

Memory Care Community Evaluation *Guide*

A Side-by-Side Comparison for Families

Instructions:

Use this guide when visiting or researching memory care communities. Print this sheet and bring it with you during tours. Compare up to 3 communities to help you make the best choice for your loved one.

Estimated Time:

During Tour: 45-60 minutes per community

At Home Review: 15-20 minutes to complete notes and ratings

Table of Contents

What's Inside This Guide:

01	Community Information (5 minutes) Basic details and contact information
02	Safety & Security Features (10 minutes) Wandering prevention and emergency systems
03	Staffing & Care Team (10 minutes) Training, ratios, and experience levels
04	Living Environment (10 minutes) Room features and homelike atmosphere
05	Daily Activities & Therapy Programs (8 minutes) Meaningful engagement and specialized care
06	Medical Care & Health Services (7 minutes) Medication management and doctor coordination
07	Family Support & Communication (8 minutes) Updates, meetings, and family resources
08	Cost & Financial Information (10 minutes) Pricing, fees, and payment options
09	Overall Impression & Decision (15 minutes) Final evaluation and next steps

Total Guide Time: Approximately 1 hour per community visit

COMMUNITY INFORMATION

Fill out basic details for each community you're considering:

Community Details	Community A	Community B	Community C
Community Name			
Address			
Phone Number			
Date of Visit			
Tour Guide Name			

SECTION 1: SAFETY & SECURITY FEATURES

Instructions: Memory care communities must be secure to prevent wandering. Look for these important safety features during your visit.

Safety Features	Community A	Community B	Community C
Locked doors/secure entry	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
Alarm systems on exits	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
Fenced outdoor areas	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
24-hour monitoring	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
Camera surveillance	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
Safe walking paths	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
Emergency call systems	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
Safety Rating (1-10)			

Key Questions to Ask:

- ☐ How do you prevent residents from leaving unsupervised?
- ☐ What happens if a resident goes missing?
- ☐ How often do you check on residents during the night?

Notes:

SECTION 2: STAFFING & CARE TEAM

Instructions: Good staffing is crucial for quality memory care. Ask about training, ratios, and how long staff members have worked there.

Staffing Information	Community A	Community B	Community C
Residents per staff member (day)	<input type="text"/> to 1	<input type="text"/> to 1	<input type="text"/> to 1
Residents per staff member (night)	<input type="text"/> to 1	<input type="text"/> to 1	<input type="text"/> to 1
Nurse on staff 24/7	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
Dementia-specific training	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
Average staff tenure	<input type="text"/> years	<input type="text"/> years	<input type="text"/> years
Background checks done	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No

Key Questions to Ask:

- ☐ What training do staff receive for dementia care?
- ☐ How do you handle difficult behaviors?
- ☐ Who can I talk to if I have concerns about care?
- ☐ What is your staff turnover rate?

Staff Experience Levels:

Experience Level	Community A	Community B	Community C
Memory care specialist on staff	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
Social worker available	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
Activities director	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No

Notes:

SECTION 3: LIVING ENVIRONMENT

Instructions: The physical environment should feel homelike and comfortable. Look for cleanliness, lighting, and spaces that encourage activity.

Environment Features	Community A	Community B	Community C
Clean and well-maintained	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
Good lighting throughout	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
Comfortable seating areas	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
Quiet spaces available	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
Outdoor access	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
Personal items allowed	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
Pleasant odors (not institutional)	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No

Room Features:

Room Type	Community A	Community B	Community C
Private rooms available	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
Private bathroom	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
Space for personal furniture	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
Window with natural light	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
Environment Rating (1-10)			

Key Questions to Ask:

- ☐ Can residents bring their own furniture?
- ☐ How do you handle roommate conflicts?
- ☐ What is your policy on visitors?
- ☐ Are pets allowed to visit?

SECTION 4: DAILY ACTIVITIES & THERAPY PROGRAMS

Instructions: Good memory care communities offer activities designed specifically for people with dementia. These should be meaningful and appropriate for different ability levels.

