



CICOA helps build communities that enable older persons and those of any age with a disability to live with the greatest possible independence, dignity, and quality of life in central Indiana.

**Caregiver Assistance Foundation Information & Assistance
In-Home Services Nutrition**

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Shopping for a Health Care Facility, Assisted Living Facility, or Continuing Care Retirement Community

Ask yourself the following questions:

What do you see?

Does the landscaping look neat and clean? Is the parking lot clean? Are the residents dressed in street clothes? Are the residents engaged in various one-on-one and/or group activities? Do the activities you see occurring match the activities listed on the posted monthly activity? If visiting during a meal time, does the food look appetizing? Are the employees dressed neatly? Are they wearing uniforms? Can you tell who is an employee and who is a visitor? Is the facility well-lighted? Are the floors clean – carpet or tile? Is the furniture in the lounge areas, dining room, and resident rooms clean? Are the bathrooms clean? Are the bathing areas clean? Are there grab bars? Does each resident have a water pitcher and a glass in their room? Does the facility have working smoke detectors? Does the facility have a sprinkler system?

What do you hear?

Are residents talking to each other? Are the residents and employees talking to each other in a caring manner? Do you hear residents participating in the various activities? Are they having a good time? Do you hear call lights buzzing? How long does it take for an employee to reach the resident who is calling for assistance?

What do you smell?

Can you smell aromas from the facility kitchen? Are there food aromas coming from the activities room? Do you smell fresh flowers? Is the facility free of unpleasant odors? If you do smell an odor, is it fresh or stale? Do you smell smoke? Does the facility allow smoking? If so, where is the designated smoking area?

What do you feel/touch?

How does the facility's atmosphere feel (calm, soothing, uplifting, etc.)? Is the room air temperature comfortable throughout the building? Is the furniture in the lounge areas, dining room, and resident rooms clean to the touch? Are the handrails clean?

What do you taste?

How does the food taste? Is the food at the appropriate temperature? Does the facility serve food from different cultures?

Helpful Tips

- **SHOP** for the facility that meets the needs of your loved one - Visit various facilities more than once and at different times of the day and evening
- Talk to the residents and staff – What do they like about this facility? What concerns do they have about the facility?
- Ask about the Pre-Admission Screening process that is conducted by the local Area Agency on Aging – Pre-Admission Screening is required for health care facility admission.

However, a person can decline to participate in this process, but this will make him or her ineligible for Medicaid for one year.

- Ask to see the most recent Indiana State Department of Health survey report
- Ask for a copy of the Resident Rights (includes state and federal rights)
- Ask for a copy of the Resident Admission Agreement
- Ask for a copy of the current monthly activity calendar
- Ask if your loved one's physician will visit residents at this facility – Ask how often a physician must see your loved one while they live in the facility
- What types of care are available? Does the facility provide nursing care, skilled care, assisted living (residential care), and/or independent living apartments? Is the facility state licensed and/or Medicaid/Medicare certified?

Does the facility have special care units – Alzheimer's disease, Hospice, Home Care, etc.?

What are the admission requirements for these units?

If spouses need different levels of care, are they able to live together?

- Ask about the resident care plan meetings – Who is invited? What information is discussed? How often do the meetings occur?
- Ask for a copy of the weekly menu – If visiting during a meal time, does the meal being served match the posted menu? Are the food preferences of each resident honored? Is there an alternate food item available, if the resident does not want a food item listed on the menu?
- How many residents live in each room? How are roommates selected? Are private rooms available?
- How much does it cost to live in the facility? What is the charge for a private room or apartment versus a room with one or more

residents? Are residents expected to pay a daily or monthly rate? Is there an entry fee? If so, are there situations where a resident or his or her estate could receive a full or partial refund?

What happens when a resident runs out of money?

- Ask if the facility accepts Medicare and/or Medicaid – Please note, that not all facilities accept Medicare and/or Medicaid. If the facility does participate in these payment programs, how much does the resident pay out-of-pocket for his or her care?
- What situations would necessitate the facility to discharge a resident?
- How does the facility screen potential employees?
- Ask about in-service training for employees – What topics are discussed?
- Ask about the facility's security system – Are the housekeeping and maintenance supply rooms locked? Does the facility have secured outdoor areas or courtyards? Are the exit doors locked? If so, what time are the doors locked?
- Ask about the facility's disaster plans – fire, tornado, bomb threat, etc. If a disaster occurs that requires resident relocation, where will the residents be taken?
- Call the Indiana State Department of Health to obtain information about a health care facility – call 317-233-7442 or 1-800-246-8909;

Nursing Home Report Card information is also available at <http://www.in.gov/isdh/> and

<http://www.in.gov/isdh/regsvcs/ltc/repcard/search.htm>.

Health care facility regulations are available at <http://www.in.gov/isdh/regsvcs/ltc/lawrules/>.

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