

ALL ABOUT ASSISTED LIVING

Why have Assisted Living Facilities Developed?

The type of senior housing now known generically as assisted living (AL) has grown out of several of this country's changing demographic factors. These include the increase in the actual number of older adults, and also an increase in the age of older adults. The group experiencing the most rapid growth is those 85 years of age and older, often called the "old old." Also, increased wealth of elders has created a demand for assisted living type of housing. In addition, the increased mobility of family members who often live long distances from their elders, and the increase in women working outside the home has reduced their availability in providing housing and other assistance to their elderly family members.

What Exactly is an Assisted Living Facility?

Because there is not a federal license for assisted living facilities, the actual definition of AL is ambiguous and varies considerably from state to state and even within communities. It can include any of these facilities or terms:

- Residential care
- Personal care
- Adult congregate care
- Board and care
- Boarding care
- Domiciliary care

- Adult living facility
- Supported care home
- Enhanced care
- Retirement facility
- Adult foster care
- Adult homes
- Sheltered housing
- Retirement residence
- Licensed care home
- Group home

How are Assisted Living Facilities Regulated?

Without a national standard for AL facilities, licensure or regulation of AL type residences takes place at the state level. As terminology continues to reflect ongoing development in the AL industry, legislatures are making frequent changes and updates to their regulations regarding AL housing. In Minnesota, there is no "assisted living" license. Facilities are licensed as either adult foster care homes for five or fewer residents, or board and lodging homes for six or more residents. In addition, facilities that meet specific criteria must be registered with the Minnesota Department of Health (MDH) as a Housing with Services (HWS) facility.

How is the Home Health Care Provided?

The licensure covers only the housing and food provision; additional home care licensure is necessary for those facilities providing health-related services.

They have a choice of the following licensures:

- Class A licensure—full service home health care agency that can offer professional nursing, home health aide services and therapies such as physical and occupational therapy. In addition, central storage of medications can be offered in a facility registered as a HWS facility.
- Class E Assisted Living Provider licensure—that permits provision of home care aide tasks in a residential center, but does not allow for medication administration or delegation of nursing tasks. Clients must be able to walk and transfer without the assistance of another person (assistive devices permitted) and have no serious acute illness or infectious disease.
- Class Assisted Living Home Care Provider (ALHCP) licensure—that permits professional nursing, delegated nursing services, other services provided by unlicensed personnel, and central storage of medications in HWS facilities.

What is the Assisted Living Federation of America?

The Assisted Living Federation of America (ALFA), is a trade association representing over 7,000

for profit and not for profit providers of assisted living, continuing care retirement communities, independent living and other forms of housing and services. ALFA defines an assisted living residence “as a special combination of housing, personalized supportive services and health care designed to meet the needs—both scheduled and unscheduled—of those who need help with activities of daily living (ADLs).” They say an AL residence can range from high-rise apartment complexes to converted Victorian homes to renovated schools to updated farm homes. These may be free-standing buildings or be attached to other residential housing, such as independent living apartments or skilled nursing facilities. Most AL facilities have between 25 and 120 units, although they may be as small as two beds or as large as several hundred units. The size of the units may range from one small room to a large three bedroom apartment.

Who Lives in Assisted Living Facilities?

The typical resident of an AL facility is a female in her mid-80s who is either widowed or single, and needs help with some Instrumental Activities of Daily Living (IADLs). [See chart of ADLs and IADLs.] AL residents can be as young as 40 while most are in their 80s, 90s or even 100s. They can be affluent or low income, and are often frail with dependencies in IADLs and some ADLs. Some AL facilities provide specialized care for residents with Alzheimer’s disease or other memory-impairing conditions. Many AL facilities accept residents who use wheelchairs or electric carts, and frequently AL residents require canes or walkers.

ALFA studies reported in 2001 showed that many AL residents are highly impaired, with 3+ ADL deficiencies and/or cognitive impairment. The studies also found that residents in AL facilities with a

full time RN involved in direct care were half as likely to move to a nursing home as when an RN was not involved full time. On an annual basis, 8% of AL residents moved to nursing homes, mainly because of declining cognitive ability, and 4% moved to another AL facility. Of those who did move from an AL facility, only 12% indicated dissatisfaction with care.

What Services are Provided in Assisted Living Facilities?

Services provided in AL facilities vary considerably from one facility to the next, but may include any or all of the following:

Hospitality Services

- Two or three meals daily in central dining room
- Housekeeping services
- Social and recreational activities
- Transportation to shopping areas
- Linen service

Supportive Services

- Personal laundry service
- Health promotion and exercise programs
- Transportation for medical and health services
- Assistance arranging health and medical services
- 24 hour security and staff availability
- Emergency call system for each unit

Health-Related Services

- Nursing assessment
- Assistance with ADLs
- Medication management
- Central or locked medication storage

How Much does it Cost to Live in a Assisted Living Facility?

The costs of residence in an AL facility varies considerably, depending on the type of residence, the room size, and the services needed by the resident. Across the country, daily rates vary from \$15 to \$200, usually on a month-to-

month basis. Some AL facilities require an initial “buy-in” payment ranging from \$1,000 to over \$50,000 with various policies on return of this payment upon discharge. Fee structures vary considerably. Some AL facilities have an all-inclusive fee based on one of several levels of services needed by each resident while others rent the units at a fixed rate and offer additional services “a la carte.”

