

EIGHT STEPS TO CHOOSING AN ADULT DAY CENTER

Adult Day Centers provide a planned program that includes a variety of health, social and support services in a protective setting during daytime hours. This is a community-based service designed to meet the individual needs of functionally impaired adults.

STEP #1 – Decide what you and your loved one want from attending the adult day center.

What does your loved one want or need?

- A safe, secure environment?
- Social activities?
- Assistance with eating, walking, toileting, medicines?
- Therapies – physical, speech, occupational?
- Health monitoring – blood pressures, food or liquid intake, weight?
- Nutritious meals and snacks?
- Special diet?
- Exercise?
- Mental stimulation?
- Personal care?

What do you need?

- Occasional free time?
- Coverage while working?
- Transportation?
- Support?
- Assistance in planning for care?

STEP #2 – Find adult day centers
Identify services in your area.

- Yellow pages (“Adult Day Care”, “Aging Services”, “Senior Citizens”, etc.)
- Office on Aging – Call 1-800-510-2020 for the center in your area.
- A senior center
- Your family doctor

STEP #3 – Call first!

Call centers and ask for a flyer or brochure, eligibility criteria, a monthly activity calendar, menus and application procedures.

STEP #4 – Know what to ask
Look for the following information in the material received.

- Owner or sponsoring agency
- Years of operation
- License or certification
- Hours of operation
- Days open
- Transportation
- Cost – hourly or daily charge, other charges, financial assistance
- Staff credentials and training
- Number of staff per participant
- Activities provided – is there variety and choice of individual and group activities?
- Menu – appeal, balance

STEP #5 – Pay a visit
After reviewing materials, make an appointment to visit two or more centers that might meet your needs.

The following list will help you decide which day care center is the right one for you.

SITE VISIT CHECKLIST

- | Yes | No | |
|--------------------------|--------------------------|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | Did you feel welcomed? |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | Did someone spend time finding out what you want and need? |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | Did someone clearly explain what services and activities the center provides? |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | Did someone present information about staffing, program procedures, costs and what is expected of the caregivers? |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | Was the facility clean? |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | Were the building and the rooms wheelchair accessible? |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | Was the furniture sturdy and comfortable? |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | Loungers for relaxation? Chairs with arms? |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | Is there a quiet place for conferences? |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | Is there a place to isolate sick persons? |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | Did you see cheerful faces on staff and participants? |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | Are participants involved in planning activities or making other suggestions? |

STEP #6 – Check references
Check references. Talk to two or three people who have used the center you are considering. Ask for their opinion.

STEP #7 – Give it time to work
Select a center. It sometimes takes several visits for new participants to feel comfortable in a new setting and with a new routine. If you have questions or are experiencing any problems, ask for a conference. Staff may have suggestions to make the transition easier.

STEP #8 – Take care of yourself
Relax. Your loved one is being well cared for. Remember, your loved one may not be able to recall all the activities enjoyed during the day. The staff will provide missing details. The day center staff is there for you, too. Ask for:

- Tips to make caregiving easier
- Additional resources available in the community.

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