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SENIOR LIFE

Building A Family Connection

The benefits of using an assisted living advisor

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With more Americans living longer than ever, it is inevitable that someone you know—a parent, sibling, spouse or other aging relative—will one day require a new living setting. It's estimated that for individuals who reach 65 years of age, there is a 70 percent likelihood they'll require some form of long-term care services. When faced with that reality, many of us simply don't know where to turn. That's when senior home advisors becomes a valuable resource. Not only do they have the expertise and information you need regarding the various options available, but there is no fee for their services. They'll guide you through a supportive, caring process that helps alleviate much of the emotional stress that comes with this major life decision.

The qualified, compassionate senior home advisor will start by getting to know the family, the senior and his/her current situation. A disciplined discovery process is conducted through which the advisor asks a series



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of questions intended to qualify the senior's medical condition, memory impairment, any behavioral issues, need for supervision and ability to manage daily living requirements (e.g., grooming, dressing, feeding, etc.). This information helps narrow down the various senior care and living settings that would be appropriate.

Knowing Your Senior Living Options

We've all heard of assisting living communities, nursing homes and memory care facilities, but do we understand their differences and what determines the best setting for a loved one? A senior home advisor will break it down, explaining that:

- Assisted living communities are for seniors requiring day-to-day assistance with activities of daily living (ADLs), and who want to be as independent as possible.
- Nursing homes are for seniors requiring extensive medical care and supervision.
- Memory care facilities are assisted living designed specifically for individuals with Alzheimer's, dementia or other memory problems.

Additionally, the senior home advisor will explain other options, such as:

- Independent living community, which can offer some support in housekeeping, dining, meal preparation, social/recreational activities and transportation.
- Care homes are for more fragile individuals who would benefit from a more intimate, home-like setting with a higher staff-to-resident ratio.

Making The Best Selection

Each option has a different price point and services, which the senior

home advisor will explain and, as needed, discuss with the senior's estate planning attorney or financial planner to determine the best way to pay for the new living arrangement. Once the setting option has been determined, the advisor will help with specific facility selection. Leveraging his/her relationships with the region's various senior living facilities and with consideration to the individual's finances and geographic preferences, the advisor will narrow down the selection to the best three or four choices. Then, the advisor will accompany the senior and his/her family members on tours of the selected facilities to determine the best choice. The process is conducted with great sensitivity to the senior and his/her family.

For the senior and his/her family, being guided by a senior home advisor through this process can make the transition much less difficult, providing assurances and peace of mind that a loved one will be living out their golden years in the most appropriate setting.

Mike McClernon is the owner/eldercare advisor at Assisted Living Locators.



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