet your particular needs, ask the following questions:

- Based on my condition, do I need short-stay rehabilitation or long-term care?
- What is the percentage of long-term care versus short-stay rehabilitation patients?
- Is the community focused on getting you home as quickly and safely as possible?
- Does the community offer any specialty care programs or enhanced clinical capabilities?
- Can you provide me with physician coverage if my doctor cannot follow my care at your campus?
- Will I require physical, occupational and/or speech therapy and does the community offer these services? Be sure to tour the therapy gym, especially if you will need rehab before returning home.
- Ask what types of rehab equipment will be used in your care. Some centers use advanced technologies like Wii gaming systems.
- Are patients, residents and families encouraged to participate in developing a care plan?
- Are other medical professionals (dentists, podiatrists, optometrists) available to residents?
- How are prescriptions drugs ordered and administered?

### Notes:

## LICENSURE AND CERTIFICATION

While you can probably assume a senior living community with skilled nursing has all the appropriate licensure and certifications, you should make sure by asking to see, or be directed to a website, to view:

- State license
- Medicare and Medicaid certification
- Latest state survey report

Be sure to ask about:

- A formal quality assurance program
- Any awards or additional certifications that make the senior living community's skilled nursing stand out

### Notes:

## AMENITIES

Just as care varies by center, so do the amenities. Some assisted living communities are outdated, while others have been fully renovated and have new technologies and upgrades. Consider the following questions, particularly if you cannot tour the center in advance:

- How old is your building and when is the last time it has been renovated?
- Do you have private and semi-private rooms available?
- Are private telephone lines and TVs provided? Are they free of charge?
- Do you have free Internet access and/ or wireless connectivity?
- Are private areas available for you and your family to meet outside of your room?
- Do you offer menu options in addition to daily planned menus?
- Do you have available meal options or snacks?
- Do you have the ability to make special dining or menu requests?

### Notes:

## STAFF

It is important to inquire about required training and qualifications, in addition to the community's general philosophy. Visiting and personally observing the interactions between staff and patients or residents is a great way to judge your compatibility with the campus community. You can also ask the following:

- How many attending physicians/nurse practitioners are on staff and will they be involved in my care?
- How many RNs are on staff and what is the staffing ratio per patient/resident?
- Do physical, occupational and recreational therapists, as well as speech pathologists, work on staff? How many days a week are they available?

### Notes:

## FINANCIAL CONSIDERATIONS

While you or your loved one may not have a choice about needing skilled nursing care, understanding the costs and whether you will be covered by Medicare, Medicaid or private insurance is important. If not, you will need to pay for your care out of pocket. Be sure to ask the following questions:

- Will a knowledgeable liaison from the senior living community help assess your financial situation?
- Will this liaison help determine your eligibility?
- In addition to the cost of the stay, will there be additional fees?
- Who is responsible for fees, such as cable television, telephone, transportation or other services?
- Is there a barber/beautician onsite?

### Notes: