

Nursing Homes in Illinois

NURSING HOME CHECKLIST

The following checklist is offered as a guide. Carry it with you when visiting homes. It will help you to compare one with another. As a general rule, the best home is the one that has the most "yes" answers. However, be sure to remember that different kinds of homes offer different types of services. Compare skilled nursing homes with skilled nursing homes, and sheltered care homes with sheltered care homes. Nursing facilities may be licensed in more than one category. Always consider the higher category when comparing one facility with another.

Name of Home A _____

Name of Home B _____

Name of Home C _____

CHECKLIST ITEM	Home A Yes/No	Home B Yes/No	Home C Yes/No
Does the home have a current license from the state?			
If the person needs and is eligible for financial benefits through the Medicare or Medicaid programs, is the home certified to participate in those government programs?			
Does the home provide special services, such as specific diet or therapy, which the resident needs?			
Is the general atmosphere of the home warm, pleasant and cheerful?			
Is the administrator courteous and helpful?			
Are staff members cheerful, courteous and enthusiastic?			
Do staff members show genuine interest in and affection for residents?			
Do residents look well cared for and generally content?			
Are residents allowed to wear their own clothes, decorate their rooms and keep a few prized possessions on hand?			
Is there a place for private visits with family and friends?			
Is there a written statement of residents' rights?			
As far as you can tell, are these points being carried out?			
Do residents, other visitors and volunteers speak favorably about the home?			
LOCATION			
Is the home near family and friends?			
GENERAL PHYSICAL CONSIDERATIONS			
Is the nursing home clean and orderly?			

CHECKLIST ITEM	Home A Yes/No	Home B Yes/No	Home C Yes/No
Is the home reasonably free of unpleasant odors?			
Are toilet and bathing facilities easy for disabled patients to use?			
Is the home well-lighted?			
Are rooms well-ventilated and kept at a comfortable temperature?			
SAFETY			
Are wheelchair ramps provided where necessary?			
Is the nursing home free of obvious hazards, such as obstacles to residents, hazards underfoot, unsteady chairs?			
Are there grab bars in toilet and bathing facilities and handrails on both sides of hallways?			
Do bathtubs and showers have non-slip surfaces?			
Are there smoke detectors, an automatic sprinkler system and portable fire extinguishers?			
Is there automatic emergency lighting?			
Are exits clearly marked and exit signs illuminated?			
Are exit doors unobstructed and unlocked from inside?			
Are certain areas posted with no smoking signs?			
Do staff, residents and visitors observe them?			
Is an emergency evacuation plan posted in prominent locations?			
MEDICAL, DENTAL, AND OTHER SERVICES			
Does the home have an arrangement with an outside dental service to provide residents with oral health care when necessary?			
In case of medical emergencies, is a physician available at all times, either on staff or on call?			
Does the home have arrangements with a nearby hospital for quick transfer of nursing home residents in an emergency?			
Is emergency transportation readily available?			
PHARMACEUTICAL SERVICES			
Are pharmaceutical services supervised by a qualified pharmacist?			
Is a room set aside for storing and preparing drugs?			
Does a qualified pharmacist maintain and monitor a record of each resident's drug therapy?			
NURSING SERVICES			
Is at least one registered nurse (RN) or licensed practical nurse (LPN) on duty day and night?			
Is an RN on duty during the day, seven days a week? (for skilled nursing homes)			
Does an RN serve as director of nursing services? (for skilled nursing homes)			
Are nurse or emergency call buttons located at each resident's bed and in toilet and bathing facilities?			

CHECKLIST ITEM	Home A Yes/No	Home B Yes/No	Home C Yes/No
FOOD SERVICE			
Is the kitchen clean and reasonably tidy?			
Is food needing refrigeration not left standing out on counters?			
Is waste properly disposed of?			
Ask to see the meal schedule. Are there at least three meals served each day?			
Are meals served at normal hours, with plenty of time for leisurely eating?			
Are nutritious between-meal and bedtime snacks available?			
Are residents given enough food?			
Does the food look appetizing?			
Sample a meal. Is the food tasty and served at the proper temperature?			
Does the meal being served match the posted menu?			
Are special meals prepared for residents who require therapeutic diets?			
Is the dining room attractive and comfortable?			
Do residents who need help in eating, whether in the dining room or in their own rooms, get it?			
REHABILITATION THERAPY			
Is a full-time program of physical therapy available for residents who need it?			
Are occupational therapy and speech therapy available for residents who need them?			
SOCIAL SERVICES AND RESIDENT ACTIVITIES			
Are there social services available to aid residents and their families?			
Does the nursing home have a varied program of recreational, cultural and intellectual activities for residents?			
Is there an activities coordinator on the staff?			
Is suitable space available for resident activities?			
Are tools and supplies provided?			
Are activities offered for residents who are relatively inactive or confined to their rooms?			
Look at the activities schedule. Are activities provided each day? Are some activities scheduled in the evenings?			
Do residents have an opportunity to attend religious services and talk with their clergymen, both in and outside the home?			
RESIDENTS' ROOMS			
Does each room open onto a hallway?			
Does each room have a window to the outside?			
Does each resident have a reading light, a comfortable chair, and closet space and drawers for personal belongings?			
Is there fresh drinking water within reach?			
Is there a curtain or screen available to provide privacy for each bed whenever necessary?			

CHECKLIST ITEM	Home A Yes/No	Home B Yes/No	Home C Yes/No
Do bathing and toilet facilities have adequate privacy?			
OTHER AREAS OF THE NURSING HOME			
Is there a lounge where residents can chat, read, play games, watch television or just relax away from their rooms?			
Is a public telephone available for resident's use?			
Does the nursing home have an outdoor area where residents can get fresh air and sunshine?			
FINANCIAL AND RELATED MATTERS			
Do the estimated monthly costs (including extra charges) compare favorably with those of other homes?			
Is a refund made for unused days paid for in advance?			
Are visiting hours convenient for residents and visitors?			
Are these and other important matters specified in the contract?			