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AgingLong-Term Care Options



Nursing Home or Alternative Care in Oklahoma



OKLAHOMA DEPARTMENT OF HUMAN SERVICES

Aging Services Division Long-Term Care Ombudsman Program

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Introduction

This guide provides information on how to obtain quality long-term care for yourself, a friend or a relative. It describes nursing home care in Oklahoma and community-based options available. If you need to choose nursing home care, this guide can help you locate the nursing facility that will best meet your needs and provide quality care.

The time and effort spent in deciding on the type of care you need, and in choosing the best possible provider of that care, will help you avoid some problems later.

If you need further information or assistance, write or phone one of the agencies listed at the end of this guide, or contact the Oklahoma Department of Human Services (DHS), Office of the State Long-Term Care Ombudsman.

Alternatives to Nursing Home Care

Many older persons do not need nursing home care but do need some health care services or help with daily activities. Home and community-based services such as personal care, home health services, congregate or home delivered meals, Adult Day Services, the ADvantage program or services available through the Older Americans Act or Eldercare often enable older persons to remain in their own homes. Such arrangements are less costly than nursing home care and are generally more acceptable to the individual.

Brief descriptions of the variety of services available in Oklahoma follow. For additional information about local availability of specific services, please contact your Area Agency on Aging (see listing on page 22).

Telephone reassurance is a program through which homebound persons are contacted (by volunteers) at a certain time daily or as often as necessary, to see if they are safe and well.

The congregate meals program funded through the Older Americans Act provides hot, nutritious meals, social services and companionship at centers within the community. The social services available at congregate meal sites include outreach, assisted transportation, information and referral, nutritional information, health counseling and referral, transportation and recreation.

Home delivered meals are nutritious meals delivered to vulnerable, homebound older persons who are physically unable to attend congregate meal sites. For many program recipients, the daily visit from the person delivering their meal may be the only contact with the outside world.

The Personal Care Program provides in-home assistance with health care needs, bathing, grooming, meal preparation, houseThe ADvantage Program, administered by the DHS and funded through a partnership between the federal and state government via a waiver to the Medicaid program, provides an opportunity for vulnerable elders and adults with physical disabilities to stay at home, instead of residing in a nursing home. Persons served through this program can receive the services they need in their own home or in a family member's home. Each person receiving ADvantage Program services will have a case manager who will be responsible for arranging for care and seeing that service is properly provided. The program services include case management, personal care, skilled nursing care, adult day services, home delivered meals, home modifications, prescription drugs, specialized medical equipment and supplies and respite care.

Adult Day Care services include rehabilitation such as physical and speech therapy, hot meals and other assistance for persons who need daytime care while family or other caretakers work. These services are provided at centers located throughout the state. For a current listing of those centers, call your local Area Agency on Aging. (see page 22)

Senior Citizen Housing includes apartment complexes and highrise buildings and is available in many parts of Oklahoma. These generally provide reduced rental payments and easy access to services of various sorts. Many include senior centers and nutrition sites on or near the premises.

Residential Care Homes provide supportive assistance in a residential setting. Housekeeping, help with eating, bathing, dressing

and other services are included as "supportive assistance" to persons who do not routinely require nursing care. Residential Care Homes must be licensed by the State Department of Health if they serve one or more people.

Assisted Living Centers offer, coordinate, or provide services to residents who may need assistance with any or all of the following: personal care (meals, dressing, movement, bathing or other personal needs or maintenance, or general supervision of the physical and mental well-being of a person, including assistance with toileting) or nursing supervision; intermittent or unscheduled nursing care; medication assistance, and transfer and/or ambulating. Assisted Living Centers must be licensed by the State Department of Health, either as a stand-alone Assisted Living Center, or as a part of a Continuum of Care Facility, which includes a Nursing Home and an Assisted Living Center.

If Nursing Home Care Is Needed

Nursing facilities are primarily designed for persons convalescing from illness, or to provide long-term nursing care which is not appropriate for a hospital or available through home care programs or other alternatives.

