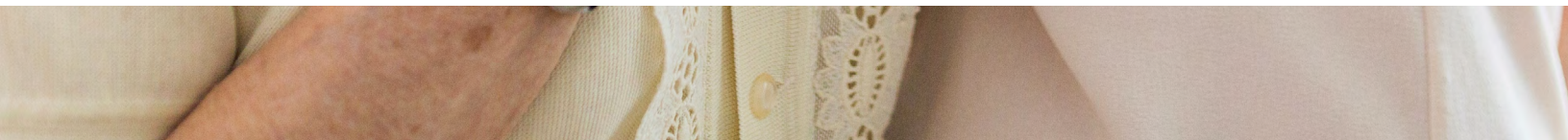
Making an Informed Decision When Selecting A Memory Care Assisted Living Community

A Consumer Guide



THE CORDWAINER

ANTHEMION SENIOR LIFESTYLES



Take the First Steps

When the time comes to find a memory care assisted living community for your loved one living with Alzheimer's or dementia it is important to find a community that will best meet their needs now and in the future. We have developed this guide to help you explore your options.

1 Determine which communities in the area you desire have memory care assisted living services. Visit potential communities' websites, review the type of services and programs they offer, and see if you can find online reviews that give you insights into the satisfaction of staff and current families.





2 Determine what type of community you would prefer your loved one to live in. Do you want a community that offers just memory care for individuals living with dementia, or do you prefer a larger environment that might offer independent living, assisted living and memory care all on one campus?

3 Assess your loved one's preliminary monthly budget for Memory Care Assisted Living care.





The Next Step: Call Potential Memory Care Communities

During the initial call to a community, it is important to gain a thorough understanding of their cost structure. Ask about all costs and the levels of care provided. Also, ask if they have additional care levels built in or if it is all-inclusive care. Questions to ask during your call include:

- What is included in the base rate for a memory care suite?
- Are there any additional charges for their medication management, including self- or limited-medication management programs.
- Are there any charges for additional housekeeping, and laundry services per month, or are those services included in the base rent?
- Is there any care included in the base rent?
- How is the amount of care for the resident calculated? Is it calculated in minutes of care, or based on a point system?
- Will you have to pay a higher rate for your loved one's care based on their care tracking system?
- What percentage, and when, do monthly rent fees increase?
- What is the staff-to-resident ratio in the community including the recreation staff, Resident Care Associates, and nurses?
- What are the training requirements for employees? Make sure the staff has additional training specifically for Alzheimer's and dementia care.
- Can your loved one age in place, or do they have to move out of the community if their care levels increase?
- Do you have the capacity to use mechanical lifts for a two-person assist, if needed?
- Can pets visit the community?
- Does the community offer therapeutic diets (diabetic or low-sodium) and thickened liquids? Are there any additional charges related to a specialized diet?
- Is there an additional charge if a resident is unable to feed themselves?
- Does the community have COVID-19/infection control policies and procedures?
- What is the community's visiting policy?
- Are there any signature programs that differentiate this community from other memory care assisted living communities?
- How does the management team communicates information to residents' families?

If you are satisfied with the answers you receive, it is time to take the next important step.



The Next Step: Schedule a Tour

A community tour will take your research to the next level. Questions to ask during your visit include:

- What is your overall first impression when you drive up to the community?
- Are employees engaged with the residents? Does the staff call residents by their names?
- Are the employees smiling and seem happy? Is their appearance neat and clean?
- Do the residents seem happy and engaged? Do they appear neat, clean, and dressed appropriately?
- Do the employees greet you when you walk into the room?
- Does your tour guide know and introduce the employees to you?
- Does the community appear and smell clean? Are the floors free of debris and the furniture dusted?
- Is there an odor? If so, is it coming from a particular area like the restrooms or from a resident accident? Does someone attend to it right away or is it lingering throughout the community?
- Ask to visit the dining area and for a copy of the current menu. Does it include a variety of healthy choices?
- What recreation programs are offered that will benefit your loved one? Ask for a copy of the activities calendar.
- Does the community have a home-like environment? Are the community spaces comfortable and inviting?
- Ask to see a suite or apartment. Does it appear well-maintained and spacious enough to accommodate a walker or wheelchair? What safety features are there such as call buttons, safety bars, and nighttime lighting in the bathrooms?
- Ask about safety protocols. How are residents monitored to ensure they do not leave the community unattended or become stranded outside?
- Ask what their plan is in the event of a fire or other emergency.
- Request a copy of their consumer guide and the community's disclosure statement.
- At the end of your tour, ask to meet the leadership team. Are they professionally dressed and seem interested in engaging with you and answering your questions? Do they interact with residents, families, and staff with a respectful, cheerful, and attentive demeanor?
- Finally, consider making an unannounced visit after normal business hours. Does there appear to be enough staff on duty? Does anyone greet you and ensure you are following health and safety protocols if applicable?

Take The Final Steps

As you move forward with this important decision for your family, it's essential to have these critical documents in place.



1 Assign a Healthcare Proxy

This person should have general knowledge about the resident's diagnosis and be knowledgeable about their symptoms, medications and medical care plan.



2 Fill out a Massachusetts Medical Order for Life-Sustaining Treatment (MOLST)

A MOLST form should be filled out with your loved one and their primary care physician to clarify their wishes for end-of-life care. Find the form online at molst-ma.org.

3 Assign a Power-of-Attorney (POA)

Your loved one's POA should have knowledge of their finances and be legally allowed to sign the lease and pay the bills. The form and how to file it can be found online at **eforms.com/power-of-attorney/ma**





4 Ask For a Complete List of Move-in Prerequisites

Contact the community you have chosen and ask for all the paperwork necessary and a checklist of everything you will need to complete before your family member can move in such as a needs assessment and a physical exam.



We're Here For You

We hope this guide makes the process of finding the best Memory Care Assisted Living community for your loved one easier. Please don't hesitate to contact us if you have any questions. As a dedicated Memory Care Assisted Living Care community, we are a resource for local families exploring their options.

THE CORDWAINER
ANTHEMION SENIOR LIFESTYLES

555 Cordwainer Drive
Norwell, MA 02061
cordwainermemorycare.com
781-871-5550