



Your Internet Guide to the resources devoted to serving older adults on Cape Cod and the Islands.

What to Look for When Choosing an Adult Day Care

Adapted from: J.F. Durante, "Evaluating Day Care Services," Cleveland Alzheimer's Association Chapter, Cleveland OH, Edward R. Horton, M.A., M.S.W., "Adult Day Care And Dementia, Part 2 , How to Select an Adult Day Care Center"

It is important that we ask certain questions when looking for a day care facility. Below is a list of questions for you to think about when choosing day care.

- Is the location convenient and accessible?
- Is transportation available? Is there an additional charge for transportation or is it included in the day care fee? Can they suggest options?
- Are service hours appropriate for your situation?
- What is the daily cost? Are meals and snacks included?
- Is financial assistance available? Is there a sliding scale, medicare, medicaid, scholarships that you may qualify for?
- Are there hidden expenses, such as lunch fees, craft supply fees, fees for outings, transportation?
- Must you commit to a minimum amount of service, i.e., at least 2 days/week?
- What is the policy concerning late arrival or late pick-up?
- Do the services include family-supportive programming such as caregiver support groups, social worker consultation, or referral services?
- Are there hidden benefits, such as the availability of regular professional testing for blood pressure, annual immunizations, hair styling services, bathing, dental check-ups, etc.? (Although such benefits may require additional fees, they may be invaluable time-savers for caregivers).
- What about programming for the participants throughout the day? Exercise, music, crafts, memory sharing, etc. Is there structured programming which maintains participants abilities without being over stimulating. Are individuals with dementia separated from other participants or included in activities?
- Can the facility accommodate the following special physical or medical requirements:
 - Dispense medicine?
 - Give reminders about taking pills?
 - Assist with toileting or handle incontinence?
 - Provide total access and participation to wheelchair-restricted client?
 - Effectively communicate with hearing impaired participants?
- How do they insure safety? How are behavior problems handled? Are there specific behaviors or care needs which would require your loved one's withdrawal from the program? Since Alzheimer's disease is a progressive disorder, you need to find out how the facility is going to handle existing care needs AND whether or not they are able to handle potential ones, such as:
 - Incontinence?

- Difficulties in speaking?
- Wandering?
- Special dietary requirements?
- Behavioral problems?

Schedule a visit to the day care facility. Tour and examine each facility for cleanliness, odors, room size, lighting, decorations, general atmosphere of the environment. Observe how meals are served; sample the food, if possible.

Observe and interview the staff. Ask about their qualifications and training. Have they been trained in dementia issues? What is the staff to participant ratio? What does the staff's attitude seem to be? Carefully watch verbal and non-verbal communication between staff and participants. What is their policy in case of a medical emergency?



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