



WHAT IS ASSISTED LIVING?

Today, adult children often live many miles away from retired parents. Even more often, the entire family works. Adult children are working and raising children of their own. With dual responsibilities, they are often called the Sandwich Generation.

Mom and Dad are enjoying their retirement years. Dad has a garden, goes fishing and plays golf. Mom is active with her church circle, garden club and volunteer work. Yet, things can change quickly. Mom or Dad begins to show signs of physical decline or forgetfulness. What can cause this change?

- *The loss of a spouse*
- *A sudden illness with resulting change in health status*
- *The loss of independence due to chronic illness*
- *A fall*

When a loved one begins to need help with activities of daily living (bathing, dressing, grooming, medication supervision, meal preparation, etc.), a physician or family friend may mention Assisted Living. The term is familiar, but what exactly is “Assisted Living?”

Assisted Living has become the most popular housing option for America’s growing senior population within the past few years. Assisted Living is attractive to seniors and their families for several reasons, including:

- *Provides a more appealing and fulfilling alternative than living alone, hiring sitters, or entering a skilled nursing facility*
- *Offers a more affordable alternative to skilled nursing care and often at-home nursing care or sitters*
- *Grants security of 24-hour supervision, but with an emphasis on independence*
- *Designs programs to encourage companionship*

Licensed by the state, but not regulated federally, Assisted Living is known by nearly 26 different terms, such as: Congregate Care, Personal Care, Residential Care, etc. No matter the terminology, all understand the following necessities for serving seniors:

- *Provide setting that provides personal services and 24-hour supervision*
- *Accommodate “aging in place” by minimizing need to move*
- *Meet residents’ individually changing needs*
- *Encourage residents’ rights, including dignity, privacy, independence, choice and safety*
- *Involve family and community*



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