

# Helping Seniors Transition to Long-Term Care

“Depression is a big mental health concern with the aging population, especially as seniors isolate themselves. Long-term care not only provides help for their health needs, but also social engagement to enhance their quality of life.”

Bridget Larkin, Social Services  
Leader, Meadowlark

As a medical professional, you are in a unique position to hear about the concerns and changes happening with your older patients. As you know, some changes may require medical intervention. Other changes may point to a need for the patient to make significant lifestyle changes, the most significant of which is moving to a retirement community.

While you might not be directly involved in the decision-making process, your input as a trusted advisor will be highly valued.

## Helping Patients and Families

Everyone is different and the decision to move is a personal one. Some seniors may choose to move earlier in order to focus on activities that bring them joy, rather than spending their energy taking care of their households. But if there comes a point when staying at home becomes unsafe, then it's time for a move.

You may hear patients bring up concerns before it gets to that point. The earlier patients and their loved ones can start discussing their options, the easier it will be on everyone down the line.

Making a move to long-term care—and the process of coming to peace with that transition—is a normal part of aging. To provide guidance to your patients and their family members as they begin to think about and discuss long-term living options, please share the enclosed handouts with them:

- How to Plan for Long-Term Care
- How to Discuss Moving with an Aging Relative or Friend
- What to Look For in a Nursing Home
- About Continuing Care Retirement Communities

