

# MAKE AN INFORMED DECISION

## 10 smart strategies for evaluating an assisted living community...

- 1 Visit numerous residences and compare for yourself, perhaps even keeping a journal where you jot down notes about each community.
- 2 Pay close attention to the ways in which staff members attend to residents and meet their needs. Also, ask what the staff to resident ratio is.
- 3 Carefully review the community's calendar of activities, trips and planned events...in particular, look for a varying assortment of activities designed to get everyone involved.
- 4 Try the food personally for taste and ask to see a monthly menu to determine variety. Ask if special dietary needs are accommodated.
- 5 Look around the community and appraise such things as decorating schemes (i.e., handsome woodwork and design accents) along with cleanliness, landscaping and other "housekeeping" criteria that are indicative of a high quality assisted living community.
- 6 Take note of items vital to a well designed assisted living residence, such as lighting, unobstructed pathways and accessibility.
- 7 Stroll through the "common" areas where people congregate, including dining rooms and lounges...making a mental note of how residents share one another's company.
- 8 Ask about the security and safety measures that are in place at the community.
- 9 Make it a point to go inside an apartment or two, evaluating such things as ease of moving about the apartment.
- 10 Contact your county's and/or state's licensing agency to make certain the community is up to date with inspections and other requirements. Have a clear understanding of price structure. Also, inquire about any additional costs.