

What to Look For When You Consider a Facility

by Kari Wittmeyer, Director

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Tour the facility before you make a decision. What is your first impression? Pay close attention to the staff. Do they acknowledge you and other tenants? Tour an apartment and visit with the tenants and ask detailed questions.

- **Do tenants play a role in setting up their care/service plan?**
- **Is transportation offered by the facility?**
- **Do they offer daily activities and occasional outings?**
- **Are religious needs met?**
- **When is the nurse/case manager available?**
- **Ask, “What happens to me if I run out of money?**
- **Do you accept Medicaid payments if that happens?**
- **If I need to transfer to a higher level of care, such as a nursing home, is your organization affiliated with another facility to provide this care?**
- **Do you have an emergency push button system with 24-hour awake staff to respond to tenant needs?**
- **Do you offer one, two or three meals a day, medication administration or reminders, bathing, dressing, or grooming assistance?**
- **Do you offer dementia specific care?**
- **How often does rent increase?**
- **Pay attention to green space, gardening options, proximity to doctors’ offices, churches.”**

The answers will assist you in determining whether or not the facility is right for you.

Whether you are a family or friend helping your parent or a neighbor, or someone in need of services and care, it is very important to tour long term care facilities in your community. For additional assistance, contact the Area Agency on Aging in your community.

Kari Wittmeyer is the Director of the Ellen Kennedy Living Center (EKLC) in Dyersville, Iowa. The Center offers independent living and assisted living housing and services to people age 55 and older. EKLC is sponsored and managed by Mercy Medical Center.

For more information or a private tour, contact Kari at (563) 875-6323 or write to: EKLC, 1177- 7th Street S.W., Dyersville, Iowa 52040.