How Do I Select an Assisted Living Facility?

It is important to consider several types of information when choosing an AL facility, and not to be swayed by interior decorating, fancy brochures or location. The most important information to consider are the resident’s current and potential needs. This is done by determining the amount and level of assistance the resident currently needs with Instrumental Activities of Daily Living (IADLs) and Activities of Daily Living (ADLs), and to consider how quickly the current needs may increase. [See Matching Care Needs and Living Options chart on page 3 of this newsletter for lists of IADLs and ADLs]. Then, when visiting AL facilities, it can be determined whether they have the staff and services to meet the resident’s needs, and how they charge for their services. Using this information, it should be possible to calculate the total monthly cost for rent and services. Also ask how often residents’ care needs are evaluated and when changes are made in the amount and cost of services.

While physical appearance of the AL facility can be important to consider, it is more important to observe the appearance of the other residents. Are they neatly groomed and dressed? Do they appear happy, engaged in activities or conversation, and at home in the

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MATCHING CARE NEEDS AND LIVING OPTIONS

Type of Housing	Instrumental Activities of Daily Living YNS (Yes/No/Sometimes)	Activities of Daily Living YNS (Yes/No/Sometimes)	Comments
Own home or apartment	<input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> Cleaning <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> Laundry <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> Meal preparation <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> Medication management <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> Money management <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> Shopping <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> Recreation	<input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> Bathing <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> Dressing <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> Eating <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> Grooming <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> Toileting <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> Transferring <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> Walking	Must hire home care agency for services; most require 3 hour minimum.
Apartment in senior building which offers assisted living services	<input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Cleaning <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Laundry <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Meal preparation <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Medication management <input type="checkbox"/> <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> Money management <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Shopping <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> Recreation	<input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Bathing <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Dressing <input type="checkbox"/> <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> Eating <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Grooming <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Toileting <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Transferring* <input type="checkbox"/> <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> Walking	Can contract with in-house home care agency for services in 15 minute increments.
Assisted living facility	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> Cleaning <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> Laundry <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> Meal preparation <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> Medication management <input type="checkbox"/> <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> Money management <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Shopping <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> Recreation	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> Bathing <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> Dressing <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> Eating <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> Grooming <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Toileting <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Transferring* <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Walking	Can purchase additional services in 15 minute increments.
Board and lodging facility	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> Cleaning <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> Laundry <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> Meal preparation <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> Medication management <input type="checkbox"/> <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> Money management <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Shopping <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> Recreation	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> Bathing <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> Dressing <input type="checkbox"/> <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> Eating <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> Grooming <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Toileting <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Transferring* <input type="checkbox"/> <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> Walking	Provides help with ADLs through Case Mix D.
Adult foster care home	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> Cleaning <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> Laundry <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> Meal preparation <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> Medication management <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Money management <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Shopping <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> Recreation	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> Bathing <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> Dressing <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Eating <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> Grooming <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Toileting <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Transferring* <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Walking	Level of care varies depending on home.
Nursing facility	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> Cleaning <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> Laundry <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> Meal preparation <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> Medication management <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Money management <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Shopping <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> Recreation	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> Bathing <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> Dressing <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> Eating <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> Grooming <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> Toileting <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> Transferring <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> Walking	All services included.

* With the help of one caregiver
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environment? Are staff members responsive to the residents and do they interact with them spontaneously, even when the resident doesn't make a specific request?

Regarding health services, it is important to find out if the Director of Nursing (sometimes called "Wellness Director" or a similar title) is a registered nurse, or a less highly skilled individual. How frequently is the nurse in the building and available? How are medications stored, set up and administered? Who contacts the resident's doctor if needed, and how are physicians' orders implemented? Is there a daily check on each resident to ensure their safety if they don't appear for breakfast? What is the discharge criteria, or when would a resident be asked to leave? Can the resident hire their own outside caregivers, or are they required to use the facility's caregivers?

Good food and a pleasant dining atmosphere is important in ensuring

adequate nutrition. Find out who develops the menu, and see if it offers appealing, nutritious choices. How are meals served? Are residents required to come to the dining room for every meal, or is tray service available? Can the facility accommodate special dietary needs?

Participating in scheduled activities prevents boredom, isolation and depression. Ask if there is an activity program. How often is activity staff present? Does the activity department offer a range of options morning, afternoon and evening? Are there opportunities to participate in activities out of the facility, such as attending a play, movie or eating at a restaurant?

While the location of the AL facility often seems very important to family members, it should be remembered that while most family members visit once or twice a week, the residents need to live in the facility and have their needs met 24 hours every day. Thus, the

closest facility to the family may not be the most appropriate option for the resident. In the long run, choosing the facility that can best meet the resident's current and projected needs will be the most successful option, even if the family members must drive a little farther to visit.

For further information about Matrix Advocare Network or for a complimentary consultation, call **763/560-1010** or **800/560-0961**. We also welcome your comments and your suggestions for future newsletter articles.

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