

Q. I live in Southfield and need a ride to my doctor. I can afford to pay something but cabs get very expensive.

A. The Southfield Senior Adult Advisory Council sponsors the Transportation of Southfield Seniors program that provides medical transportation to Southfield residents 60 years of age or older. TOSSE will pick up older adults, at their homes, and take them to doctor's offices, hospitals, pharmacies or for their appointments. TOSSE has a 4-door passenger car and a lift-equipped van. This service is available Monday through Friday from 8:30 a.m.-4 p.m. Service is restricted to within the city of Southfield area.

To help pay for the cost of this service a \$1 donation, each way, is suggested for those with an annual income of \$12,000. A \$2 donation, each way, is suggested for those whose income is over \$12,000. Reservations are necessary at least 24 hours in advance. For additional information or to make a reservation, call 356-1509.

Q. Please explain Adult Foster Care Homes.

A. Adult Foster Care Homes are for people 18 and older who do not require constant nursing care but are unable to live independently. Licensed by the Michigan Department of Social Services, these homes provide room, board and supervision 24 hours a day.

The homes specialize in care for the mentally impaired, developmentally disabled and the elderly. The homes will help residents with dressing, bathing and other activities of daily living. Costs vary and may depend on such factors as where the home is located and how many services and activities are offered. Medicare or Medicaid payments are not accepted.

In selecting a Foster Care Home, and you should investigate several before you place a family member in one, there are several questions you should ask:

What type of residents does the home provide care for, what kind of privileges are allowed the resident within the home, is there transportation available, what type of educational, recreational or religious programs are offered, what are the house rules and how does the staff interact with the residents, what does the monthly fee include?

While the homes are licensed by the Department of Social Services and must follow specific rules and regulations, this does not guarantee that the home is providing good care. It is up to you to ensure that your family member is receiving the care he or she needs.



Renee Mahler

For further information concerning Adult Foster Care Homes in southeastern Michigan, call Citizens for Better Care, toll free, 1-800-292-7852, 8:30 a.m.-4:30 p.m.

Renee Mahler is a gerontologist and the Director of Communications and Admissions at a Rochester Hills nursing facility. Send your questions to her at Observer & Eccentric, 805 East Maple, Birmingham, MI 4809

consumer mailbag

Q. Can you tell me what other types of indoor air pollution besides tobacco smoke there are?

A. With today's energy conservation practices, such as storm windows, insulation, weatherstripping and caulking, making buildings airtight, indoor air pollutants may stay trapped inside.

Cleaning solvents, paints, pesticides and personal care products may contain potentially harmful chemicals, such as mercury or lead arsenate. These products should only be used according to package directions and only with sufficient ventilation.

Virus and bacteria are two more common sources of indoor air pollution.

These microbes are carried inside on people, pets, plants and insects. They can also grow inside air conditioners, humidifiers and on air cleaning filters.

Two gaseous pollutants are nitrogen dioxide (NO₂) and carbon monoxide (CO). Both of these gases are given off by fireplaces, wood and coal stoves and gas appliances, which are not adequately vented or properly maintained. Carbon monoxide is also given off by other combustible sources, including gasoline and unvented kerosene heaters.

Tobacco smoke is a common indoor air pollutant. In addition to giving off NO₂ and CO, tobacco smoke contains respirable particulate mat-



Terry Gibb

ter and hydrogen cyanide and ammonia compounds that irritate lung tissue.

Formaldehyde, asbestos and radon are dangerous compounds sometimes found in the air in buildings. Formaldehyde is found in foam insulation and some carpeting, drapery and upholstery fabrics.

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