A nursing facility is not a hospital. It is not reasonable to expect hospital care in a nursing home. However, it is reasonable to expect a high quality of life and care—nothing less is acceptable.

Paying for Nursing Home Care

There are several ways to meet the financial costs of nursing home care. Income from Social Security, pensions, veteran's benefits, long-term care insurance and other sources may cover all or part of the expense. Some health insurance plans include limited nursing home coverage. Contact your agent to see if nursing home care is covered and if so, for what type of facility. For instance, Medicare nursing home coverage is extremely limited (see "Medicare," page 8). Medicare does not pay for long-term care.

When a person's savings or other resources have been spent down to the maximum limit allowed by the state and all other income from Social Security, other pensions, etc. is less than the amount needed to pay for care, the individual resident may qualify for Medicaid (medical assistance).

Medicaid (Title 19, Social Security Act)

Medicaid is a financial assistance program that will pay for nursing home care for an **unlimited** time for persons who need such care and meet the income and assets guidelines. This program uses federal and state funds.

For information about the medical assistance program call the DHS county office in the county where the person needing nursing care is located. This office will be able to advise what information will be required to make application, how soon to expect a decision, and how to ask for a review if found ineligible. In addition, the DHS county office has information about other programs which may be helpful.

Medicare (Title 18, Social Security Act)

Medicare is a federal health insurance program for persons over age 65 and Medicare-eligible persons under 65, and is administered by the Social Security Administration. It will contribute to the payment of nursing home care for a limited period of time, following certain hospital stays.

The guidelines for Medicare payment of nursing home costs are very strict, and few persons qualify for this assistance. You can get information about Medicare benefits for nursing home care from your local Social Security office. Be sure to ask for a *Medicare Handbook*.

Choosing a Nursing Home

First step

As the first step in choosing a nursing home, decide on the area or location most acceptable to the person who will be the resident. If the person wishes to continue using his or her private physician, consider homes close to the hospital that the doctor uses. Being near a hospital or other emergency services can be an advantage.

It is also important to consider a location that is convenient to friends or relatives, as visits by familiar people can make a big difference in the resident's progress and general well-being.

Remember that the individual's specific situation, needs and wishes are the most important considerations. Talk with the doctor about the kind of care the person needs. By all means, the elderly person should be included in the decision-making and planning.

Make a list of nursing homes in the chosen area.

To assist in compiling the list, consult with the following resources:

- · Ask doctors, friends or ministers for recommendations.
- Get names of nursing homes from your local DHS county office, health department, Social Security office, ombudsman, or call the Senior Info-line at 1-800-211-2116.
- · Check the yellow pages of the telephone book, under the listing, "Homes Convalescent."

It is helpful to check with more than one resource. This decision is very important.

Call the homes on the list.

The number of homes you will need to visit can be narrowed down by first asking certain questions by telephone. When calling the nursing home, ask to speak to the administrator or the person in charge of admissions. Some of the questions to ask are:

- Does the home provide the kind of care the doctor says the person needs?
- Is the home certified for the Medicaid or Medicare program? (Ask this question if you now need or may need this type of assistance to pay for care).
- Does the home have an opening? If not, how long is the waiting period?

Visit at least two homes.

After narrowing the field to homes which meet the general needs of the prospective resident, make an appointment for a visit. If possible, the prospective resident should be included in the visit. He or she is an adult and should be allowed to exercise the right to choose. If transportation to the home is a problem, ask the facility whether transportation can be provided for you to visit. Some offer this service.

Try to visit the facility during the noon meal and spend at least one hour. Arrange to meet and talk to the administrator and the nursing director because their attitudes will affect the actual care and quality of life of the residents.

Ask to review the last three years' State Health Department inspection reports. State law requires these reports be available at the home for public inspection.

Ask for a copy of the facility policy.

Ask for a tour. This is the most important part of the visit. Observe whether residents are awake and dressed appropriately. Observe the activity calendar posted and whether those planned are taking place. Pay close attention to the interaction between nurses aides (direct care givers) and residents. Are call lights being answered? Are residents treated with respect and dignity?

