



Matching Housing Options with Caregiving Needs

If your parent needs long-term care, what is the best option for you and your parent? Moving your parent from a home of 25 years is more than just a residential decision. It's also a financial, emotional, real estate, tax, and health care decision. It's important to understand the complex nature and impact all of these decisions can have on your parent and you as a care giver.

If your parent needs to relocate, be aware that his decision is difficult and emotionally a very stressful life event. A home has meant security, enjoyment and a sense of independence, and familiarity. You need to respect your parents' wishes to remain at home if at all possible. But if a physician or other health care professional recommends a change in the housing arrangement, if your parent needs health care or supervision 24-hours a day due to physical or mental limitations, if your parent's safety is at risk, or if the neighborhood has deteriorated, then make your plans and know you've done the right thing.

Questions to Consider When Matching Housing Options with Needs:

- If your parent needs long-term care, what's the best option?
- Is the building and neighborhood one in which you and your parent feel safe?
- Is the housing choice close to your parent's doctors and hospital? Is the living environment designed for elder access? Is assistance with mediations and other medical needs available?
- How easy or difficult is the house or apartment to keep clean? Could your parent reside in just a few rooms of his or her current home? If you're considering some kind of advanced care facility, does it meet your standards for cleanliness?
- If independent living is no longer an option, does the alternative housing choice have a homey, caring atmosphere? Does the staff understand the cultural differences and needs of your parents?
- Stability and security are important considerations for everyone, especially the elderly. How long will your parent be able to stay in his current or new home? You'll want to work with your parent to minimize the number of future moves because moving is extremely stressful and costly.

- Is the location of the prospective new home close to family, friends, and place of worship? Your parent's social life is critical to his mental health and ability to function independently. Is the location close to public transportation?
- Cost may be a key factor in choosing a housing option for your parent. What can your parent or your family afford? A financial planner or other advocate may be able to assist you and your parent with looking at the long range cost connected to any housing option.

For additional information about housing options and living with older relatives, contact your Caregiving Information & Referral Service at 1-800-253-9236.