

Help A Loved One Transition To Assisted living

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Moving a loved one to an assisted living facility is tough for both the person and the family. Oftentimes seniors find themselves having to leave the familiarity and comfort of their home and move into a new environment not knowing what to expect. Family members sometimes carry a sense of guilt for not being able to care for them.

It is a hard decision, but remember it's going to be fine, said Pat Younger, the Vice President of Assisted Living at SagePoint Care in La Plata. Transitioning into assisted living is not something families need to be as worried as they think.

Here are three tips to help make the transition go as smoothly as possible.

1. Do your research

First, do your research and find out the right facility that fits your loved one's needs. Facilities usually vary in sizes and services. Ask yourself if your loved one would more likely to thrive in a close-knit small group home setting or a larger community with more amenities? While both group homes and large communities offer services such as complimentary transportation, homemade meals, housekeeping and laundry services, the social activities and other enrichment programs may differ greatly.

Younger recommends a place with friendly staff and the proper services the person needs.

The best way to find out whether a facility is right for your loved one is to talk to the residents who currently live there, Younger said. Find out if the residents are happy there and see if they are being taken good care of.

2. Give your loved one a sense of control

Once you find the right facility, initiate a conversation with your loved one to try out this new home. Younger said it's best to make the person feel he or she has some control.

Transitioning into a new environment can be scary. Suggest taking a look at the new home and maybe try it out for 30 days before making any final decision.

3. Engage

Encourage your loved one to bring his or her own bedding and some personal items. Photos, books, music CDs and other personal things are all good options to decorate the room and make it feel like home. Also, encourage your loved one to engage with the community and other seniors at the new home.

Engage with the staff. It is helpful to let the staff know your loved one's preferences ahead of time.



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