If the potential resident has been unable to accompany you on this visit, please share your comparisons on the following pages with him/her and allow them to participate in the decision-making process.

Checklist

The following checklist is provided for reference and convenience. Use it to prepare for and during the tour of a nursing facility. Observe, ask questions, but respect the privacy of the residents.

★ Before reaching a final decision, it is suggested a second unannounced visit be made to the facility. This time, plan a visit during the evening hours. Take time to visit with the residents and walk leisurely throughout the facility. Re-check earlier findings.

Nursing facilities you have chosen:

Nursing facility A is		
Nursing facility B is	Home A yes no	Home B yes no
General Does the nursing home have the required current state license?		
Does the administrator have a current state license?		
Is the home certified to participate the Medicare and/or Medicaid programs?		
Is the administrator courteous and helpful?		

	Home A yes no	Home B yes no		Home A yes no	Home B yes no
If the person you are placing requires special services, such as rehabilitation therapy or a theraputic diet, does the home provide them?			Physical Conditions Is the nursing home clean and orderly?		
Is the general atmosphere of the nursing home warm, pleasant and cheerful?			Is the home reasonably free of unpleasant odors? Is the home well-lighted?		
Are staff members cheerful, courteous and enthusiastic?			Are rooms well-ventilated and kept at a comfortable temperature?		
Do staff members show residents genuine interest and affection?			Safety Is an emergency evacuation plan posted in prominent locations?		
Do residents look well cared for and generally content? Are residents allowed to wear their			Is the nursing home free of obvious hazards, such as obstacles to residents and unsteady chairs?		
own clothes, decorate their rooms and keep a few prized possessions on hand?			Are there grab bars in toilet and bathing facilities and handrails on both sides of hallways?		
Is there a place for private visits with family and friends?			Do bathtubs and showers have non-slip surfaces?		
Is there a written statement of resident's rights? As far as you can tell, are these points being carried out?			Is there an automatic sprinkler system and automatic lighting?		
Do residents, other visitors and volunteers speak favorably about			Are there portable fire extinguishers? Are exits clearly marked and exit		
the home?			signs lighted?		

	Home A yes no	Home B yes no		Home A yes no	Home B yes no
Are exit doors unobstructed and unlocked from inside? Are certain areas posted with no smoking signs? Do staff, residents and visitors observe them?			Nursing Services Is at least one registered nurse (RN) or licensed practical nurse (LPN) on duty 24 hours a day, seven days a week?		,
Are wheelchair ramps provided where necessary?			Does an RN serve as director of nursing services? Are nurse call buttons within each resident's reach whether in bed or		
Medical, Dental and Other Services In case of medical emergencies, is a physician available?			chair and are they located in toilet and bathing facilities? Do they work?		
Does the home have arrangements with a nearby hospital for quick transfer of residents in an emergency?			What is the direct care staff-to-resident ratio on each shift?		
Is emergency transportation available? Is oral hygiene adequate?			Food Service Is the kitchen clean and reasonably tidy? Is food needing refrigeration promptly stored?		
Does the home have an arrangement with an outside dental service to provide dental care when necessary?			Ask to see the meal schedule. Are at least three meals served each day? Are meals served at normal hours, with time for leisurely eating?		
Pharmaceutical Services Are pharmaceutical services supervised by a qualified consultant pharmacist?			Are no more than 14 hours allowed between the evening meal and breakfast?		
Is a locked room set aside for storing and preparing drugs?			Are nutritious between-meal and bedtime snacks available and offered?		

