

IMPORTANT QUESTIONS TO ASK...

As you visit or call different communities, be sure to ask these critical questions. They will help you in determining if that specific community can meet your current and/or future needs.

- *How is your community staffed?*
- *Do you have 24/7 "awake" staff?*
- *How would I call for assistance?*
- *Who responds to emergency calls?*
- *Do you have a full time nurse?*
- *If so, how many, and how many hours a week?*
- *Does all of your staff speak English?*
- *Are there set visiting hours?*
- *Do I have the freedom to come and go as I please?*
- *How are mealtimes handled?*
- *Are there menu choices; if so, how many choices?*
- *Can you accommodate special dietary needs?*
- *Who serves the meals?*
- *Are activities available seven days a week?*
- *Who handles the activities?*
- *Do you have transportation? How often?*
- *What is your ratio of men to women?*
- *Will I have privacy?*
- *Can I have my own television? Any extra charge?*
- *Can I have my own phone?*
- *Can I bring my own furniture and belongings?*
- *What is included in the base rate?*



HELPFUL RESOURCES

AARP:

www.aarp.org

Alzheimer's Association:

www.alzheimersassociation.com

Assisted Living Federation of America:

www.alfa.org

National Center for Assisted Living:

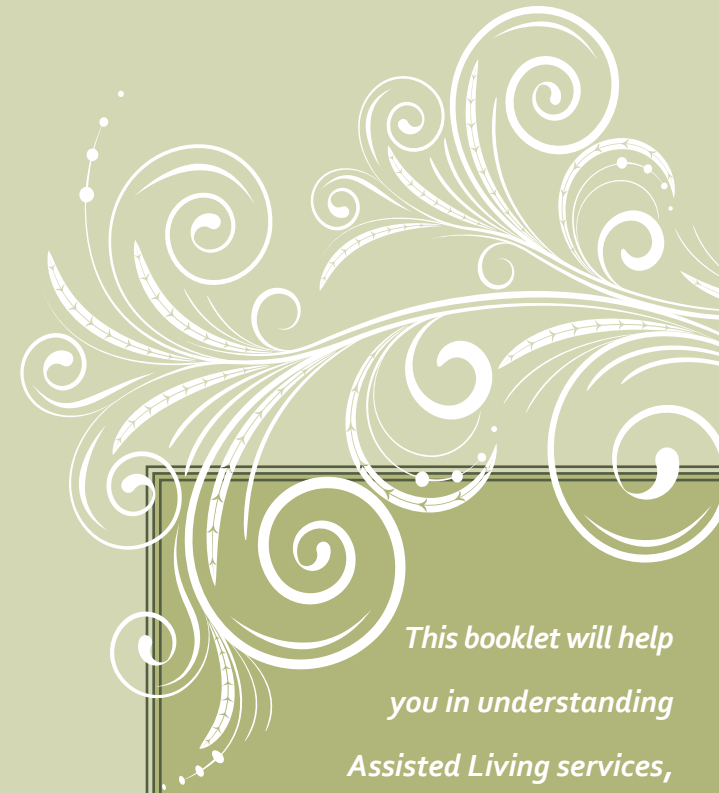
www.ncal.org

Local Attorney General Office website

Local Chamber of Commerce

What you should know

**ABOUT ASSISTED LIVING &
RESIDENTIAL CARE HOMES**



*This booklet will help
you in understanding
Assisted Living services,
educate you on things
you need to know and
questions you must ask.*

ASSISTED LIVING

In general, Assisted Living bridges the gap between independent living, either in your own home or in an independent retirement center, and skilled nursing. This is obviously a very wide gap, and can include a wide-array of needs and services.

All Communities/Centers offering Assisted Living Services are required to be licensed by the State Department of Health Services. If a facility is not licensed by the State, they cannot be an Assisted Living Community/Center. This is very important for many reasons. One very big one being many long-term care insurance policies only cover services performed by a licensed Community/Center. Plus, having a State-issued license means the Community/Center meets mandatory requirements and standards set by the State, as well as receiving regular inspections by the State.

All Assisted Living Communities/Centers are required to provide certain services such as: three well balanced meals, specific activities programs, and adequate trained staff to provide assistance with activities of daily living (ADLs). Each community can customize their programs with a variety of services and service plans including (but not limited to):

- Transportation
- Fitness programs
- Availability of licensed staff
- Housekeeping and laundry
- Administration of medications
- Personal care/ wellness services
- Expanded recreational programs

It is important to visit and thoroughly inspect any place you are considering to ensure it will meet your current and future needs.

As an individual you have specific needs, likes and dislikes.

Fortunately you have choices.

This is why it is very important for you to understand all of your options.

So, here they are...

RESIDENTIAL CARE HOMES

There are many key differences between Assisted Living Communities/Centers and Residential Care Homes, sometimes called Board and Care Homes or Group Homes.

While both are licensed by the State as Assisted Living - there are differences in the standards they are both held to by the State, such as staffing ratio requirements and frequency of inspections, to name a few. Be sure that you evaluate these critical areas:

- Does the County Health Department make regular kitchen inspections?
- Does the fire department make regular inspections?
- Do all staff members speak English? If not, how do they communicate?
- Can you see your own physician?
- Is transportation provided?
- How often does a nurse visit the home? If so, how many hours per week?
- Is there enough variety of trained staff to meet your needs?
- What are their back-up plans if staff calls in sick or does not show up for work?
- Are services such as barber/hair styling, manicures, pedicures, etc. available on-site?
- What activities are available on-site as well as off-site and is transportation available to these activities?
- Are meals nutritionally well-balanced? Are there choices of entrees and side dishes?