

# SKILLED NURSING

## Frequently Asked Questions



**The Esquiline**  
A Life Plan Community at the Shrine

When your parent starts to exhibit signs of intellectual or physical difficulties, determining the proper level of care can be a confusing process. For most of us, it's the first time we've ever had to deal with anything like it. It's difficult to know what to look for or even where to start.

This tip sheet will help answer your questions by going over the most frequently asked questions about skilled nursing. Learn what skilled nursing is, whether it's right for your parent, and what to look for in a skilled nursing community.



# SKILLED NURSING

## Frequently Asked Questions

### 1. How can I tell if my parent needs skilled nursing?

This is usually a conversation you'll have with your family physician or the caregivers at your parent's [assisted living community](#). If your parent's daily needs are more than the caregivers can provide either at home or at the living community, then it's time.

One way to determine if they need more advanced care is to spend a morning or evening with them if you are able. Watch to see if they're struggling with simple tasks as they go

about their day. You can also ask the care professionals at an assisted living community. They'll be able to tell you if they've noticed any changes in your parent's abilities.

[Skilled nursing care centers](#) are also used for rehabilitation or physical therapy services. After an injury or surgery, your parent might need a place to stay while they recuperate. A skilled nursing care center can provide the rehab services they need to get back on their feet.

### 2. What is the difference between assisted care, intermediate care, and skilled care?

Those terms essentially refer to the level of help a person needs during an average day. Here is a quick rundown of what each one means:

**Assisted Care:** The definition of assisted care is a little vague because different campuses define this in different ways. Assisted care generally means the need for assistance with two ADLs (activities of daily living). For example, two ADLs could be needing help with medication administration and help with meal preparation.

**Intermediate Care:** Requiring assistance in maintaining care in many ADL areas. For example, needing help with medication, meal preparation, grooming, dressing, eating, and mobility.

**Skilled Care:** The need for a skilled licensed professional to provide care for an individual. Examples of this type of care would be therapy (occupational therapy, physical therapy, or speech therapy), catheter care, dressing changes, and application of dressings involving prescription drugs, and monitoring of medical equipment by a licensed professional.

The Esquiline is a place where needs at all three levels of care can

be met on one campus through the Dammert Care Center and the St. Francis Center for Assisted Living.

### 3. Why do some long-term care communities NOT show up on the Medicare 5 Star Rating System?

Star rating stats are collected and published by Medicare. Private-pay campuses like the Dammert Care Center and St. Francis Center for Assisted Living receive no Medicare reimbursement. Therefore, Medicare does not collect the statistics from private-pay campuses.

However, private-pay campuses are still held accountable. State health departments conduct inspections and publish reviews to ensure the communities meet health and safety requirements. Both the Dammert Care

Center and the St. Francis Center for Assisted living have received deficiency-free reports from the [Illinois Department of Public Health](#) for over a decade.

Be sure to familiarize yourself with [what is tracked in the Medicare 5 Star Rating System](#) when considering different skilled nursing centers. When you're looking at private-pay campuses, ask about similar statistics and how they compare to state percentages.

### 4. What questions should I ask when comparing skilled nursing communities?

Here are three basic questions to ask to get the ball rolling:

1. How many beds do you have and how many are occupied?
2. How many staff hours are spent on each resident per day?
3. Can you provide the results of the latest deficiency report from the

state's department of public health?

Then, on your tour, be sure to take a checklist of things to look for. Medicare.gov has created a very thorough checklist that you might find helpful. [You can find a printable version here.](#)



## 5. I don't want my parent to live in a cold, impersonal facility. How do I avoid that?

You want a place that treats your parent like family, not a patient, so choose a skilled nursing center that places an emphasis on person-centered care. When you tour the property, ask yourself—would you feel comfortable staying there?

At the Dammert Care Center, we respect our residents' individuality

and strive to create home-like surroundings. Semi-private rooms are immaculately kept and spacious, with emergency response systems incorporated into the layout in an unobtrusive way. Wooded landscapes can be seen from resident rooms while skylights in common areas bring in natural light, creating a relaxing, homey atmosphere.

## 6. Am I allowed to decorate my parent's room?

Once your parent is moved in, you can add personal touches to their space to make them feel at home. You don't want to go overboard and create a cluttered living space, but it can be very comforting for a resident to have

family pictures and cherished belongings in easy sight. Bring their favorite painting or place a warm throw blanket at the end of the bed to make the room even more personal and familiar.