	Home A yes no	Home B yes no		Home A yes no	Home B yes no
Are residents given enough food? Does the food look appetizing? Sample a meal. Is the food tasty and served at the proper			Does the nursing home have a varied program of recreational, cultural and intellectual activities for residents?		
temperature? Does the meal being served match the posted menu?			Is there an activities coordinator on the staff? Is suitable space available for		
Are special meals prepared for residents on therapeutic diets? Is the dining room attractive and			resident activities? Are tools and supplies provided? Are activities offered for residents who are relatively inactive or		
comfortable? Do residents who need it get help in eating, whether in the dining room			confined to their rooms? Look at the activities schedule. Are activities provided each day,		
or in their rooms? Rehabilitation Therapy			including week-ends? Are some activities scheduled in the evenings?		
Is a full-time program of physical therapy available for residents who need it? Are occupational therapy and speech			Do residents have opportunities to attend religious services and talk with clergymen both in and outside the home?		
therapy available for residents who need them? Social Services			Are a barber and beautician available?		
Are there social services available to aid residents and their families?			Resident's Rooms Do all the rooms open onto a hallway?		

R	Home A yes no	Home B yes no		Home A yes no	Home B yes no
Does each room have a window to the outside?			Does the facility have a van, or other transportation for residents?		
Does each resident have a reading light, a comfortable chair, and a closet and drawers for personal belongings?			Financial Matters Do the estimated monthly costs (including extra charges)		
Is there fresh drinking water within reach?			compare favorably with the cost of other homes?		200
Is there a curtain or screen available to provide privacy for each bed whenever necessary?			Is a refund made for unused days paid for in advance?		
Do bathing and toilet facilities have adequate privacy?			Are these and other important matters specified in the contract?		
The Nursing Home Is there a lounge where residents can chat, read, play games, watch television or just relax away from their rooms?					
Is a public telephone available for resident's use?					
Does the nursing home have an outdoor area where residents can get fresh air and sunshine?					
Are visiting hours convenient for residents and visitors?					

The Ombudsman Program

In Oklahoma, the Ombudsman Program is administered by the Aging Services Division of the Department of Human Services in coordination with the Area Agencies on Aging. The purpose of the Long-Term Care Ombudsman Program is to help improve the quality of life and the quality of care available to older residents of long-term care facilities, such as nursing homes and other similar adult care homes.

A long-term care ombudsman is a person who receives complaints from residents in long-term care facilities, or from friends or relatives of residents, and attempts to resolve those complaints. Staff ombudsmen are assisted by local volunteers committed to improving and enriching the lives of institutionalized older persons.

What To Do If You Have A Complaint

If you have a complaint about a nursing home, for whatever reason, you have a right to make the complaint known without fear of repercussions to the resident.

You can report a complaint to:

- 1. The nursing facility administrator.
- 2. The Area Agency on Aging Ombudsman supervisor or a local certified ombudsman volunteer (see page 22 for a list of Area Agencies on Aging and the counties they serve) by calling 1-800-211-2116 or through the State Ombudsman office at (405) 521-6734.
- 3. The resident's caseworker at the local Department of Human Services county office, if the resident is covered by Medicaid.
- 4. State Long-Term Care Ombudsman, Aging Services Division, Department of Human Services, PO Box 25352, Oklahoma City, OK 73125, (405) 521-6734.

- 5. Department of Human Services, Long-Term Care Complaint Investigations Unit, Special Unit on Aging, PO Box 25352, Oklahoma City, OK 73125, (405) 521-3440 for complaints of resident abuse, neglect or exploitation in a nursing facility.
- 6. Oklahoma State Health Department, Special Health Services Division, 1000 NE 10th Street, Oklahoma City, OK 73152, (405) 271-6868.
- 7. Legal Services Projects for the Elderly:
 Legal Aid of Western Oklahoma, (405) 557-0014
 Legal Services of Eastern Oklahoma, 1-800-299-3338
 University of Oklahoma Legal Clinic, (405) 325-3702
 University of Tulsa Law Center, (918) 584-2751
 or any other reputable lawyer.
- 8. The Department of Human Services Adult Abuse Hotline, 1-800-522-3511. When you suspect abuse, neglect or maltreatment, call the Adult Abuse Hotline. It operates 24 hours a day, seven days a week.

Suggested Reading

Pamphlets are available from the Social Security Administration office, county or state health department, Department of Human Services or public libraries.

Nursing Homes — Getting Good Care There by Sarah Greene Burger, Virginia Frazer, Sara Hunt and Barbara Frank (a consumer action manual prepared by the National Citizen's Coalition for Nursing Home Reform). American Source Books/Impact Publishers, 1996.

