



## spotlight on health care

### Choosing A Nursing Home For A Loved One

(NAPSA)—Many of us will have the sometimes daunting experience of placing a loved one in nursing home care. In order to make the process and transition easier, it is important to know what questions to ask and the best available resources for information. Following is a list of tips:

First, talk to the physician, nurse or social worker who can assess the individual's needs. Then, determine the best options in your area by visiting [www.medicare.gov](http://www.medicare.gov) for ratings of nursing homes, financial and other information.

"A recent study in the *American Journal of Nursing (AJN)* found that providing at least 30 to 40 minutes of daily RN direct care time was strongly associated with better health outcomes. One of the most important factors to consider is if the facility provides a minimum of 4.1 to 4.5 hours of daily day-and-night direct staffing," said Susan D. Horn, co-author of the study and senior scientist, Institute for Clinical Outcomes Research, vice president of research for International Severity Information Systems, Inc (ISIS) and adjunct professor, Department of Medical Informatics, University of Utah School of Medicine, Salt Lake City. "You should also consider how much direct care your loved one will receive by a Registered Nurse (RN)."

According to Charlene Harrington, professor at the School of Nursing, University of California, San Francisco, some other tips



**Studies show more direct care with nurses may improve a nursing home resident's overall health.**

you should consider are:

- Check on how many complaints and deficiencies the facility may have received for federal regulation violations by visiting [www.medicare.gov](http://www.medicare.gov).
- Meet the administrator. Do not simply listen to what the marketing director says about the activities and facilities available for residents.
- Ask to speak with someone from the facility's resident or family council to learn how responsive the staff is to residents, the quality of food, etc.
- Determine how frequently the Medical Director sees the residents.
- Visit the nursing home during the evening hours and weekends to determine if the facility is clean and well-staffed.

For more information on the *AJN* study, visit the Web site [www.ajnonline.com](http://www.ajnonline.com).