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How to Choose the Right Adult Rehabilitation and Nursing Home



ONEIDA, NY – Most of us will be faced with the choice of selecting an adult rehabilitation and or skilled nursing facility for a family member, a loved one, or a friend, during our lifetime. There are many factors to consider when evaluating your options.

As with most healthcare decisions, quality should play a significant role. “Quality is directly related to outcomes,” said Long-Term Care Administrator Bryan Ehlinger. “Individuals who are seeking care should use quality as a major factor in their decision making.” Ehlinger has worked in rehabilitation and long-term care for over 30 years and is currently the administrator of Oneida Healthcare’s Rehabilitation Center and Extended Care Facility in Oneida.

Quality can be determined based on a number of variables. There are free resources available online to compare facilities based on standard quality measures at medicare.gov/nursinghomecompare. This includes quality measures related to short and long stay residents in areas such as improved mobility, successful discharge, readmission rate, quality of life measures, and pressure ulcers rates, to name a few. With a few clicks, you can easily compare facilities. For example, Oneida Healthcare was rated better than the state and national average in all the above mentioned measures. This site can also be helpful in the process of finding facilities in your area as you begin your search.

If seeking inpatient rehabilitation therapy, Ehlinger encourages you to ask questions about the staff’s experience and the array of therapy services available. “An experienced and comprehensive inpatient therapy department can shorten length of stay and reduce the chance of readmission,” he said. “For example, at Oneida Healthcare we have Physical, Speech, Occupational, and Respiratory Therapy, as well as Nursing. This may differ at other facilities.”

The federal government also provides a helpful nursing home checklist to use when touring a facility at [medicare.gov/files/nursing-home-checklist.pdf](https://www.medicare.gov/files/nursing-home-checklist.pdf). Ehlinger also expressed the importance of visiting at numerous times of the day to help determine continuity of care. “Multiple visits gives you the opportunity to see the residents and staff interact.”

“Trust your senses,” he added. “How does the facility look? What do you see and hear? How does it smell? Does the food look appealing? These are important considerations that help determine quality beyond statistical data.”

Resident access and advocacy can also impact quality. “When choosing a facility, accessibility for family and friends to visit is important. That support often plays a significant role in outcomes.” He explained that facilities have Ombudsmen who serve as an external neutral advocate for residents. Families make an ideal advocate as well. “Having an extra set of eyes that help notice simple changes in a resident’s health and behaviors can only help drive purposeful interventions.”

Evaluation of a facilities’ quality of care requires due diligence when choosing an adult rehabilitation and or skilled nursing facility. For more helpful information about this topic and other factors that can influence your decision, visit [medicare.gov](https://www.medicare.gov), the National Institute on Aging, and or AARP.

Photo Caption: Pictured above is Jack with his wife Dorothy Stone, who recently received care at Oneida Healthcare’s Rehabilitation Center. Oneida Healthcare’s Rehabilitation Center and Extended Care Facility offers inpatient rehabilitation and long-term care with a total of 160 beds including a 29 bed rehabilitation and 11 bed ventilator unit. For information about Oneida Healthcare, visit oneidahealthcare.org or call 315-361-2018.

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About Oneida Health

Oneida Health serves an area comprised of approximately 29 communities in Madison and western Oneida counties with a population of approximately 100,000. Operated by Oneida Health Systems, Inc, a New York State not-for-profit corporation, the organization includes a 101-bed acute care hospital, emergency department, state of the art surgery center, 160-bed extended-care and short-term rehab facility, primary care offices, internal medicine, comprehensive lab services, home medical equipment, comprehensive imaging services, outpatient therapy, and care specialties in: oncology, neurology, podiatry, vascular, sleep, OB/GYN, GI, wound care, orthopedics, and ENT.