

## Learn to Identify the Correct Assisted Living Facility for You

There is a confusing soup of acronyms used in the assisted living facility community. If seniors are not familiar with these licensure terms, they may choose the wrong facility for themselves or their loved ones. So I thought it might be useful to take a look at all of the different assisted living facility licenses and what that means to a prospective tenant.

First, there is the standard assisted living facility license. This means a facility can provide these basic services:

“Housing, nutritional meals, and special diets  
Help with the activities of daily living, like bathing, dressing, eating, walking, physical transfer (moving from a bed to a chair, etc.)  
Give medications (by a nurse employed at the facility or arranged by contract) or help residents give themselves medications  
Supervise residents  
Arrange for health care services  
Provide or arrange for transportation to health care services  
Health monitoring  
Respite care (temporary supervision of an adult, giving relief to the primary caregiver)  
Social and leisure activities”

A facility might provide more or less of the above services based on the particular facility.

Second, assisted living facilities with an Extended Conjugate Care (ECC) license can provide these additional services:

“Limited nursing services and assessments  
Total help with bathing, dressing, grooming and toileting  
Measurement and recording of vital signs and weight  
Dietary management, including special diets, monitoring nutrition and food and fluid intake  
Supervise residents with dementia and cognitive impairments  
Provide or arrange for rehabilitative services  
Provide escort services to medical appointments  
Educational programs to promote health and prevent illness”

Third, assisted living facilities with a Limited Nursing Service (LNS) license can perform these additional services:

“Nursing assessments  
Care and application of routine dressings  
Care of casts, braces, and splints

Administration and regulation of portable oxygen  
Catheter, colostomy, and ileostomy care and maintenance  
Application of cold or heat treatments, passive range of motion exercises,  
ear and eye irrigations, and other services as defined in law”

Fourth, an assisted living facility can have a Limited Mental Health (LMH) license. “This type of license must be obtained if an assisted living facility serves three or more mental health residents. Services must be provided for the special needs of these residents, along with the basic services of an assisted living facility. A facility with this type of license must consult with the resident and the resident’s mental health case manager to develop and carry out a community living support plan.”

It is important to know the differences between the types of licensure because if your facility does not provide the services that you need, you may have to move to one that does!

Lastly, on the financial end of things, if Medicaid is going to be utilized to pay for services at the facility, then you must make sure that the assisted living facility has a contract with a Nursing Home Diversion Waiver provider.

Source: Agency for Health Care Administration, <http://ahca.myflorida.com/>