

Empowerline, a service of the Atlanta Regional Commission Area Agency on Aging, has prepared this checklist to help you make decisions about nursing home care. If you or a member of your family must enter a nursing home, visit the facility ahead of time. Quality of care, cost, services provided, and physical layout vary greatly. By carefully evaluating and comparing nursing homes in your area, you are more likely to choose one that meets your needs.

## Look at Daily Life

	Home A		Home B	
	YES	NO	YES	NO
1. Do residents seem to enjoy being with the staff? Is the interaction warm and respectful?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
2. Are most residents dressed for the season and time of day?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
3. Do staff know the residents by name?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
4. Do staff respond quickly to residents' calls for assistance?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
5. Are activities tailored to residents' individual needs and interests?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
6. Are residents involved in a variety of activities?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
7. Can residents make choices about their daily routine? Examples include when to go to bed, get up, bathe, or eat.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
8. Does the nursing home serve food attractively and at proper temperatures?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
9. Does the nursing home consider personal food likes and dislikes in planning meals?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
10. Does the nursing home use care in selecting roommates?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
11. Are there enough staff to assist each resident who requires help with eating?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
12. Does the nursing home have a residents council? If so, does the council influence decisions about resident life?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
13. Does the nursing home have a family council? If so, does the council influence decisions about resident life?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
14. Does the facility have outside volunteer groups, such as pet therapy programs, scouts, and churches?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

## Look at Care Residents Receive

	Home A		Home B	
	YES	NO	YES	NO
1. Do various staff and professional experts participate in evaluating each resident's needs and interests?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
2. Does the resident or his or her family participate in developing the resident's plan of care?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
3. Does the home offer programs to restore lost physical functioning, (for example, physical therapy, occupational therapy, speech and language therapy)?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
4. Does the home have any special services that meet the needs of the perspective resident?, (for example, special care units for residents with dementia or respiratory problems)?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
5. Does the nursing home have a program to restrict the use of physical restraints?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
6. Is a registered nurse available to nursing staff?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
7. Are there enough staff at night and on weekends or holidays to care for each resident?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
8. Does the nursing home have an arrangement with a nearby hospital?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
9. Do the administrator and staff seem comfortable with each other and with the residents?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

## Look at How the Nursing Home Handles Payment

1. Is the facility certified for Medicare?
2. Is the facility certified for Medicaid?
3. Is the resident or the resident's family informed when charges and fees increase?

Home A		Home B	
YES	NO	YES	NO

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## Look at the Environment

1. Is the outside of the nursing home clean and in good repair?
2. Are there outdoor areas accessible for residents to use?
3. Is the inside of the nursing home clean and in good repair?
4. Does the nursing home have handrails in hallways and grab bars in bathrooms?
5. When floors are being cleaned, are warning signs displayed or are areas blocked off to prevent accidents?
6. Is the nursing home free from unpleasant or intense odors?
7. Does the nursing home have smoke detectors and sprinklers?
8. Are toilets convenient to bedrooms and at an appropriate therapeutic height?
9. Do noise levels fit the activities that are going on?
10. Are exits clearly marked?
11. Is it easy for residents in wheelchairs to move around the home?
12. Is the lighting appropriate for what residents are doing?
13. Are there private areas for residents to visit with family?
14. Do the residents have some personal items in their bedrooms (for example, family pictures, souvenirs, a chair)?
15. Do the residents' rooms have accessible storage areas for their personal items?

Home A		Home B	
YES	NO	YES	NO

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## Other Thing to Look For

1. Does the nursing home have a good reputation in the community?
2. Does the nursing home have a list of references?
3. Is the nursing home convenient for family and friends to visit?
4. Does the local ombudsman visit the facility regularly?
5. Does the nursing home meet your cultural, religious, or language needs?
6. Can residents continue to see their personal physician?

Home A		Home B	
YES	NO	YES	NO

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**For a listing of nursing homes and additional information on this type of care, please call Empowerline at (404) 463-3333.**

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