

SENIORS

Use these helpful resources to find senior housing

By *Bradley Dubin*

CONTRIBUTOR

An important step in finding the perfect living arrangement for a senior is making a list of senior living residences in your area. I am often asked how to find them.

In addition to a general Internet search, the local yellow pages is a good source. There are also a variety of free national referral sources (i.e. A Place For Mom; Assisted Senior Living; Assisted Living Source; Eldercare Channel; Gilbert Guide; Snap For Seniors; Senior Living Guide).

I also recommend that you contact local state agencies. In South Carolina for example, the following are excellent



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resources:

- SC Assisted Living Federation of America
 - SC Alzheimer's Association
 - SC Access Aging and Disability Information (SCAAA), which is part of the Lieutenant Governor's Office on Aging
 - SC Department of Health and Environmental Control (DHEC)
 - SC Department of Consumer Affairs
 - Aging Services of South Carolina
- The SCAAA and DHEC links are especially helpful in locating local senior housing options: www.scaccess.communityos.org/cms and www.scdhec.gov/health/licen/hlfaclist.htm.

National agencies are also an available resource (i.e. Assisted Living Federation of America; and the U.S. Medicare Office). The U.S. Medicare Office link is helpful in searching for a

nursing home: www.medicare.gov.

As I searched for the perfect community for my grandmother, I found state and national agencies valuable not only in identifying senior living residences, but in providing information regarding the community's reputation or rating.

In most instances, agencies will provide recent survey or licensure violation information for licensed communities.

If you have difficulty obtaining this information from South Carolina agencies, keep in mind that the community is required by South Carolina law to provide its latest annual survey upon request.

Local informational sources are also available. In the Bluffton and Hilton Head area, the Chamber of Commerce, Beaufort County Visitor's Bureau and senior citizen centers are terrific resources. Providers commonly advertise in your local newspapers and maga-

zines, so look through them. You can usually find back issues online.

You can also consult with geriatric case managers (i.e. nurses, social workers or psychologists), physicians and home health care agencies.

Word of mouth in the community is another good to find what you want. Ask around for opinions.

Friends, associations, clergy, pharmacists, attorneys, accountants, financial planners, trust and estate administrators, businesses, residents or staff at senior living communities, social clubs and disability organizations are invaluable resources.

Bradley Dubin is a principal of Bloomfield Senior Living, LLC, owners of Riverside at Belfair Retirement Community and six other senior communities across the U.S.

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