



## U.S. Assisted Living Residences: Glossary

Below is a list of common terms used in assisted living and residential care settings, including examples of programs and services found in many jurisdictions.\* Because programs are jurisdiction-specific, this glossary is a general overview of select terms in this field.

**Activities of Daily Living (“ADLs”):** Normal daily activities including but not limited to ambulating, transferring, range of motion, grooming, bathing, dressing, eating, and toileting.

**Adult Care Facility (also known as Congregate Housing):** Housing that provides board and in-home support services to six or more adults who are not related to the operators. Services may be similar to an adult foster care or board and care home.

**Adult Day Care Services (also known as Adult Day Services):** A nonresidential program licensed to provide services to functionally impaired adults on a regular basis for periods of less than 24 hours a day in a setting other than a participant’s home or the residence of the facility operator. Services are individualized, coordinated and directed at maintaining or improving the participants’ capabilities for self-care, and may include health services, social services, and nutritional services.

**Adult Foster Care:** A 24-hour-a-day program licensed to provide food, lodging, protection, supervision, and household services to functionally impaired adults in a residence. Services may also include the provision of personal care, household and living skills assistance or training, medication assistance, and assistance in safeguarding cash resources.

**Assisted Living:** A special combination of housing, supportive services, supervision, personalized assistance and health care designed to respond to the individual needs of those who need help with activities of daily living and/or instrumental activities of daily living.

**Assisted Living Facility:** A licensed entity that provides “assisted living” services.

**Assistive Technology:** Any item, piece of equipment or product system, whether acquired commercially off the shelf, modified, or customized, that is used to increase or improve functional capabilities of adults with disabilities.

---

\* This publication was prepared as part of a 2014-16 research grant (RC-2014-0017) funded by ClearWay Minnesota<sup>SM</sup>.

**Board and Care Home:** A private residence, often a converted or adapted single-family home, that provides a room, which may be shared with another person; meals; help with daily living activities; arrangement for or provision of transportation to medical and other appointments; reminders to take medications; and daily contact with staff.

**Cognitive impairment:** Loss of those mental processes that orchestrate relatively simple ideas, movements, or actions into goal-directed behavior including a lack of judgement, planning, organization, self-control, and the persistence needed to manage normal demands of the individual's environment. "Cognitive impairment" refers to a condition that interferes with decision-making skills or effective communication including Alzheimer's disease, multi-infarct dementia, stroke, Parkinson's disease, and other neurological conditions.

**Crisis Respite Services:** Services for persons with developmental disabilities for specific short-term care and intervention due to a caregiver's need for relief or support or protection of the person with developmental disabilities or others living with that person. These services may address both medical and behavioral needs.

**Day Training and Habilitation Services:** Services provided to adults with developmental disabilities to help them develop and maintain life skills, participate in community life, and engage in proactive and satisfying activities of their own choosing.

**Family Adult Day Services:** A program licensed to provide services in the license holder's primary residence for a period of less than 24 hours per day to a limited number of functionally impaired adults. Services are individualized and coordinated and directed at maintaining or improving the participants' capabilities for self-care, and may include health services, social services, and nutritional service.

**Functional assessment:** An assessment of a resident's ability to perform activities of daily living, instrumental activities of daily living, and the degree of assistance required, if any.

**Medicaid (called Medical Assistance or MA):** Joint federal and state program for financing health care for low-income individuals and families. Jointly financed and administered by the federal, state and local governments, Medicaid pays for health care services for those with low incomes or very high medical bills relative to income and assets. It is the largest public payer of long-term care services provided to those that meet both financial and functional eligibility criteria.

**Medicare:** Organized under Title XVIII of the Social Security Amendments of 1965, this federal program provides hospital and medical expense benefits for individuals over age 65 or meeting specific disability standards. Benefits for nursing home and home health services are very limited.

**Nursing Home** Licensed facility that provides general nursing care to those who are chronically ill and unable to perform essential activities of daily living without regular assistance.

**Residential Care Facility:** A group residence that provides residents with, at a minimum, assistance with bathing, dressing, and help with medications on a 24-hour-a-day basis, as well as medical services under certain circumstances.

**Residential Facilities for Adults with Mental Illness:** A residential program licensed to provide residential treatment and rehabilitation services to adults with mental illness on a 24-hour per day basis. Services may include intensive residential treatment services or crisis stabilization services.

**Residential Habilitation Services:** Services provided to persons with developmental disabilities, who cannot live in their homes without such services or who need outside support to remain in their homes. Habilitation services are provided in the person's residence and in the community, and are directed towards increasing and maintaining the person's physical, intellectual, emotional and social functioning. Residential habilitation services include:

**In-Home Family Support:** Services provided to persons and their families, including extended family members who are not providing licensed foster care, in the families' home and in the community to enable the persons to remain in or return to their homes.\

**Supported Living Services (SLS) for Adults:** Services provided to adults who require daily staff intervention due to behavior problems, medical conditions, physical deficits and lack of adequate survival skills. Services may be provided in an adult foster home, the community, or a person's own place of residence.

**Residential Programs and Services for Physically Disabled:** A residential program licensed to provide medical, developmental, and rehabilitative services for the care and treatment of five or more persons with physical disabilities on a 24-hour per day basis.

**Specialty Care Assisted Living Facility:** A facility that meets the definition of Assisted Living Facility but that is specially licensed and staffed to permit it to care for residents with a degree of cognitive impairment that would ordinarily make them ineligible for admission or continued stay in an assisted living facility. Residents admitted to specialty care assisted living facilities must meet certain eligibility and continued stay requirements.