

## HELPFUL INTERNET SITES

[www.medicare.gov](http://www.medicare.gov)

This site includes a comparison of nursing homes in your area.

Call 1-800 633-4227 to speak to a Medicare customer representative.

[www.medicare.gov/NHCompare/home.asp](http://www.medicare.gov/NHCompare/home.asp)

The primary purpose of this site is to provide detailed information about the performance of every Medicare and Medicaid certified nursing home in the country. Information provided includes a guide to choosing a nursing home and a nursing home checklist.

[www.nursinghomereports.com](http://www.nursinghomereports.com)

This site provides ratings reports and useful, comparative information concerning nursing homes throughout the United States.

[www.angelfire.com/tn/NursingHome](http://www.angelfire.com/tn/NursingHome)

This site provides information relative to Medicare and Medicaid and suggestions with respect to how to choose a nursing home. It also includes sections for family member assistance, patients' rights, financing of long term care and a directory of Ombudsmen for each state.

## ASSOCIATIONS

- *HEALTH CARE FINANCING ADMINISTRATION (HCFA)*

The HCFA administers the Medicare, Medicaid and child health insurance programs. (This office is now called the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services.)

Address: 7500 Security Blvd.  
Baltimore, MD 21244  
Phone: (410) 786-3000  
Website: [www.cms.hhs.gov](http://www.cms.hhs.gov)

- *NATIONAL ASSOCIATION FOR HOME CARE*

Address: 228 7<sup>th</sup> Street SE  
Washington DC 20003  
Phone: (202) 547-7424  
Website: [www.nahc.org](http://www.nahc.org)

- *AMERICAN ASSOCIATION OF RETIRED PERSONS (AARP)*

Address: 601 E Street NW  
Washington DC 20049  
Phone: (800) 424-3410  
Website: [www.aarp.org](http://www.aarp.org)

# NURSING HOMES

## INFORMATION YOU NEED TO KNOW

*To find out about Nursing Homes in your area call 1-800MEDICARE*

*To find out more about what you need to know about Nursing Homes from the ABA go to: [www.abanet.org/tips](http://www.abanet.org/tips)*

**Good health care -- we all need it**



**A Public Service Project of the  
American Bar Association and the  
Law in Public Service Committee of the  
Tort Trial and Insurance Practice Section**

## QUESTIONS TO ASK

1. What is the ratio of staff members to patients?
2. What change, if any, is there in the ratio on the weekends or after hours?
3. What transportation facilities are available? Is there transportation available for medical appointments?
4. Is there a full time RN on premises? Is there a registered health care professional on premises?
5. What types of emergency medical equipment are on premises?
6. What method is used to organize and distribute prescription medicine?
7. How long has the home been operating? How long has the current staff been working at the home?
8. What is the current population of the home and what is its capacity? Are patients specifically grouped? If so, how are the groups formed and what current groups exist?
9. Are any patients with certain medical

conditions prohibited? If so, what are the conditions?

10. What room options are available?
11. How are meals administered?
12. What activities are available for entertainment and field trips?
13. How close is the home to the nearest hospital? Fire Station? Police Station? Shopping area?
14. Does the staff hiring process include a criminal history check?

## PROGRAM OPTIONS

What programs and options are available?

1. **Adult day care**-structured day visits outside the individual's home.
2. **Assisted living**-combines a housing facility with personal service and light medical care.
3. **Continuing Care Retirement Communities**-financially self-sufficient residential communities for independent living that offers medical and nursing care.
4. **Home healthcare**-refers to a variety of services performed at a person's home by an outside agency.

5. **Hospice care**-comprehensive specialized care for patients with life threatening illnesses and their families.
6. **Nursing Home options**-variety of living arrangements that offer different levels of care such as:
  - a. Board and care homes
  - b. Home and community care
  - c. Subsidized senior housing
7. **Outpatient programs**-comprehensive array of services tailored to meet a person's specific needs.

## PAYMENT OPTIONS

1. Payment options available with respect to each program.
2. Insurance coverage available
  - a. Medicare
  - b. Medicaid
  - c. Private health insurance
  - d. Long term care insurance
3. Annuities
4. Self-Funded

"This brochure was written by volunteer attorneys in the Tort Trial and Insurance Practice Section of the American Bar Association to help you think about options for the assisted care of your aging loved one. Knowing the right questions to ask is a good start."