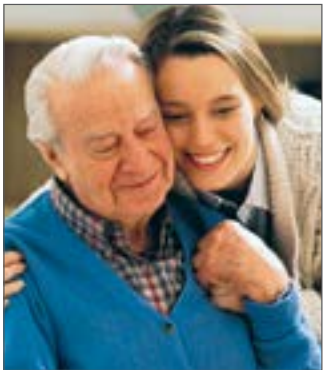


# In Touch® TIPS FOR MOVING YOUR FAMILY MEMBER TO MEMORY CARE

Moving into a new Memory Care community takes some planning and consideration. Residents with dementia often have difficulties such as short term memory loss, confusion and limited coping skills. Some general information and tips may be helpful for a smooth transition into Memory Care. The following questions are those which are most commonly asked by families and which you may also find helpful in your preparation for a successful move.

## Should I prepare my loved one by telling them they are moving into a Memory Care community?



Preparation is most often the best route to take so that the resident does not feel abandoned by simply being dropped off. However, when you decide to do this is up to the family who knows the resident best. Some residents who are higher functioning participate in the process from the beginning with the selection of their new residence suite. Because of concerns for increasing anxiety, other residents are told about the move closer to move in day.

## How should I address this with my loved one?

How you address the move can help establish a successful transition for your loved one. Again, this is dependent upon your family member's ability to process the information and cope. Many families keep it very simple making statements about "the new residence, new neighborhood and friends." They may refer to the quality care the community is known for or the many activities or perhaps it's hospitality in welcoming new neighbors. The decision for how to address the move is purely dependent on the scenario you feel your loved one would respond to best. The main point is for families to reassure their loved ones that they will be nearby and continue to see them which can limit any associated anxiety.

## How should I prepare for the move?

The resident with dementia can become easily confused when not in familiar surroundings or when their surroundings are disturbed. For this reason it is typically recommended that moving day take place without your loved one present. Here are a few hints to make the move in day go as smoothly as possible:

1. **Decide what will be moved to the new residence, or moved elsewhere. Remember to include those items moving to the community which are familiar and comfortable for your loved one, such as furniture, chairs, tables, bedding, pictures, clothing, toiletries, etc.**
2. **The move will be far more successful when the prospective resident arrives and things are already in order. It's beneficial for them to be surrounded with familiar things including favorite photos and family photos.**
3. **On move in day plan that your loved one is out with someone they are fond of and trust so they will remain occupied and away from the business of the move.**
4. **Ensure that the room is set up prior to returning the resident to her/his residence suite. This will eliminate confusion. Do not have boxes or debris remaining in the apartment. The resident should arrive to their suite completely prepared for their comfort.**
5. **Arrange a particular time that the resident will arrive at the community. This will help staff carve out some personal time to assist in the resident's transition.**



6. Allow time for staff to greet the resident and socially introduce them to their neighbors. They may decide to share a cup of tea or activity time. The social greeting is setting the stage for a good first night.
7. Staff will be available to assist and answer any questions.
8. Toiletries should be brought to the attention of staff that will assist in the safe storage of them. In most cases, personal toiletries are stored securely so no wandering resident is able to accidentally access.
9. Medications should be given directly to the Director of Assisted Living or other Health Service staff. It is essential that medications are not left in the resident's care or in their suite.
10. It may take time for a resident to adjust to their new surroundings and can take weeks depending on the resident. Residents should be reassured they will have continued contact with families and friends.

### **Who will orient me to Memory Care and answer my on-site questions?**

Typically, the Memory Care is staffed with a Director of Assisted Living, or Memory Care Coordinator. They are usually your first point of contact for all questions related to Memory Care and available for any questions that you may have. The Care Staff is responsible for personal care and leading the resident's program of activities. They are often the ones who you will see spending a great deal of time with your loved one. The activity program is designed by the Program/ Activities Director and/ or the Memory Care Coordinator. On move in day the Memory Care Coordinator, Director of Assisted Living and/ or the Director of Marketing are most happy to show you around and answer all your questions regarding the care of your loved one. She/he will describe a typical day, meal times, activity programs and other essential information. Going forward the Director of Assisted Living and/ or the Memory Care Coordinator will be your first point of contact for any issues arising that you need addressed.



### **Will staff be available during the night?**

Yes, there is always awake night staff on duty that routinely check the residents both throughout the day and during the nights.

### **What things should I pack for my family member?**



Clothing that is comfortable and which encourages independence as much as possible. Shoes or sneakers that are familiar and easy to get on, robes, slippers, pajamas and other comfortable items should be included, however residents will be spending the most part of their day in the common areas such as dining and activities. Typical attire for residents is common "street clothes" such as slacks, shirts, blouses, dresses, skirts etc. as opposed to night time attire. It is also helpful to provide staff with information concerning how your family spends their time on a typical day.

### **How does staff get to know my family member?**

Prior to move in, the family is expected to provide the community with a Resident Life Questionnaire which is contained in the Move in Packet. This document is truly essential in getting to know the new resident, their likes, preferences, traditions and habits. It provides future points of discussion which staff and residents can share. Staff also personally visit the new resident and introduces the resident to others. Mealtimes and activities provide further opportunities for residents and staff to connect in a "social" setting.

### **What are the display boxes/windows outside of the residence suites?**

These are called Memory Care Boxes that are for families to decorate with items and memorabilia that best reflect your loved one's life. It also serves as a "cue" for residents who would recognize these items and more easily find their rooms. Most often photos, hobbies and personal knickknacks are displayed.



