



A Caregiver's Corner Publication... tips for the at-home Caregiver

Courtesy of Transitions Nursing & Rehabilitation Center—1000 Dixon Ave.—Rock Falls, IL (815) 625-8510

Preparing for Admission

Once you have chosen the facility where your loved one will live, it is important to prepare yourself and your loved one for admission day.

The transition from home to nursing facility can be very emotional for everyone involved, but understanding what to expect may make the adjustment a little bit easier.

In order to spend as much time as you can with your loved one, it is suggested that you complete any admission paperwork prior to the day of admission. Because of the many state and federal regulations the facility must comply with, the paperwork can take as much as an hour or so to complete. The number of questions you have will also affect how long the admission meeting will take. By doing any paperwork ahead of time, you can spend quality time with your loved one to help him or her get settled in.

You will want to decide who will provide laundry services to your loved one. Many families choose to continue to do their loved one's laundry. However, if you would like the facility to provide laundry services, you will want to be sure all resident's clothing is labeled with their first and last name. Iron on-labels may be available, however, most people choose to use indelible marker.

Unlike a hospital, where a patient feels confined to his or her room, the nursing home resident has freedom to move about the building and begin socializing with others. Unless there are medical restrictions, the resident may come and go freely from their room to any of the common areas of the facility, such as the dining room, activity room, or administrative offices. (You will want to check with the facility on their policy for off-site visits or going outside.)

On the first day of admission, you may meet your loved one's roommate and his or her family members. Celebrating the similarities – and the differences – in personalities, preferences, and family involvement, will help shorten the adjustment period. After a few days, should you discover an incompatibility that interferes with the emotional well-being of your loved one, don't hesitate to bring it to the staff's attention.

And of course, you will meet the caregivers. Unlike a hospital, much of the hands-on care is provided by certified nursing assistants, with the overall care and medication management provided by the nurses, under the direction of the physician. In the nursing facility the physician makes limited visits, usually once every month or so. Your loved one's physician will communicate by phone with the nursing staff for issues of concern. Please feel free to discuss your loved one's care with his or her charge nurse.

If you have not already done so by the day of admission, you will want to provide as much financial information to the facility as possible. This will help them secure a pay source to lessen the financial burden for costs of care. If you have not already done so by this time, you should provide a copy of any identification cards, such as Medicare, insurance, or Medicaid, and any information regarding medication reimbursement that you may have.

Admission Day Checklist

Personal Items

- Toiletries
- Pictures of loved ones
- Battery operated clock
- Snacks in sealed container (if no dietary restrictions – check with nurse)
- Updated telephone and address book
- Writing paper and stamps

Suggested Clothing Items

For Women

- Dresses or slacks
- Changes of underwear
- Comfortable shoes
- Slippers
- Socks or hose
- Pajamas or gown & Robe
- Sweater or light jacket

For Men

- Slacks or sweat suits
- Undershirts & shorts
- Comfortable shoes
- Slippers
- Socks
- Pajamas & robe
- Sweater or light jacket

Because space is limited, you may want to avoid bringing clothes that are out of season.

What Not to Bring

- Cloth furniture
- Electrical appliances
- Extension cords
- Food that is not in a container
- Medications (consult the nurse)
- Valuables, such as expensive jewelry