Things to Observe

- Do residents appear comfortable and content?
- Are residents dressed appropriately and well-groomed?
- Do residents wander in and out of rooms?
- Is there sufficient staff to meet the individual needs of residents?
- Does staff seem happy, helpful, and engaged?
- Are call lights answered on a timely basis?
- Does staff connect with residents on a personal level? Do they have meaningful conversations?
- Does the food look and smell appetizing? How is it served?
- Are residents allowed to eat at their own pace?
- Are the common areas attractive and clutter-free? Is there too much noise?
- Is the facility clean and odor-free?
- Is room temperature throughout the facility comfortable?

For More Information, Contact Your Local Alzheimer’s Association 24/7, 800-272-3900

Alzheimer’s Association Greater Missouri Chapter
160 W. Elfindale
Springfield, MO 65807
www.alz.org/greatermissouri

Alzheimer’s Association Greater Missouri Chapter
2400 Bluff Creek Drive
Columbia, MO 65201
www.alz.org/greatermissouri

Alzheimer’s Association St. Louis Chapter
9370 Olive Blvd.
St. Louis, MO 63132
www.alz.org/stl

Alzheimer’s Association Heart of America Chapter
3846 W. 75th St.
Prairie Village, KS 66208
www.alz.org/kansascity

Another Option

For information regarding Adult Day Care that specializes in caring for people with Alzheimer’s disease, please call the Department of Health and Senior Services’ Section for Long-Term Care Regulation at 573-526-8524.

For More Information on Long-Term Care Facilities:
Show Me Long-Term Care
http://www.health.mo.gov/safety/showmelongtermcare/

U.S. Government Medicare Site:
Nursing Home Compare
visit http://www.medicare.gov/, then type “Nursing Home Compare” in the search engine

For more information on long-term care, call 1-800-MEDICARE (1-800-633-4227)

Missouri Department of Health & Senior Services
Section for Long-Term Care Regulation
PO Box 570
Jefferson City, MO 65102
573-526-8524
Missouri State Long-Term Care Ombudsman Program
PO Box 570
Jefferson City, MO 65102
1-800-309-3282
LTCOmbudsman@health.mo.gov

The Long-Term Care Ombudsman Program advocates for resident rights in long-term care facilities.

An Equal Opportunity/Affirmative Action Employer

Alternate forms of this publication for persons with disabilities may be obtained by contacting the Missouri Department of Health and Senior Services at 1-800-309-3282. Hearing- and speech-impaired citizens can dial 711.
A special care unit in a licensed long-term care facility is specifically designed to meet the individual needs of people living with Alzheimer’s disease and other dementias. A quality unit realizes each person has unique needs; therefore, units differ. A quality unit is person-centered and respects the distinct cultures and values of residents and their families. It is important to find a special care unit that is best for you and your loved one, a comfortable and caring place for your loved one to call home.

First Steps

Plan on visiting several long-term care settings. Visit often and spend time in the special care unit at different times—during the day, at mealtimes, in the evening, on weekends.

Ask to see the Alzheimer’s Special Care Services Disclosure Form. It outlines the philosophy, training, activities and safety measures designed to assist your loved one. Use the form as a conversation starter during your visit.

Questions to Ask

Please note that the following questions are a starting point. You can personalize them, depending on your loved one’s needs.

- What sets this unit apart from other care settings and makes it suitable for people with Alzheimer’s disease and other dementias?
- What are the criteria to live in the special care unit? What personal monitoring systems are used? What criteria must be met before someone can be moved?
- Does staff receive training to care for residents with dementia?
- What is the facility’s restraint policy?
- Are there additional costs for the special care unit? What determines the cost? Is Medicaid accepted?
- How are decisions made? Are families welcome in the decision-making process?
- Are families’ schedules considered, allowing families the opportunity to attend care plan meetings?
- Are families notified if their loved one’s medical needs and care options change?
- Are family members welcome to eat with their loved ones? Can families participate in activities and continue family traditions within the special care unit?
- Is there a Resident Council or a Family Council?
- Can family members visit any time, day or night? Where can families visit privately with their loved ones?
- Are pets allowed to visit or live with residents?
- What spiritual support services are offered? Do these services meet your loved one’s needs?
- If residents are unable to communicate verbally, how does staff understand their needs?
- Do meaningful, structured activities take place? What about spontaneous activities?
- Are there activities during the day, in the evening, on weekends?
- Are residents encouraged to maintain their mobility? What kind of supports are in place to assist them? Can residents move about freely?
- Are residents allowed to maintain their daily routines? Are residents’ preferences and lifelong patterns accommodated?
- Does an Ombudsman volunteer visit the care setting?