

# Looking for a Nursing Home?

## Find Out About the Facility's Medical Team



*Ida got the phone call at 2 a.m.: “We received an alarm from your mother’s medical alert device. We’re sending emergency services to her home.”*

**This is the worst-case scenario every family prays will never happen. Ida’s 83-year-old mother, Anna, had suffered a stroke. Anna will need special nursing care and cannot stay alone at home!**

### WHEN IT'S TIME TO MAKE A CHANGE

When a physician declares it is no longer safe for a person to stay alone at home, the patient and family have a hard decision to make. Most older adults want to continue to live where they are, but for a variety of medical and social reasons, in-home care may not be appropriate or possible. Older patients often have complex medical issues that require specialized care from experienced medical professionals. Sometimes a care facility is the best option.

The term *nursing facility* is commonly used to describe different types of long-term care centers. A rehab center or skilled nursing facility provides short-term intensive medical rehabilitation services. Assisted living facilities give long-term, limited medical support services and personal care. A long-term care facility provides a

permanent residence for those who need extensive help with activities of daily living, such as bathing, eating, and toileting.

### LEARN ABOUT THE MEDICAL TEAM

Joseph Park is the Vice President of Marketing and Business Development for Universal Health Corporation, a Virginia-based company that provides nursing facilities with physicians and nurse practitioners. He advises, “When considering a nursing facility, it’s important to look at the level of in-house medical care available. Is the attending physician a geriatric specialist with a professional commitment to the care of older adults? Mature adults have unique health needs and drug reactions.”

*A physician should know and respect the resident’s wishes about goals of care and their philosophy about acceptable interventions for sustaining life.*

### HERE ARE SOME OTHER THINGS TO CONSIDER.

#### 1. Do the residents know the medical team?

Quality medical care happens when there is a relationship and trust, built over time, between the physician and resident. How often does the physician or nurse practitioner visit residents? Is it the same physician or nurse practitioner each time?

#### 2. Does the physician put residents first?

‘Compassionate’ should be one of the first words that residents and their families think of when describing physicians and nurses. Does the medical team make time to meet with residents and their families to create a personalized care plan? A physician should know and respect the resident’s wishes about goals of care and their philosophy about acceptable interventions for sustaining life. Does the physician take time to explain, in plain language, a resident’s health conditions and the options for addressing them?

#### 3. Is the physician a team player?

The attending physician in a nursing facility is responsible for the residents’ total physical and mental health. A good physician will review a resident’s complete plan of care at each visit and coordinate the services of other medical and non-medical professionals as needed. Is the medical team known for spotting and addressing health issues of all types before they become a major problem? Are behavioral health experts consulted when residents show early signs of dementia or depression?

In case of an emergency, can the nursing facility staff get in contact with the physician? Does the physician respond in a timely manner? When a resident is hospitalized, how well does the facility’s medical team coordinate with the local hospitals?

Every patient or family member looking for a rehab center, assisted living, or long-term care home knows that transitioning out of the family home can be difficult. The presence of a good medical team at the facility can help to ease families’ concerns.

“Nursing facilities committed to resident-centered care partner with Universal Health,” said Park. “In most cases we provide a full-time nurse practitioner who supports the facility staff’s daily resident care, medication management, and care coordination. The nurse practitioner is supervised



*Universal Health Corporation wants to collaborate with you to achieve your best healthcare results.*



by one of our highly qualified physicians. Both the nurse practitioner and the physician will work with the facility and the family to ensure the resident’s healthcare need is being met and their wishes are honored.”

Isn’t that the kind of dedicated, consistent care all families want for their loved ones when in-home care is not possible?”

Universal Health Corporation wants to collaborate with you to achieve your best healthcare results. Are you struggling with infrequent provider visits and frequent hospital readmissions? Does your medical team meet the quality standards and resident-focused care that current and future nursing facility residents and their families expect? Let’s schedule a consultation. You can contact us on our website at [www.uhcvirginia.com](http://www.uhcvirginia.com) or by phone (540-769-3964). ■