## 7. What clothing should be packed?

It's best to pack comfortable clothing like sweatpants or t-shirts. That makes it easier to change in and out of outfits and will also help with any therapy sessions that might be necessary. Don't forget the daily necessities like pajamas, socks, undergarments, and slippers. It's

also a good idea to bring a sweater or light jacket.

Skilled nursing communities will provide laundry services so you don't have to worry about running out of clean clothes. But a good rule of thumb is to bring at least enough clothing for seven outfits.

## 8. Will there be any social activities in skilled nursing?

Yes, most skilled nursing communities offer activities and entertainment. At the Dammert Care Center, there are daily group or small group activities,

cable TV and Wi-Fi, an easy-access outdoor patio, and a fireside dining room.

## 9. What do I do if my parent has special dietary needs?

Talk to the skilled nursing staff to ensure your parent receives the proper nutrition. At Dammert Care Center,

we have dietary planning and consulting available to address any concerns you may have.

## 10. Can my parent still attend mass when they're in the skilled community?

It depends on the skilled nursing center. At the Dammert Care Center, we believe that pastoral care helps improve the body, mind, and spirit connection as it relates to the overall health of our

residents and families. For our residents who wish to attend, we have daily Catholic masses and communion, as well as weekly Protestant services.



## What Sets Us Apart

### Our goal is to help you live your life to the fullest.

The Dammert Care Center is a place to heal. We have been instrumental in transitioning some of our residents back to their own apartments in [assisted living](#) or even back to [independent living](#).

### We strive for constant improvement.

At The Esquiline, the St. Francis Assisted Living and Dammert Care Center, staff participated in a 12-hour Person Centered Care education program through the Alzheimer's Association. These communities received a [certification for Person Centered Care Program completion](#) and will continue ongoing education to further culture change and community development.

### We're finding new ways to continue our legacy of superior care.

The Dammert Care Center is a certified [MUSIC AND MEMORY<sup>SM</sup>](#) campus. Music and Memory is a program that provides music to our resident family based on their individual preferences. It raises the quality of life for all residents and helps those struggling with Alzheimer's or dementia to reconnect with the world.





**We train our caregivers to deliver consistent, individualized care.**

The Dammert Care Center and St. Francis Assisted Living Community utilize Charge Nurses to help build employee knowledge. Caregivers are trained on how to provide the best care and cultivate meaningful, engaging relationships with residents. Consistent caregivers are a philosophy of person-centered care.



**Your loved one is more than just a number or a patient.**

With Dammert being a 57-bed community and St. Francis being a 30-apartment community, we can really take time to get to know our residents. The intimacy of these numbers gives us the chance to assure individual meaning in the lives of each of our residents. This is also at the heart of our belief system as we care for those with any level of memory loss.

**We believe physical, intellectual, social, and spiritual wellness all play a role in our well-being.**

Those are the [four pillars of well-being](#) at The Esquiline. In addition to unparalleled physical care and a wide offering of social activities, we also offer pastoral care. Weekly Protestant services as well as daily Catholic mass and communion serve as stabilizing influences in our community.



**We offer a wide range of on-site services for easy access.**

On-site services that are available to all interested residents include:

**Hearing Aid Clinic:** offered through the [Hearing Care Centers of Southern Illinois](#), this service provides monthly hearing aid maintenance.

**Dental Services:** dental services provided by [Dr. Ethan Schuman, DDS](#).

**Podiatry Services:** residents are generally eligible to be seen every 60 days by [Dr. David Weik, DPM](#), or [Kelly Whitaker, NP](#).



## How to Start the Conversation

If your parent is in assisted living, discuss your concerns with their caregivers at the community. If your parent is living at home or has recently been hospitalized, talk to their physician and get their opinion on what the best plan for your parent is.

It's important to be open with your parent as you go through the process because they might not be on the same page as you. Use this guide on [navigating difficult conversations with your parent](#) to help with what can sometimes be a painful discussion.



**The Esquiline**

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If you'd like to find out more about The Esquiline and the Dammert Care Center, call us at 800-533-6279 or [contact us online](#). Remember, we're here to help.