Assisted Living: Special Care Units

*If your loved one is considering a move to assisted living, you need to find out about any special care services offered by the facility.*

Note: These checklists have been developed by The Consumer Consortium on Assisted Living (CCAL), a national, nonprofit organization dedicated to representing the needs of consumers in assisted living facilities and educating consumers, professionals, and the general public about assisted living issues.

**Special Care Units**

This section is directed to family members or other interested persons, because it would be unusual for the person who needs a special care unit to be asking these questions. These questions should be asked in addition to previous questions.

- **Is there a separate area specifically for people with dementia?**
  
- **How do services in the special care unit differ from services in the rest of the facility?**
  
- **What is the difference in staff training? The staff-to-resident ratio?**
  
- **Do residents go out of doors regularly? How often? Where do they go?**
  
- **How do you ensure that the resident is getting proper nutrition? Are finger foods available? Do you offer decaffeinated drinks throughout the day?**

For additional tools for caregiving or aging, visit www.CaregiversLibrary.org
Look at a calendar of activities. Do they appear appropriate for the resident?

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________________________________________________________________________

Do the residents on the unit seem as disabled as the prospective resident?

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________________________________________________________________________

What is the facility’s policy on restraints, both chemical and physical?

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Is there space to walk around on the unit?

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What are the room arrangements?

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If there will be a roommate, does he/she have any habits or mannerisms that would be difficult for the prospective resident to handle, e.g. staying up late at night, yelling, going through personal possessions of others?

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When rooms are shared, what does the facility do if problems such as those in the previous question arise?

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What is the cost difference between special care and regular units?

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