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SELECTING A SENIORS RESIDENCE

What You Need to Know

The decision to move into a seniors residence can be much simpler if you know what to look for and what questions to ask. Whether you're looking for a seniors residence for yourself or for a loved one, asking the right questions can make all the difference in ensuring you have the information you need to make an educated choice.

Check the organization's credentials and reputation

One of the most important things to consider is the organization's reputation, history and credentials, which are a good indicator of the residents' experience living there. We often hear that people choose LutherCare because of our strong history and our reputation for providing

excellent service. We've been a proud local organization for the past 65 years, with our head offices located in Saskatoon. Our organization is also the only fully accredited seniors' housing organization in the province, based on international standards.

Check the organization's care and support options

Residents need to know what care options are available to them, especially if they may need a higher level of care in the future. At LutherCare, our residents are guaranteed first priority in our intermediate care home when the space is available. We know that moving into seniors' housing can be difficult in the first place, so you only want to do it once.

Another question to ask is what kind of support they offer if someone has a fall

or an injury. Having proper care has a big impact on healing and quality of life. Many of our employees are long-term and get to know the residents very well. These kinds of relationships are critical for making sure residents know who to turn to if extra support is needed.

Ask about the activities offered

Organizations should have activities and programs for residents to take part in so they stay active and have opportunities to interact with others. Our proven Continuum of Living Model ensures residents have the ability to make their own choices and stay engaged in the community.



Walter Botting and Fran Opsahl-Botting

Couple Flourishes at LutherCare's *The Village*

Walter Botting and his wife, Fran Opsahl-Botting, are a lively couple, always joking and laughing with each other. Now in their late 80s, they knew they didn't want to move into a "care home," but when Walter went for lunch one day to The Village Bistro at LutherCare's The Village, he was impressed by the food, and asked for a tour of the residence.

A couple days later, Walter called back, wanting to know more. Within a week, Walter and Fran had moved into The Village, and have been enjoying life there ever since.

"I never thought I'd be able to live in a place like this in Saskatoon," Walter says. "I don't have to do anything — it's all inclusive. For people our age, I can't think of anything better." Fran adds: "They're spoiling us. Everyone treats you so nice."

The couple had recently moved back to Saskatoon from Calgary, and was living in a condo in the city. They didn't want to give up their autonomy, but felt weighed down by cooking and household tasks. Now, they enjoy the best of both worlds. With no set meal times, and a full kitchen in their condo, they are able to cook or eat when they please.

"The meals are good, and that was one of the reasons we came, because we didn't want to cook. I like that you can sit and talk to people, and I'm proud to show people we live here, because it's so nice," Walter adds.

Walter and Fran like to relax with a glass of wine before dinner, and have family and friends for dinner at The Bistro, which is The Village's fully licensed restaurant where residents can go out for a meal, on-site. Since moving in, Walter and Fran have flourished. Fran has her hair done on Fridays, and the couple usually goes on a dinner date to The Bistro after. They like to take in The Village's entertainment, such as piano at Sunday brunch and the movie nights in the full-screen theatre.

Always cracking jokes, Walter notes: "I really enjoyed the winter this year because I had no reason to go outside! But we're not young anymore; we're close to 90, and this is just a damn good place to be." ■

Some of our programs include walking challenges on our indoor walking paths, gentle yoga, and monthly themed wellness activities, such as diabetes or heart health month. These programs are offered at all of our LutherCare facilities to ensure we provide consistent delivery of services.

Ask about the meal plans

The quality and type of food an organization offers can have a big impact on residents' health, happiness and autonomy. Ask about how the organization ensures residents get proper nutrition, and whether they can cook in their own suites. LutherCare provides table service, which engages residents in making choices. The ability to make choices is a small observation and for staff, a good indicator of how well a person is doing. At LutherCare's The Village, we also have The Village Bistro, a licensed restaurant which is also open to the public, where residents can order a meal or dine with guests.

Location

If family members want an accessible place to visit or will be coming from out of town, the location might be something to consider. The location can also be an important part of feeling connected and avoiding isolation if someone wants to be close to a certain area of the city or to their family members.

Choosing a seniors residence that meets all of you or your loved one's needs is a key part of the process. By asking the right questions, you'll ensure you have all the right information — before moving in! ■



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