### **How is laundry handled?**

Your Director of Assisted Living and/ or Memory Care Coordinator will advise you of the schedule for cleaning services and bedding changes. Personal laundry may be laundered in the Memory Care or families may bring laundry home to process.

## Are there any items I should not bring?

Families need to consider a few things in order to maintain a safe environment for all Memory Care residents: Is the item safe and could it pose any hazard for the resident or other confused residents who may inadvertently enter someone else's suite? This includes any toiletry items that can, for example, be misperceived as something edible, or any hobby items that could be misused such as sharp scissors, knives, tools, weapons of any sort (even if a collector item), etc. During move in time, a staff member will assist and help determine if any particular items should be stored elsewhere for safety. Any valuable items should be secured in another location rather than on-site including personal funds or credit cards.

## How are medications handled?

Keeping safety in mind it is required that any medications, including over the counter medications, are not stored with the resident or in the resident's suite. All medications are managed at the community. Families should refrain from providing any medication or over the counter medications directly to the resident so as not to interfere with the physician's ordered medication regime for the resident. If there are any medication concerns, please discuss these with the Memory Care Coordinator or Director of Assisted Living.



## Will other residents ever have access to my family member's suite?

Not typically or intentionally but on occasion a wandering resident may get confused and enter another resident's suite. These residents are quickly redirected away and escorted to activities or their own residence. Residents with dementia can become confused regarding the location of their own suite and mistake another suite for their own. At other times they are simply curious and often attracted to new and interesting things hence the "draw" to a new neighbor's suite.

## When can I reach the Memory Care Coordinator if I have a question?



You will be in close contact with the Memory Care Coordinator. She/he will provide you with their contact numbers and how they can be reached. Most often return calls are made promptly on the same day. Additionally, you will be scheduled for routine meetings or calls regarding the Resident's Service Plan where all care and resident issues are reviewed and discussed.

## May I visit or take my loved one out for the day?

Absolutely, we encourage visits! If a resident is capable and willing to go out, outings can be a special treat for the resident. Please make prior arrangements with the Memory Care Coordinator so they can assure any needed medications are prepared. Also, they will introduce you to the Sign-In/Out Log.

## Are there any special security features that I should know about?

Yes – a very important question. Perimeters are typically secured in Memory Care by a delayed egress system. Some perimeters are not locked but rather emit an audio alert to the care staff if an exit area has been breached so that the care staff can respond. To help ensure residents' safety the following protocols are followed:

1. Visitors are most welcome but must use one designated entry.
2. A Sign-In/Out Log is provided for all visitors and required to be used if any resident is leaving the Memory Care even for a short walk.
3. If wishing to take a family member out, please also notify the Memory Care Coordinator or supervisor in charge.
4. Signing the resident back in on return is also required. The Sign-In/Out Log is conveniently located at the entrance of the Memory Care.
5. Additionally, families should advise the Memory Care Coordinator or supervisor that the resident has returned so that continued monitoring on-site will resume.

Sign In/Out Log		
Name	Date	Time
Mary Lou	9/15/15	2:00pm
Edward T.	9/15/15	2:15pm
Hilda W.	9/15/15	2:40pm
John P.	9/15/15	3:00pm
Ronald S.	9/15/15	3:30pm
Sophia K.	9/15/15	5:30pm

### What if my family member needs to be seen by a doctor?

Residents in Memory Care are required to be escorted if needing to see a physician. Families typically take their loved ones to scheduled appointments which they have arranged. If the responsible party would like the resident to be escorted by a staff member instead, there needs to be an advanced request as soon as possible. The Memory Care Coordinator will attempt to accommodate this, however this is dependent on staffing. Associated fees will be explained to you by the Memory Care Coordinator. In addition, you may want to inquire about on site physician services.



### Who arranges for doctor transportation?

Families should contact the Memory Care Coordinator for assistance with arrangements. Families may also pick up a monthly newsletter/calendar to familiarize themselves with the scheduled days and times specific for doctor appointments. Any appointment should coordinate with this schedule when needing to use community transportation.

### Will I be notified if the family member needs something?

If your loved one is in need of something that the community does not provide, you will be notified. Most often this is not necessary but at times there are some concerns or comfort items needed in which you would be contacted.

### Will my family member be able to go out with other residents?

Residents are encouraged to attend outings whenever possible. Families are most welcome to join the outings. Weekly outings for “mystery drives” occur all year round during good weather. Special seasonal trips are also arranged for social or cultural events when appropriate. Check the Memory Care calendar for planned trips.

### Are there special food items that are needed?



Nutrition is an important factor in the care of your loved one. A well balanced meal and snacks are provided by the community Chef which complements nutritional needs and general resident preferences. If there is an item that a resident does not eat or is allergic to, please advise the Memory Care Coordinator. At mealtime there are always substitutes available. Staff monitor residents' consumption and encourage and cue during meal service and snack times. Residents are frequently offered beverages throughout the day for proper hydration.

If there are particular snacks you would like your family member to have, please discuss this with the Memory Care Coordinator to arrange for storage. It is not recommended to store food items in resident suites.

### Is a family member allowed overnight visitors?

Yes, in private suites, if this is not disturbing to the resident.

### How will I know how my family member is doing?

Your Memory Care Coordinator will remain in close contact with you. Any concerns are brought to your attention promptly. Please feel comfortable in visiting or contacting the Memory Care Coordinator by phone so you can be assured of your family member's progress. Most often residents do very well within days and become well adjusted quickly due to staff attention, social stimulation and the In Touch® model of care.

We welcome your feedback and wish you every success and peace of mind while your loved one is in our care.



Ask how you can benefit from a CARF accredited community!