

THREE STEPS TO MAKING THE RIGHT CHOICE

Step 1: Evaluate the needs, desires and resources of the individual.

Needs vs. Desires

Changes in physical functioning, mental capabilities, life interests, financial circumstances and social supports are all determining factors of the most appropriate living arrangements and services for you or your loved one. Equally as important is considering where the individual is ultimately going to be happy and content. For example, some people may prefer to remain in their current residence and avail themselves of home health care or community support services, as required. However, these may not be realistic options for those with higher care needs.

Be open and honest about what is absolutely needed and what is open to compromise and negotiation. Prioritize the needs and desires to ensure that the best quality of life can be maintained.

If you are assisting someone in making this decision, remember to evaluate the options from their point of view, as well as your own. If you are unsure about anything, seek the advice of a professional.

Resources

Determining the financial resources available is an important part of the process. You'll need to consider what level of savings and investments are available. You may also want to look at how the proceeds from the sale of a primary residence can be used.

The amount required will depend upon several factors. If, for example, the individual qualifies for government funded home health care services, the cost to the individual is usually nominal to nil. If the person is eligible for placement in a long-term care home, programming and care are funded through the Ministry of Health. However, the resident is still responsible for the cost of accommodation, which is set by the government annually. Retirement housing with care services are private pay and the costs vary depending on the type of accommodation and level of services. It is advisable to consult with a financial planner to help you determine what can be afforded.

Step 2: Evaluate your options

You're holding in your hands the most comprehensive evaluation tool available today. Start by referring to the definitions for the various housing and service options available to you on page seven (7) and go to the section of **The Care Guide** that most closely matches the individual's needs while trying to accommodate as many of their "wants" as possible. Read each of the listing descriptions and check the map on pages XX - XX to see where they are located.

You can also visit us online at **TheCareGuide.com** to see if further information is available on the housing or service options of interest. In most cases, you will find additional facts about the services and amenities offered. Some providers also include pictures and virtual tours to give you a better perception of what they have to offer. You can also request that additional information be sent directly to you.

Talk at length to the service coordinators or admissions personnel at those that best match your criteria to further evaluate their ability to address your current and future needs.

Step 3: Last but not least, meet with your top candidates

Schedule a visit to meet with the front-line care support workers or tour the residences of choice. In fact, we recommend that you visit with several residences or service providers. Be prepared with a list of questions and keep notes. By systematically evaluating your top candidates, you can compare the strengths and weaknesses of each. Use the Residence Checklist on pages XX-XX to keep notes and compare residences being considered. There are articles throughout **The Care Guide** and **TheCareGuide.com** that will help you further determine what to look for and what questions you should be asking.

If you've found **The Care Guide** to be helpful in making your decision, please let us know at 1-800-311-CARE (2273) or info@thecareguide.com. We would also appreciate you mentioning us to the residences or service providers that you call or visit.

Source: The Care Guide (www.thecareguide.com)