



# Consumer Guide

## HOW TO CHOOSE AN ASSISTED LIVING COMMUNITY

Different seniors have different needs, so Valley VNA Senior Services offers choices to suit many lifestyles. One of the many advantages of living with us is that, as your lifestyle changes, you can move within our residential community, and receive the kind of services you deserve. Ask these questions during your first conversation with any assisted living community. Valley VNA Senior Services' answers are below, so you can see how we compare to other communities.

### QUESTIONS TO ASK:

#### WHO OWNS AND OPERATES THE ASSISTED LIVING COMMUNITY? HOW LONG HAS IT BEEN IN BUSINESS?

Why ask this? It's important to learn if the organization is a reputable business. Each assisted living community varies in their level of business experience.

VALLEY VNA SENIOR SERVICES' ANSWER: We're an independent, non-profit agency established in 1908. As a community-owned organization, governed by a local volunteer board of directors, we're committed to providing care in the community.

#### WHAT TYPE OF LICENSE DO YOU HAVE?

Why ask this? The state of Wisconsin has two licensing categories that regulate all assisted living communities.

- Community Based Residential Facility (CBRF) – 24-hour assistance per day
- Residential Care Apartment Complex (RCAC) – Up to 28 hours assistance per week

Many assisted living communities operate under one license. It is important to review your needs now and in the future to make the best choice for your care options.

VALLEY VNA SENIOR SERVICES' ANSWER: Our community is a Class CNA licensed CBRF and a registered RCAC providing multi-levels of care for changing physical needs.

#### WHAT TYPE OF TRAINING IS PROVIDED TO THE STAFF?

Why ask this? The CBRF license requires hiring certified resident assistants who receive 12 hours of in-service training annually. The RCAC registration does not have specific requirements for hiring and training. Additional training varies from place to place.

VALLEY VNA SENIOR SERVICES' ANSWER: All of our resident assistants receive over 12 hours of in-service education in addition to 12 hours of department specific training annually. Our caregivers are state certified. In addition, many team members attend and are certified through the "Dementia Specialist Training Program" taught by the Alzheimer's Association of Greater Wisconsin.

#### HOW DO STAFF CAREGIVERS PROVIDE CARE FOR RESIDENTS?

Why ask this? This is one of the most important questions to ask. Many organizations operate with the "universal worker" concept – a resident assistant (RA) is responsible for resident care and all other functional support – social events, food preparation, housekeeping, laundry, etc.

VALLEY VNA SENIOR SERVICES' ANSWER: We provide care with specialization of services. Our caregivers (Certified Nursing Assistants – CNA's and RA's) focus on caregiving to meet each resident's needs implementing a customized service plan. Additional staff are responsible for functional support including: homemaking, social events and food service.

#### IS THERE A FULL-TIME REGISTERED NURSE ON STAFF?

Why ask this? An RN has the ability to manage complex medical situations that may arise day to day.

VALLEY VNA SENIOR SERVICES' ANSWER: We have a full-time Clinical Services Director (RN) who handles complex medical situations and provides invaluable support in the form of mentoring and training caregiving team members. In addition, our Transition Coordinator (RN) is able to guide you through a skilled needs assessment and help with the move-in process.

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## WHAT ARE THE SOCIAL EVENT OPPORTUNITIES?

Why ask this? Social events should be geared toward the needs of the residents offering a variety of activities to choose from. A memory care setting needs a consistent routine of activities.

VALLEY VNA SENIOR SERVICES' ANSWER: Our dedicated team of social event planners, along with input from our residents, develop programming that meets a variety of resident preferences.

## WHERE ARE YOU LOCATED AND WHAT IS YOUR ASSISTED LIVING COMMUNITY LIKE? ARE THE SUITES PRIVATE WITH PRIVATE BATHS?

Why ask this? Location, household size, and style vary. You may prefer a small, homelike environment or may enjoy a large community. Not all assisted living communities offer private rooms with private baths. Decisions need to be based on your preferences.

VALLEY VNA SENIOR SERVICES' ANSWER: We are nestled in a residential neighborhood with easy access to pharmacy, grocery store, doctor's offices, hospital, etc. Our assisted living offers varying levels of senior living in smaller home-like settings. All apartments, studios and suites are private with private baths.

## WHAT ARE THE COSTS ASSOCIATED WITH LIVING IN AN ASSISTED LIVING COMMUNITY?

Why ask this? Two types of pricing structures are typically used by assisted living communities: All-inclusive pricing and a la carte. Be sure to ask if there are additional costs such as admission, endowment or enrollment fees, and security deposit.

VALLEY VNA SENIOR SERVICES' ANSWER: Our pricing structure is all-inclusive based upon personal and physical needs. We don't require admission, endowment or enrollment fees. A refundable one-month security deposit is charged as well as a nominal assessment reservation fee (non-refundable). Cable television and all utilities are included, except telephone.

## WHAT IS THE PROCEDURE FOR BECOMING A RESIDENT?

Why ask this? Assisted living communities should conduct an assessment before you move into the community. There may be income and asset requirements.

VALLEY VNA SENIOR SERVICES' ANSWER: We will spend time with you to help you determine the best setting to meet your personal and physical needs. In addition, our team will assist with necessary paperwork and guide you through the move-in process.

## WHAT HAPPENS IF YOUR HEALTH NEEDS CHANGE?

Why ask this? Licensing and staffing levels of assisted living communities will determine whether or not they are capable of meeting your changing needs.

VALLEY VNA SENIOR SERVICES' ANSWER: Our ability to administer multi-levels of care enables transition into other settings within our assisted living neighborhood. Through regular assessments, we are able to determine the most appropriate care setting to meet your changing physical needs. We also have specialized care settings for those experiencing early, middle and late dementia/Alzheimer's symptoms. In the rare instance we are unable to meet your needs, we'll guide you to other resources.

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**Be sure an agency can answer these questions to your satisfaction. If not, continue your search until you find one that does.**

**It's beneficial to take tours at different times of the day and different days of the week to get a feel for the senior community. Valley VNA Senior Services encourages tours and the staff is available anytime that's convenient for you.**

