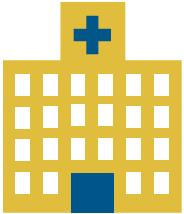


# SKILLED NURSING FACILITIES



Skilled nursing facilities are medical facilities that offer on-site nurses, nurse practitioners, social workers and dietitians. These facilities, also known as nursing homes, provide a high level of medical care, with 24-hour nursing for residents with serious medical conditions and/or advanced Alzheimer's disease, dementia or cognitive impairment.

At a skilled nursing facility, a licensed physician supervises each patient's care, and a nurse or other medical professional is always on the premises. In addition to nursing care, skilled nursing facilities may offer rehabilitation, medical services and protective supervision, as well as assistance with activities of daily living.

Medicaid may cover most of the costs, but only for those with very limited income. Also, not all skilled nursing facilities accept Medicaid. Medicare covers only a limited amount of the costs, typically up to 100 days after a hospitalization. Coverage by long-term care insurance varies by policy.

This worksheet is designed to familiarize you with the types of services offered by skilled nursing facilities.

**Consider reviewing the guide in advance of your visit, and bring a copy to take notes when you evaluate the facility.**

## Topics to Address:

Community profile	Activities and amenities
Community basics	Staff
Location	Management
Community environment	Contract and fees
Community services	Dedicated memory care
Health and medical care	

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## Community profile

Name of community

Date visited

Address

Phone no.

City

State

Zip code

Contact name

Your rating 1–5 (5 being the highest)

## Community basics

Number of total residents \_\_\_\_\_ Number of total units/beds \_\_\_\_\_

What is the average length of stay?

What is the setting (e.g., in-town, suburban, country)?

What is the average age of the residents?

What is the name of the developer/sponsor?

Is the sponsor for-profit not-for-profit (Affiliated with: \_\_\_\_\_)?

What is the financial position of the sponsor? (Request financial statement.)

Is there debt? If yes, how is it structured? Yes No

How many years has the facility been in business?

What is the occupancy rate (%)?

Are there semi-private or private rooms? Yes No

Is there a waiting list? Yes No

What is the cost to join the waiting list?

Is the cost refundable? Yes No

## Community basics (continued)

How long is the waiting list?

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How is the waiting list managed?

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## Location

Is it convenient to family? Yes No

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Is it convenient to friends? Yes No

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Is it convenient to medical care (e.g., doctors, specialists, hospitals, specialized rehabilitation facilities)? Yes No

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## Community environment

Does it feel welcoming? Yes No

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Do the residents appear happy and engaged? Yes No

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Does the facility appear clean? Yes No

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How are shared areas managed to prevent the spread of germs?

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Can residents bring personal items from home? Yes No

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Do you smell urine or strong deodorizers that may be covering up the smell of urine? Yes No

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Is there a secure outside area for the residents to walk in? Yes No

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## Community services

What types of services are available (e.g., activities, personal care, snacks)?

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What kinds of meals are normally served, and when?

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Can they accommodate special dietary needs? Yes No

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What type of help is available at mealtime?

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**Community services** (continued)

Is there visitor parking?	Yes	No
Is there a security system?	Yes	No
Are there bed alarms?	Yes	No
Is there an emergency response system?	Yes	No
How is staff trained to handle emergencies (e.g., fire/outbreak/quarantine)?	Yes	No
How does management communicate when an outbreak of any type occurs?		

**Health and medical care**

Is there a written plan for the care of each resident, and is there an ongoing process for assessing changing needs?	Yes	No
What type of health care and personal care services are available?		
What is the protocol for contacting family members should issues arise?		
Is there an on-site pharmacy?	Yes	No
Are residents required to use the on-site pharmacy?	Yes	No
Who is the contact when family members have questions about patient care?		
How are emergencies handled after hours?		
Is there someone on staff to help arrange doctor appointments?	Yes	No
Are there doctors on site on certain days? Which specialists?	Yes	No

## Health and medical care (continued)

What is the lead time to be seen by a doctor or specialist?

Is there a social worker on staff for help with care and resources, if needed?

Yes

No

What happens if there is a short-term need for hospitalization?

How often do residents return to the residence after a stay at rehab or a hospital?

What health setbacks or clinical needs would trigger a move to skilled nursing (e.g., mobility, oxygen, dementia or cognitive impairment, need for in-house physician, need for nurse/medic on call, or need for other specialists)?

Who makes the decision to move the resident to a higher level of care (hospital)?

What if there is no unit/bed available in a higher level of care?

What is the relationship between monthly costs and level of care?

What options are available if a resident needs more care?

How much notice is given when a transition is necessary?

Who makes the final decision about a long-term move to a higher level of care?

## Activities and amenities

How are new residents welcomed to the community?

What types of activities and events are offered?

Is there a central community room for activities and events?

Yes

No

## Staff

Is the staff available 24 hours a day? Yes No

Is the staff friendly, respectful and personable? Yes No

What is the ratio of staff to residents?

What is the staffing level on weekdays, weekends and evenings?

What is the staff turnover rate?

## Management

Who manages the facility? Is the management supervised?

How is the management supervised?

What feedback mechanisms exist for residents and their families?

## Contract and fees

What are the monthly fees and what is included?

What services are included in the care agreement/services contract? (Ask to see the care agreement/services contract.)

If a service is not covered, what is the fee for that service?

Is there a different fee for memory care? Yes No

## Dedicated memory care

Does the facility have a special wing or floor for residents with Alzheimer's disease, dementia or cognitive impairment?

Yes No

What type of training has the staff received in caring for residents with dementia or cognitive impairment?

Who conducts the training?

How does the staff handle behaviors such as wandering and agitation?

What security measures are in place to keep residents with Alzheimer's disease, dementia or cognitive impairment from wandering out of the building?

Is the dedicated staff available 24 hours a day?

Yes No

Who makes the final decision about a long-term move to memory care?

For facilities without specific memory care units, what training has the staff received to care for people with memory-related issues?

Who is the contact when the family has questions about patient care?

By what percentage have the monthly fees increased over each of the last five years?

What happens if a resident can no longer cover their monthly fees?

What would make the facility discharge a resident?

What dispute procedures are in place?

What is the state rating and incident report?

Is the facility Medicaid-certified?

Yes No

Do not hesitate to ask any facility you visit what kind of procedures and inspection policies they have in place to ensure that patients are safe and receive a good quality of care. Check with local regulatory agencies and the Better Business Bureau to confirm compliance and see if any complaints have been filed.

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