



How to Choose and Move to a Memory Care Assisted Living Community During the COVID-19 Pandemic

In these extraordinary times, we are taking more precautions than even before to guard the safety of our precious senior community, and those with memory care needs. Recognizing that seniors are in the high-risk group for the virus, stringent measures have been put into place in terms of social distancing and limiting interactions with the community. These factors make it more difficult when evaluating how to provide for a loved one's care if it is becoming too difficult to do this at home, or if they are living alone.

Reading the news makes you feel like an assisted living community is not safe since the virus easily spreads, but if the need for daily professional care is there, it may still be the best choice. Especially when you consider that fact that home care can also pose a risk if a senior is living alone with outside help or if they are living with your family who could contract the virus while out in the community. As schools open this fall, this may become a larger concern than it has been in previous months.

Residential care facilities have put into place very strict measures for the protection of residents and staff. Being into a community also ensures they will have everything they need and not have to go out to pick up food and other daily living supplies.

What to Consider

When is it time for Assisted Living?

Look at different factors to help make your decision as to whether or not now is the right time. Those who may need assistance sooner include:

- Seniors who have Alzheimer's or another form of Dementia and caregiving at home is no longer an option.
- Those who need help with activities of daily living; taking medicines, bathing, dressing, meals and housekeeping, or if safety is a concern.
- Those who are medically compromised and who are living with family members who cannot stay at home and there is not a private bedroom or bathroom to provide social distancing.
- Those who are living at home and are having emotional issues.

How to Find the Right Community

Assisted Living communities across the country have mandated protocols to follow as outlined by the CDC and their State Health Department. This will include restriction of visitors and/or set guidelines for visits, conducting testing and health screening of everyone in the community, required PPE, strict housekeeping/cleaning procedures, and guidelines for dining and activities.

So even in these extraordinary times, Assisted Living can offer the perfect amount of support that is just right for your loved one. Whether it's having help with things like dressing, personal care, medication management or housekeeping, or extra support with transfer or mobility assistance, Assisted Living can help your loved one to continue to live their most independent lifestyle.

To research which community is best for your family, use these questions as a reference in reviewing and evaluating websites, taking virtual tours and making phone calls. Look at website photo galleries and face book pages to get a sense of their culture and daily life; identify if they are a nonprofit or for-profit organization and learn if they have received any recent awards for their care. Word of mouth, reputation and reviews/testimonials are also important in making an informed decision. Some communities are able to arrange for a video chat, to get to know them even better.

1. What is the difference between Assisted Living and Skilled Nursing?

To qualify for Assisted Living (AL) level of care, per CT regulations, a resident to be 'chronic and stable,' care needs can be managed on a schedule, and RN is available during the day. Skilled Nursing level offers care "on-demand" from a nurse 24-hours a day.

2. What happens when someone needs Skilled Nursing; do they have to move out?

At a Life Plan Community like McLean, a continuum of care including skilled nursing is available for resident, if and when they need it.

3. How is your Assisted Living Staffed?

At McLean, Assisted Living Care Partners are available 24/7 and Registered Nurses are on each neighborhood between 7 am – 11 pm. Nurses are in the building for emergencies at all times. Staffing will depend upon the patient's individual level of care.

4. Are there other medical services on site?

For example, McLean provides Podiatry, Audiology, Ophthalmology, Psychiatry, Dental, Primary Care, Home Care and Hospice.

5. What is the meal plan?

At McLean, there is restaurant-style, cooked to order dining, serving 3 nutritious meals a day, plus drinks and snacks.

6. What activities do you offer?

Our Life Enrichment team plans a robust calendar of daily activities, including exercise, art and ceramics, music, live performances and trips to the community. During these times of social distancing, activities are being arranged individually or in small groups.

7. Is transportation available?

McLean provides transportation to doctors appointments in the Farmington Valley and on Cottage Grove Road in Bloomfield, plus transportation to planned activities.

8. What are the costs? Is it all inclusive or will there be monthly fees?

Please call us at 860-658-3786 for more information on McLean's all-inclusive monthly fees.

9. What is your procedure during COVID-19?

McLean continues to work closely with the State Department of Public Health, to closely follow the mandated guidelines along with those of the CDC. Our current mitigating strategies by department are detailed on our website, which include required PPE, weekly testing of residents and staff, visitor policy, state travel restrictions/self-quarantine guidelines. Call us today at 860-658-3786 to learn more.

10. Do you have a waiting list?

Like McLean, this may vary depending upon when you inquire and what size of residence you are looking for.

11. What is the application process like?

Please call 860-658-3786 to learn how to apply for McLean Assisted Living and Memory Care Residential programs.

**Visit McLeaninspiredliving.org/assisted-living/memory-care
and**

McLeaninspiredliving.org/assisted-living for a virtual tour, panel video presentation and to view the full brochure on Assisted Living and Memory Care at McLean.