

# SINCE YOU CARE

A Series of Guides from MetLife® in Cooperation with the National Alliance for Caregiving

## Adult Day Centers

### About the Subject

In today's world, an individual's most precious resource may be time. Trying to find the time to care for an aging family member or significant other, together with the demands of everyday life, can be overwhelming. More emphasis is being placed on the need for a wide variety of long-term care alternatives for older adults — avenues of care between the home and facility placement.

One such alternative is the adult day center, sometimes referred to as Adult Day Care or Adult Day Services. Adult day center programs have been assisting caregivers for over 20 years. According to the National Adult Day Services Association (NADSA), there are more than 3,500 centers nationwide servicing more than 150,000 Americans each day.<sup>1</sup>

The adult day center (ADC) has two missions. The first is to provide older adults with social and



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*Caregivers face many challenges as they search for information and make decisions about how best to provide care to their loved ones. To help meet their needs,*

*MetLife offers SinceYouCare® — a series of guides which provide practical suggestions and useful tools on a variety of specific care-related products.*

some health services, as an alternative to nursing home placement, with the goal of improving a person's ability to remain independent. The second is to afford caregivers respite from the often-demanding responsibilities of caregiving.

Adult day centers allow family caregivers to:

- Continue to work away from the home or more productively while at home.
- Have “down time” from caregiving responsibilities.
- Obtain assistance with the care recipient's physical care needs.
- Prevent premature nursing home placement.
- Provide appropriate and cost effective care for the older individual.
- Provide opportunities for aging family members or significant others to socialize with other older adults, helping to prevent social isolation.

## Things You Need to Know

Adult day centers target frail older adults and those who are physically or cognitively impaired. About half of all



people in ADCs suffer from dementia-related diseases, such as Alzheimer's.<sup>2</sup>

### Types of Centers

There are three main types of adult day centers.<sup>3</sup>

#### *Adult Day Social Care*

Provides social activities, meals, recreation and some health related services.

#### *Adult Day Health Services*

Provides social activities as well as more intensive health, therapeutic and social services for those with severe medical problems or for those at risk of nursing home placement.

#### *Dementia-Specific Adult Day Care*

Provides social and health services only to those with diagnosed dementias.

### Services Offered

Although each facility may differ in features, scope of services and the area of expertise, these general services are offered by most ADC centers.

#### *Transportation*

Door-to-door handicapped service in a vehicle that is accessible to people with disabilities.

#### *Social Activity*

Interaction with other participants in planned activities.

#### *Meals and Snacks*

Participants are provided with meals and snacks. Those with special dietary needs are offered special meals and individuals who have difficulty eating receive assistance.

## ***Nursing Care***

Non-intensive medical care such as administering medications or doing monthly health assessments.

## ***Personal Care***

Help with toileting, grooming and other personal activities.

## ***Counseling***

Helps older adults deal with depression and separation anxiety.

## ***Therapeutic Activities***

Exercise and mental interaction for all participants, plus help with other ailments.

## ***Rehabilitation Therapy***

Helps older adults recover functional ability, as best they can, to perform normal tasks after an illness or injury through physical, occupational and speech therapy. Therapy services are most often provided in centers that provide Adult Day Health Services.

## **Are Adult Day Centers the Right Choice?**

### ***How do you know if an ADC is right for your situation as a caregiver?***

Honestly assess your situation to see whether or not an ADC is an appropriate solution.

- Do you need occasional assistance with taking care of your relative?
- Are you worried about his or her safety when you cannot be around?
- Are you leaving your relative alone too often in order to do errands or go to work?
- Do you find that you are taking off more and more time from work to care for your relative?
- Would you feel better if he or she was able to enjoy a nutritious meal during the day, the opportunity to socialize more or to get more exercise?
- Has a good relationship with your relative turned into a troubled one? Are arguments increasing?
- Is your relative feeling isolated by not having the company of other older people?

A “yes” to even one of these questions could mean that an ADC might be an answer to your relative’s caregiving needs. This doesn’t mean it will be easy for you or the individual for whom you are providing care. Feelings of guilt and “shirking your responsibility” may be initial reactions when considering an adult day program. But remember that you need time to care for you, to be able to work without worry-



ing about how your family member is managing, and time to relax and regroup, so that when you are providing care you're at your best. Feelings of anger, fear, denial and resistance are common first time reactions experienced by persons receiving care when a new program such as an ADC is proposed. It is important to understand that a period of adjustment may be necessary.

***Help the individual become more comfortable with the concept of an ADC by using these methods:***

- Explain that an ADC will allow you to continue to work, while providing a safe and social environment for your loved one during that time.
- Start with a trial period of only a few hours a week, gradually working up to a full day, for as many days per week as desired.
- Consider spending time at the center with your loved one initially to ease the adjustment and to make sure that you are comfortable that your loved one's needs are being met. Initiating any new service may require an adjustment on your part as well as that of your family member.

***For those with Alzheimer's Disease and other dementias:***

- Individuals may need more time to adjust.
- Changes in routine may be initially difficult and could result in anxiety.
- An adult day center may not be the best alternative, but this varies with the individual.

- Be sure to leave a reasonable amount of time for your family member to adjust before coming to a final decision as to whether or not the ADC will meet his or her needs. Use the staff at the center as a resource if you have concerns. They have experience with ways to assist individuals in adjusting to this new environment.



## Locate a Center

If you determine that an ADC program can help you provide care, it is best to look for a program in your immediate area. Sometimes, word of mouth is all you'll need. Speaking with friends, family or other older adults may put you in touch with just the right local program. *The Eldercare Locator* (see *Resources to Get You Started*) can help you find your local Area Agency on Aging (AAA) to assist you with locating ADC programs in your vicinity.

