



## **Nursing Homes Aren't the Only Option**

For many older people, there comes a time when the lawn is too hard to maintain or the old neighborhood is too lonely. Perhaps health or financial problems start to make living alone impossible. Leaving behind a long-time home and independent life can be frightening. But it can also mean finding more safety and companionship.

There are more housing options available than most people realize, and older adults and their families need to learn what their current options are. They can then take the necessary steps to find out what will work best for them, given their own specific needs, preferences, and resources.

Our Elder Care Information and Referral Services help families explore what options are available, how they can find the information they need to make a decision and how they can continue to be a wise consumer, even after they make a choice.

Here are just a few housing options that families should consider:

**Living with adult children.** Perhaps the older person can live in a separate apartment in the house. But there are many questions to consider: Will the parent get along with others living in the house? Is the house equipped for an older adult? Will the parent receive the attention he or she needs?

**Senior retirement communities.** Residents live independently in their own apartments, but may share some meals in a central dining room or have housekeeping services. There may be social and recreational activities.

**Assisted living facilities.** These provide housing for people who cannot live independently but do not need skilled nursing care. The level of assistance varies, and may include help with bathing, dressing, meals and medication monitoring.

**Nursing homes.** This is an option for people who need skilled nursing care and long-term assistance. Medicaid may provide coverage to residents who meet certain requirements.

**Continuing care retirement communities.** At these facilities, a resident could start out living in an independent apartment, move to assisted living, then to skilled care if needed.