Other Reference Material:

Living in a Nursing Home — A Complete Guide for Residents, Their Families and Friends by Sarah Greene Burger, RN, and Martha D'Erasmo, RN, The Seabury Press, New York, NY 1976.

Oklahoma Department of Human Services Area Agencies on Aging

Listed by Planning and Services Areas—All area agency telephones are TDD equipped

Senior Info-Line 1-800-211-2116

GRAND GATEWAY Area Agency on Aging

333 S. Oak St. P.O. Box Drawer B Big Cabin, OK 74332-0502 (918)783-5793/1-800-482-4594 FAX: (918)783-5786 Area 1: Craig, Delaware, Mayes, Nowata, Ottawa, Rogers and Washington counties

EODD Area Agency on Aging

EODD Building 1012 N. 38th St. P.O. Box 1367 Muskogee, OK 74402-1367 (918)682-7891/FAX: (918)-682-5444 Area 2: Adair, Cherokee, McIntosh, Muskogee, Okmulgee, Sequoyah and Wagoner counties

KEDDO Area Agency on Aging

Vo-Tech Administration Addition Highway 2 P.O. Box 638 Wilburton, OK 74578-0638 (918)465-2367/1-800-722-8180 FAX: (918)-465-3873 Area 3: Choctaw, Haskell, Latimer, LeFlore, McCurtain, Pittsburg and Pushmataha counties

SODA Area Agency on Aging

224 W. Evergreen, Suite 203 Durant, OK 74702 (580)920-1388, (580)920-1391 (FAX) Area 4: Atoka, Bryan, Carter, Coal, Garvin, Johnston, Love, Marshall, Murray and Pontotoc

COEDD Area Agency on Aging

400 N. Bell P.O. Box 3398 Shawnee, OK 74802-3398 (405)273-6410/1-800-375-8255 FAX: (405)273-3213 Area 5: Hughes, Lincoln, Okfuskee, Pawnee, Payne, Pottawatomie and Seminole counties

TULSA Area Agency on Aging

111 S. Greenwood, Suite 200 Tulsa, OK 74120 (918)596-7688, (918)596-7653 (FAX) Area 6: Creek, Osage and Tulsa counties

NODA Area Agency on Aging

2901 N. Van Buren Enid, OK 73703-2505 (580)237-2205/1-800-749-1149 Area 7: Alfalfa, Blaine, Garfield, Grant, Kay, Kingfisher, Major and Noble counties

AREAWIDE Aging Agency Inc.

Mayfair Center 3200 N.W. 48th, Suite 104 Oklahoma City, OK 73112-5910 (405)942-8500/FAX: (405)942-8535 Area 8: Canadian, Cleveland, Logan and Oklahoma counties

ASCOG Area Agency on Aging

802 Main St., P.O. Box 1647 Duncan, OK 73533-1647 (580)252-0595/1-800-658-1466 FAX: (580)252-6170 Area 9: Caddo, Comanche, Cotton, Grady, Jefferson, McClain, Stephens and Tillman counties

SWODA Area Agency on Aging

Sherman Industrial Air Park Building 420-Sooner Dr. P.O. Box 569 Burns Flat, OK 73624-0569 (580)562-4882/1-800-627-4882 FAX: 562-4880 Area 10: Beckham, Custer, Greer, Harmon, Kiowa, Jackson, Roger Mills and Washita counties

OEDA Area Agency on Aging

330 Douglas Ave.
P.O. Box 668
Beaver, OK 73932-0668
(580)625-4531/1-800-658-2844
(580)625-3420
Area 11: Beaver, Cimarron, Dewey, Ellis, Harper, Texas, Woods and Woodward counties

Department of Human Services
State Long-Term Care Ombudsman
Aging Services Division
2401 NW 23rd, Suite 40
Oklahoma City, OK 73107
(405) 521-6734

TDD Number for the Deaf and Hearing Impaired (405) 917-7700

Senior Info-Line 1-800-211-2116

