

# From Jaime's Desk

## TIPS FOR SELECTING AN ASSISTED LIVING COMMUNITY

Assisted Living Locators offers a full assessment of your loved one's needs and recommends a plan that provides the full continuum of care.

Older adults and families who are considering a transition to an assisted living community may be overwhelmed by the number of choices that are available.

Assisted Living Locators is a no-cost advocacy, referral and housing placement service for seniors and their families offering expert advice on local care and professional resources in Manatee, Sarasota, Charlotte and North Lee Counties.

Choosing an assisted living community is an important decision that involves more than simply choosing a floor plan — it's about lifestyle. In addition to meeting social, cultural and recreational requirements, you also want to ensure that there is a continuum of care in place to meet your loved one's needs if and when those needs change.

Assisted living facilities offer the safety and security of 24-hour support and access to care. Day or night, help is only a phone call away. However, privacy and independence are encouraged. A good community will develop a personalized plan that meets your senior's needs and accommodates their challenges, while giving them the freedom to do what they can for themselves. Most facilities have a group dining area and common areas for social and recreational activities.

Touring retirement communities with help you best evaluate your loved one's options and get a feel for their "culture." Sample the dining services by visiting for lunch. Or, attend a community or social event they are hosting — there are numerous low-key opportunities which provide fun-filled, no-pressure invitations to mingle with current residents and preview the community.

Look for "personalized touches" that make the community feel more like home. For instance, many senior living communities have personal chefs, welcome animal companions or feature gardens and libraries with quiet spaces for relaxation or reading.

There are so many things to think about when comparing potential communities. Be sure to ask questions: does the facility offer activities your senior is interested in? Are there hobbies or activities

on site, or transportation available to outside ones? Does the facility have amenities that are important to his/her interests, such as a gym, recreation center, library, or a chapel?

To feel confident that your loved one will be well taken care of, it's important to inquire about the staffing levels and workload at an assisted living community. For example, how many staff members are actually involved in resident care? How many people are working at any one time? What are their duties during those times—do they have time to interact with residents? Are there registered nurses on site? How do staffing patterns differ at night? What happens when a staff member is sick or otherwise unable to be at work—is there enough staff to cover?

It is also imperative to make sure the facility is in compliance with state and local licensing requirements. In the U.S., each state has different standards.

With so much to consider and such an important decision to make, we recommend calling an expert before you start your search. You are not in this alone. The Senior Care Advisors at Assisted Living Locators work with families to find assisted living communities with top amenities, progressive healthcare and optimal wellness programs.

Assisted Living Locators offers a full assessment of your loved one's needs and recommends a plan that provides the full continuum of care. Our free community-oriented service allows you the freedom to access the best resources available. We take the time to ensure information is fully vetted and the most appropriate housing or care option is selected for your loved one. We are also a resource for short-term respite care, emergency discharges and out-of-town relocations.

If you are a senior or a family member looking for help navigating the many options in assisted living or memory care, we can help. We'll discuss the best fit for your family and even tour with you at our pre-certified partners if you'd like. Contact Jaime Daniels and her team at Assisted Living Locators at 941.479.3500 or via email at [JDaniels@AssistedLivingLocators.com](mailto:JDaniels@AssistedLivingLocators.com). Or you can visit us online at [www.AssistedLivingManasota.com](http://www.AssistedLivingManasota.com) and be sure to LIKE us on Facebook at: [www.facebook.com/AssistedLivingLocatorsManasota](http://www.facebook.com/AssistedLivingLocatorsManasota).