

HOW TO FIND THE Best Eldercare



A 20-MINUTE GUIDE
TO ASSISTED LIVING,
IN-HOME CARE,
NURSING HOMES, &
SENIOR HOUSING
IN YOUR COMMUNITY

By Marilyn Rantz, PhD, RN, FAAN
and Mary Zwygart-Stauffacher, PhD, RN, FAAN



CHAPTER ONE

GOOD NEWS AND OVERWHELMING NEWS—LOTS OF LONG-TERM CARE OPTIONS

The time comes for each of us. As we age, we eventually need assistance of some kind. We are fortunate to have many options for long-term care, but finding the best fit and high-quality services for yourself or your loved one can feel overwhelming. This book will help you through the process step by step.

To begin, what is long-term care and what are the options? *Long-term care* refers to a variety of services that help the person regain or maintain as much independence and health as possible for as long as possible. These services may last weeks, months, or even years. They could include anything from in-home services, such as help with shopping or preparing meals, to hospice care when faced with a terminal illness. Between those two extremes, long-term care could include housing options from apartments with housekeeping services to skilled nursing homes that provide rehabilitation or help with chronic illnesses.

You may be wondering, “How do I find a good homecare provider?” or “How do I find a good nursing home?” or “How do I find

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a good assisted-living facility?” or “How do I find good senior housing?” We help you find answers by providing questions to ask about a variety of service options. We have included easy-to-use guides for assisted-living facilities and nursing homes that allow you to evaluate such places in a twenty- to thirty-minute walk-through. We have carefully designed and tested the guides so that you can be sure they will give the information you need about quality care.

We also offer advice on how to adapt to life in any new type of housing, whether it’s senior housing, assisted living, or a nursing home, and we suggest ways to finance care and locate resources locally and nationwide. The advice we’ve assembled here is based on years of experience working in and managing homecare, independent living, assisted living, and nursing homes. It’s also based on research that we and other professionals have conducted on the quality of care in various settings—aging in place, assisted living, and nursing homes—and on conversations we’ve had with hundreds of long-term care staff members. Most important, we’ve learned about what is important from hundreds of individuals like you.

Before we get too far into this advice, though, let’s cover some basics about long-term care and various service options you may want to consider for your care needs.

HOW TO FIND THE Best Eldercare

Written by two award-winning experts on long-term care, this book tells how to find the eldercare options in your community. Included are Q&A sections that help you determine the level of care needed, practical information on how to pay, things to look for (and questions to ask) when visiting eldercare facilities or homecare services, and helpful lists of resources.

“No one knows more than Marilyn Rantz and Mary Zwuygart-Stauffacher about understanding what makes up quality eldercare. In this volume, they translate extensive research into a user-friendly format that is valuable to both seniors and their caregivers.”



STEVEN ZWEIG, MD, MSPH

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“If you need help working through the emotional roller-coaster of managing eldercare, look no further. This guide will be your most comprehensive and useful tool to assist in making good decisions about just what eldercare services are right.”



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“This is the ‘one-stop shopping’ guide for those seeking long-term care for themselves or their loved ones. Practical tools for selecting the best and most appropriate care option available are provided by experts who understand how to evaluate quality across multiple long-term care settings.”



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Marilyn Rantz, PhD, RN, FAAN, and Mary Zwuygart-Stauffacher, PhD, RN, FAAN, each have more than two decades of experience researching and improving eldercare and are fellows in the prestigious American Academy of Nursing. They are two-time winners of the *American Journal of Nursing's* Book of the Year Award.

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