

Alzheimer's and Dementia Program Checklist

Many organizations promote that they have a dementia program. There is "dementia care" and then, there are "locked units" that are secure and safe care for an individual with memory problems. There is a difference. Know what you are paying for before you sign an agreement.

Location

- It is close to home?
- It is on the way to work?
- It is located convenient for family to visit?



Building

- Is the facility licensed?
- Is the building/dementia unit secure?
- Is there a secured area to go outside?
- Does the facility seem quiet, without a lot of distractions?
- Is there an overhead paging system that may cause a distraction?
- Is there a separate dining area for dementia residents?
- Is there a separate area specifically for the memory impaired?
- Is the facility clean and appear organized*?
- Are there handrails in the hallways and bathrooms?
- Is there a 24-hour emergency response system in place?

Accommodations/Rooms

Are there individual thermostats to control the temperature in each room?

Is there air conditioning available? _____

If this is an old facility, ask how often the units are repaired, if they do not have central air? _____

Are there private rooms available? ___ Does it include a private bath? ___

Is there a process you use to match roommates when a semi private room is an option? _____

What is the process if the roommates do not get along? _____

Are there smoke detectors and sprinklers in each individual room? _____



Staff

Does the facility do a background check on the staff prior to employment?

Is the staff trained in memory care? _____

Has the staff had behavioral training to deal with the challenging behaviors of the memory impaired? _____

What is the turnover rate for the staff of the memory impaired unit? _____

What is the average length of employment for a staff member of this unit?

How long has the administrator/and/or director of nursing worked for the building? _____

Was the present administration in charge when the last state survey was completed? _____

Is there a program director responsible for the memory / dementia unit? What are their qualifications? _____

Is there a medical director for the unit? What is his availability? What is his/her experience with dementia? _____

Is there a neuropsychologist/ neuropsychiatrist that works with the facility when there are behavioral issues? Who is that person? _____

Is the staff required to complete any type of education or training programs regarding the care of the memory impaired? _____

Is there regular staff that works the memory-impaired unit? _____

Do they have regular assignments to insure consistent care? _____

If not, how are the specific needs, likes and dislikes communicated to the other staff? _____

Does the memory-impaired unit have behavioral plans individualized for each person? _____

Do you have the same staffing schedules for the weekends as you do the weekdays for the memory-impaired unit? _____



Amenities

Is there a programmer activities director specifically assigned to the memory care area? _____

Are activities available all day long for the residents? _____

How are residents that experience "Sun Downing" cared for? _____

Are there individual types of activities planned for the different interests of the residents? _____

Observe the unit when touring and see if the residents are engaged or sleeping.

Do you allow residents to be involved in daily chores such as dusting, folding towels, or matching socks? (This is a benefit to many residents to keep them busy and active. Many enjoy these types of activities and it can increase the sense of well-being.) _____

Eating and Dining Services

Are there of residence of the memory unit regularly assessed on their abilities to feed themselves? _____

Is there assigned seating in the dining area? _____

Are the residents moved to dining room chairs instead of remaining in their wheelchairs to eat? _____

Are the meals prepared with fresh ingredients? Are the meals prepared on-site? _____

May we see a monthly planned menu? If my family member is not able to eat the food served, are there other options for them?

Does the staff feed those that need assistance? Is the entire facility staff expected to assist with feeding residents? If there is a time when the facility is short staffed, does the administration chip in to help? _____

Other Questions

Is there a support group for families of the memory impaired in the facility?

What hospital does the facility refer their residents to? _____

What senior behavioral program does the facility refer to if negative or challenging behaviors become an issue? _____

Is the facility able to handle challenging behaviors? These behaviors may include: aggression, sun downing. sexually acting out, hoarding etc.?

