

10 TIPS FOR EVALUATING *Life Plan* COMMUNITIES

Offering tremendous value, an exceptional lifestyle, and incomparable peace of mind for the future, it's no wonder life plan communities are often considered the ideal senior living choice.

As you research your life plan community options, here are some tips to help make the choice that's right for you:

- 1 **Ask friends** or relatives to join you in the process of looking at communities.
- 2 **Make a list** of the things that are most important to your happiness, well-being, and lifestyle—such as location, dining, fitness programs, activities, access to health care, or whether the community accepts pets.
- 3 **Examine the friendliness** and responsiveness of the sales counselors. This is a good indicator of the services you can expect as a resident.
- 4 **Ask for a referral** from current residents to get their perspective on why they chose the community and their candid thoughts on the community.
- 5 **Compare all costs** to find out what's included and what's not, such as dining, utilities, real estate taxes, maintenance, and housekeeping. Ask what types of contract and financial options are offered, and whether a portion of your entry fee is refundable to you or your estate.
- 6 **Learn about** the community's ownership, sponsorship, and management. Make sure they have a strong history of service and a good reputation.
- 7 **Find out about** the dining experience, including how many daily meals are included and what food selections are offered. If you have dietary restrictions, ask about healthy options. Ask to dine at the community to experience the food quality, ambiance, and service firsthand.
- 8 **Make a list** of the features you desire in your new home, such as a den or patio, stainless appliances, wood flooring, garage, or underground parking—and consider which community can meet all or most of your requests.
- 9 **Ask about** security and emergency call systems.
- 10 **Plan ahead.** Be sure to ask about the community's health care options, and whether you must pay for those options upfront or only if needed. Waiting until something happens could necessitate a hasty and uninformed decision. With a solid plan in place, you'll enjoy today knowing you have a plan for whatever life may bring.