



Nursing home care in the '80s

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Thanks to those who helped

About 90 percent of this special section was organized and reported by Diane Gale, whose byline is familiar to most Observer & Eccentric readers.

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Most of the photos were taken by Steve Fecht, a staff member in the Observer & Eccentric.

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papers is grateful to the people who helped with this series — especially those who shared their personal experiences.

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A guide to nursing home terms

Nursing homes provide skilled or basic care, depending on the certification they have. Some facilities are certified in both areas.

The following is a glossary of words you might come across, provided by Citizens for Better Care:

- **Skilled care** patients need extensive medical equipment and care.
- **Basic care** patients need help with activities and daily living tasks.
- **Medicare** is a federally funded health insurance program for people permanently disabled or 65 and older. Medicare can pay for up to 100 days of skilled care in a nursing home. The first 20 days of skilled care are covered in full; there is a co-payment for days 21 through 100. Some Medicare Supplement Insurance (Medigap) policies will cover this co-payment.
- **Medicaid** is a state and federally funded assistance program for those unable to pay. Unlike Medicare, Medicaid will pay for basic and skilled care. It is important to find out whether a nursing home will provide the correct level of care. About 70 percent of Michigan's nursing home residents rely on Medicaid to help pay for their care.

The following is a list of terms used for places where elderly and handicapped live:

- **Senior citizens' housing** or apartments offer independent living for those who prefer not to live in their own homes. Most have features to accommodate handicapped people; like handrails and wide doorways for wheelchairs.
- **Homes for the aged** are residential care facilities for 21 or more people 60 years and older. They provide room and board, recreation, supervision and personal care assistance, like bathing, dressing and grooming.
- **Adult foster care** homes offer room and board as well as supervision and personal care to people over 18 years old. Homes may specialize in providing care for the mentally retarded, chronically mentally ill or elderly.
- **Boarding homes** are available for adults who want someone to prepare meals and take care of household tasks. They aren't supposed to provide supervision or personal care. If they do, they must be licensed as adult foster care homes.
- **Nursing homes** provide medical supervision and nursing care to persons suffering or recovering from illness. Most nursing home residents are for the elderly, but some provide care for people of any age in need of 24-hour care.

Home chore programs, home health programs, meals-on-wheels, adult day care or other services also help some people to live independently.

Citizens for Better Care or your local Area Agency on Aging suggest where to go for help in selecting a service or home. Citizens for Better Care will help if you have any questions on rights or care complaints. The Farmington Citizens for Better Care number is 476-2040. The Detroit number is 962-5968.