Activity Programs	Community A	Community B	Community C
Music therapy	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
Art therapy	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
Pet therapy	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
Exercise programs	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
Memory stimulation activities	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
Social activities	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
Outdoor activities	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No

Specialized Programs:

Specialized Care	Community A	Community B	Community C
Physical therapy available	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
Speech therapy available	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
Different activities for different stages	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
Religious/spiritual services	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
Programs Rating (1-10)			

Key Questions to Ask:

- ☐ How do you choose activities for each resident?
- ☐ What do you do if a resident doesn't want to participate?
- ☐ Do you have activities for different stages of dementia?
- ☐ How often are family members invited to join activities?

SECTION 5: MEDICAL CARE & HEALTH SERVICES

Instructions: Memory care residents often have other health needs besides dementia. Make sure the community can handle medications and coordinate with doctors.

Medical Services	Community A	Community B	Community C
Doctor visits arranged	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
Medication management	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
Can keep current doctor	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
Emergency medical care plan	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
Hospice care coordination	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
Dental care available	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
Medical Care Rating (1-10)			

Key Questions to Ask:

- ☐ How do you manage behavior changes?
- ☐ What happens if my loved one needs to go to the hospital?
- ☐ How do you work with our family doctor?
- ☐ Do you have relationships with dementia specialists?

SECTION 6: FAMILY SUPPORT & COMMUNICATION

Instructions: Good memory care communities support families too. Look for regular communication and resources to help you through this journey.

Family Support	Community A	Community B	Community C
Regular family meetings	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
Support groups for families	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
24/7 communication available	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
Regular updates on condition	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
Family education programs	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
Open visiting hours	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No

Communication Methods:

How They Communicate	Community A	Community B	Community C
Phone calls	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
Email updates	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
Written reports	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
Family portal/app	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
Family Support Rating (1-10)			

Key Questions to Ask:

- ☐ How often will you update me on my loved one's condition?
- ☐ What should I do if I have concerns about care?
- ☐ Do you offer support for family members?
- ☐ How do you help families adjust to memory care?

SECTION 7: COST & FINANCIAL INFORMATION

Instructions: Memory care costs vary widely. Make sure you understand all fees and what payment options are available.

Cost Information	Community A	Community B	Community C
Monthly base cost	\$	\$	\$
Move-in fee	\$	\$	\$
Security deposit	\$	\$	\$
Extra fees explained	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No

What's Included in Base Cost:

Services Included	Community A	Community B	Community C
All meals	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
All activities	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
Basic medical care	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
Laundry service	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No

Payment Options:

Payment Help	Community A	Community B	Community C
Accept long-term care insurance	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
Accept Veterans benefits	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
Payment plans available	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No

Key Questions to Ask:

- ☐ Are there any costs not included in the monthly fee?
- ☐ How often do costs increase?
- ☐ What happens if we can't pay anymore?
- ☐ Do you help with insurance paperwork?

Notes:

SECTION 8: OVERALL IMPRESSION & DECISION

Instructions: After visiting all communities, rate your overall impressions and make notes about your feelings.

Medical Services	Community A	Community B	Community C
Would my loved one be happy here?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
Do I trust the staff?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
Does it feel like home?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
Can we afford it long-term?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
Overall impression (1-10)			

Final Decision

Top Choice:

Why I chose this community:

Second choice (backup):

When do we want to move in:

Next Steps:

- ☐ Schedule second visit
 - ☐ Talk with family members
 - ☐ Check references
 - ☐ Review contract
 - ☐ Arrange financing
 - ☐ Set move-in date
-

IMPORTANT REMINDERS

- ☒ **Trust your instincts** – If something doesn't feel right, keep looking
- ☒ **Visit more than once** – Try visiting at different times of day
- ☒ **Talk to other families** – Ask to speak with current residents' families
- ☒ **Check state inspection reports** – Ask to see the most recent reports
- ☒ **Take your time** – This is an important decision that shouldn't be rushed

Need more help choosing memory care? Visit Senior Care Finder at
www.seniorcarefinder.com or call (402) 480-6115

This Memory Care Evaluation Guide is provided by Senior Care Finder to help families make informed decisions about specialized dementia and Alzheimer's care.