

5 MUST-ASK QUESTIONS

When Selecting a Skilled Nursing Facility

Choosing a skilled nursing facility can be overwhelming, but not to worry, we're here to help get you the answers you need to make the right choice. When meeting with the facility administrator (also known as the executive director), ask them these five revealing questions. Their answers will help provide insight into the facility's operating philosophy, help narrow your list, and aid in comparison shopping.

1 WHAT ARE THE RESULTS OF YOUR MOST RECENT STATE SURVEY?

While Medicare star ratings offer pertinent information, they don't necessarily reveal everything about a facility. Ask the administrator to share the results of the facility's latest state survey for an up-to-the-minute snapshot of what's really happening. A fully engaged administrator will be able to give you a direct, detailed answer.

2 WHAT ARE YOUR SYSTEMS FOR PREVENTING PRESSURE ULCERS AND FALLS?

Pressure ulcers and falls are two serious, yet preventable issues that can occur without the right protocols. Expect detailed answers and descriptions that are easy to grasp and understand. If the administrator declines to discuss their plan, or needs to check with staff, they are likely uninvolved in these critical clinical details.

3 TELL ME ABOUT A FEW MEMBERS OF YOUR NIGHT SHIFT TEAM.

A fully engaged administrator knows and cares about their entire team and can share a glimpse into their lives. If they are unable to name night staff or share an anecdote or two, this may be a red flag. By consistently visiting the night shift, administrators get a clear look at what's happening in real time, and ensure great care around-the-clock.

4 HOW DO YOU SUPPORT AND INVOLVE FAMILIES IN RESIDENTS' CARE?

An attentive facility effectively communicates with families and promptly addresses their needs. In addition to care conferences, find out if the facility offers a family night where families are invited to ask questions, voice concerns, receive updates, and personally meet staff and clinical leaders.

5 WHAT WAS YOUR FACILITY'S LATEST COMPLAINT AND HOW DID YOU HANDLE IT?

No skilled nursing facility is perfect. But the best ones strive for excellence every day and have a demonstrated history of addressing issues effectively. The absence of a response or a lackluster effort can speak volumes about the character of a facility.

TOP 10 FACTORS TO CONSIDER

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Touring skilled nursing facilities can be challenging simply because there are so many factors to consider. To help you in your search, we've narrowed the list down to the top ten so that you can focus on what matters most.

| FACILITY INITIALS | | | | | |
|-------------------|---|--|--|--|--|
| 1 | Did you feel you entered into a caring environment? | | | | |
| 2 | Do the staff seem happy to work there? | | | | |
| 3 | Is the facility clean and odor free? | | | | |
| 4 | Does the facility dining program meet your expectations? | | | | |
| 5 | Is the facility conveniently located? | | | | |
| 6 | Are call lights being answered in a timely manner? | | | | |
| 7 | What percentage of rehab patients return home? | | | | |
| 8 | What is the average length of stay for rehab patients? | | | | |
| 9 | What is the current overall Medicare Five-Star Rating? | | | | |
| 10 | How well did the Administrator answer the "5 Must-Ask Questions"? (see reverse) | | | | |