

LET THE INTERNET HELP YOU CHOOSE THE RIGHT NURSING HOME

The most frequently asked question during my meetings with families facing nursing home care for a family member is: "Will we have to spend everything we have at the nursing home?" Once I have assured them that most of their assets can be saved for their spouse or family, the question then becomes: "How do we choose the right nursing home?"

The first factor to consider in selecting a nursing home is location. The closer the family is to the nursing home, the more they will visit. You should visit the nursing homes close to your family during scheduled and unscheduled times to observe the facility, the staff, and the patients. You should speak with family members of several residents and ask them pointed questions about the care their family member receives.

I also recommend you visit the Medicare web page at www.medicare.gov. On the bottom of the page, click on the words "Compare Nursing Homes in Your Area." You can also download an excellent publication entitled "Guide To Choosing a Nursing Home," by clicking on the tabs "Resources," then "Nursing Home Publications." If you do not have access to the Internet, you can order this publication by calling 1-800-MEDICARE (1-800-633-4227) and order publication #02174 for free!

You can quickly obtain detailed information about every nursing home in the United States. You can select certain nursing homes and compare information about ownership, medical condition of their residents in general, summaries of their last inspection, and information about the education level of their staff.

There are 509 nursing homes in the State of Indiana. You can obtain detailed information about each nursing home and how they compare to the other nursing homes in a particular city or county.

I encourage anyone who is looking at nursing homes to visit this helpful site after you have talked to an elder law attorney about paying for the cost of care.

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