

Assisted Living Gaining In Popularity

(NAPSA)—With increased longevity and healthier lifestyle habits resulting in an increase in the over-65 population, assisted living is becoming the habitat of choice for older Americans.

Before choosing an assisted living facility (ALF), according to Denise Talbot-White, a gerontologist at the MetLife Mature Market Institute, “It’s important to understand which services may or may not be offered and how to evaluate those services.”

1. It is important to first assess the functional abilities of the older adult. You may decide to engage the services of a geriatric care manager to help you with your assessment. Geriatric care managers specialize in assisting older people and their families in making their long-term care arrangements. The National Association of Professional Geriatric Care Managers (1-520-881-8008) can provide referrals.

2. It is important to visit multiple facilities and to make at least one announced and unannounced visit to the facility so that you can observe the residents’ daily routine.

3. Be sure to review the facility’s contract as part of your research. This document should provide information on what the basic fee does and does not cover, the discharge policy, residents’ rights and responsibilities and the grievance policy. It’s a good idea to review the contract with an elder-law attorney before you sign it.

4. Ask for the licensing or certification inspection report. Remember, licensing and certification criteria vary from state to state. Check with the local Long-Term Care Ombudsman and Better Business Bureau to see if



More and more older adults are choosing to move to assisted living facilities.

there have been any complaints about the facility or staff.

It’s also important to remember that what is covered in one facility’s fee structure may not be included in another. For example, free transportation to doctors’ appointments should not be a given.

The MetLife Market Survey of Assisted Living Costs 2003 found that the average cost of an ALF in the U.S. is \$2,379 per month, or \$28,548 per year. Medicare and Medicaid do not cover the cost of ALFs, but most long-term care insurance policies do.

Choosing An Assisted Living Facility is one of a series of “Since You Care” guides for caregivers produced by the MetLife Mature Market Institute in cooperation with the National Alliance for Caregiving. Single copies are available free to the public. Write to the MetLife Mature Market Institute, 57 Green Farms Road, Westport, CT 06880, e-mail maturemarketinstitute@metlife.com or visit their Web site at www.maturemarketinstitute.com.