## Visiting a Center

Once you locate an ADC, do your homework to make sure that it is a good match for you and your relative.

### *For the Individual*

- If the individual has physical limitations, but is not cognitively impaired, you'll want to make certain the program is not predominantly for those with dementia.
- Speak with the director to see if there are days when more men attend than women or vice versa. This is often an important consideration for older adults who may feel more comfortable with those of the same sex.



- Are there particular activities your loved one enjoys that might be part of a different day's routine? Arrange for the individual to attend on those days.

### *For You, the Caregiver*

- Find out about the days and hours of operation. Most centers are open five days a week, Monday-Friday. Some have Saturday morning hours, early drop-off, and late pick-up.
- What are the charges and how do they vary?
- Does the ADC program provide caregiver support, such as training or support groups?

## Pre-Admission

You may first wish to discuss the suitability of the program with the director or social worker before bringing the individual in for a visit. If you determine that an ADC may be right for your relative's situation, you will be asked to bring him or her in for an assessment. The program director may request that you bring a medical form completed by a physician. To help further determine the suitability of an ADC for the individual, watch for his or her reaction to the initial visit.

## Helpful Hints

- If an individual spends at least eight hours a day living in your home and is financially dependent on you, expenditures made for out-of-home, non-institutional care may be eligible for Dependent Care Tax

Credits. The ADC must be in compliance with all state and local regulations for expenditures to qualify. Your tax advisor could assist you in determining whether you might be eligible for this tax credit.<sup>5</sup> See *Resources To Get You Started* for IRS information.

- Be aware that while ADCs are subject to codes, laws and regulations, these standards are not uniform among states. Also, ADCs are not federally regulated. While staff-to-client ratios can vary from state to state, NADSA suggests:

- There should be a paid staff member and at least one other responsible person on site at all times that clients are in attendance.
- The staff-to-participant ratio should be a minimum of 1:6 in a program that offers core services.
- Programs serving a population with severe impairments should consider a staff-to-participant ratio of 1:4 for enhanced or intensive services. A ratio of 1:5 is acceptable for centers with more than 20 participants.<sup>6</sup>

## *Paying for Care*

Depending on the area of the country that you are in and the level of services that the adult day program provides, daily costs can range from a low of about \$30.00 to upwards of \$100.00.<sup>4</sup>

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**Medicare** If a person is receiving physical, occupational or speech therapy while attending an adult day center, the cost of those therapies may be covered partially or in full.

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**Medicaid** The center must be certified and the individual must meet stringent financial guidelines.

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**Private Funding Sources** Private foundations, businesses and organizations such as the United Way or the Area Agency on Aging may assist with costs.

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**Sliding Scale Fee Structure** Many programs offer reduced fees when there is a proven need for financial assistance.

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**Long-Term Care Insurance** Many programs accept long-term care insurance.

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**Private Pay** All programs accept private pay individuals.

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Remember that as much as you may wish to personally meet all of your relative's care needs, this may not be possible, especially if they have diminished cognitive function. ADCs may provide an appropriate, cost effective means of assisting you with care.

## Resources to Get You Started

### *Books and Publications*

#### **Caring for Yourself While Caring for Your Aging Parents, Third Edition: How to Help, How to Survive, 3rd edition**

This book contains information and tips from other caregivers. It explores a variety of topics including long-distance caregiving, financial issues and addressing the needs of caregivers. This resource includes information specific to Adult Day Support Centers.

Berman, C. (2006).

Owl Press

Suggested Retail Price: \$22.00

ISBN: 0805079750

#### **How to Care for Aging Parents: A Complete Guide.**

This book is a useful starting point for those finding themselves in a caregiver's role for parents or any other older relative. It provides information on health care issues, caregiver concerns, community and facility based services as well as an extensive listing of helpful agencies and organizations, with contact information that assists caregivers. It has information specific to Adult Day Care and tips for helping your family member make the transition.

Morris, V. (2004).

Workman Publishing Company

Suggested Retail Price: \$18.95

ISBN: 0761134263

#### **Resources for Caregivers**

This guide was prepared by the National Alliance for Caregiving and the MetLife Mature Market Institute to assist individuals and families who have assumed the role of caregiver, or anticipate future caregiving. Single copies are available free from:

#### **Metlife Mature Market Institute**

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Westport, CT 06880

You may also call 203-221-6580  
or e-mail:

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metlife.com.**



**The 36-Hour Day: A Family Guide to Caring for Persons with Alzheimer Disease, Related Dementing Illnesses, and Memory Loss in Later Life**

This book provides valuable information for families coping with Alzheimer’s disease and other similar disorders. It gives factual information from the physical and psychological standpoints of the disorders to the impact they have on the caregivers involved. Legal, financial, and caregiver tools and suggestions are provided. It looks at Adult Day Centers as a resource for families caring for a loved one with Alzheimer’s disease or a similar dementia.

Mace, N.L., Rabins, P.V. (2006).  
 Mass Market Paperback  
 Suggested Retail Price: \$9.99  
 ISBN: 0446618764

**Internet Sites**

**Administration on Aging (AOA)**

AOA is maintained by the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, and provides resources, news and developments, and information for older adults. AOA funds the *Eldercare Locator*, a service that gives information to callers about state and community resources that provide assistance to older persons and their caregivers.

The AOA’s home page may be accessed at: [www.aoa.gov](http://www.aoa.gov). The *Eldercare Locator* may be accessed at: [www.eldercare.gov](http://www.eldercare.gov), or by calling 1-800-677-1116, M-F, 9 a.m.- 8 p.m. EST.

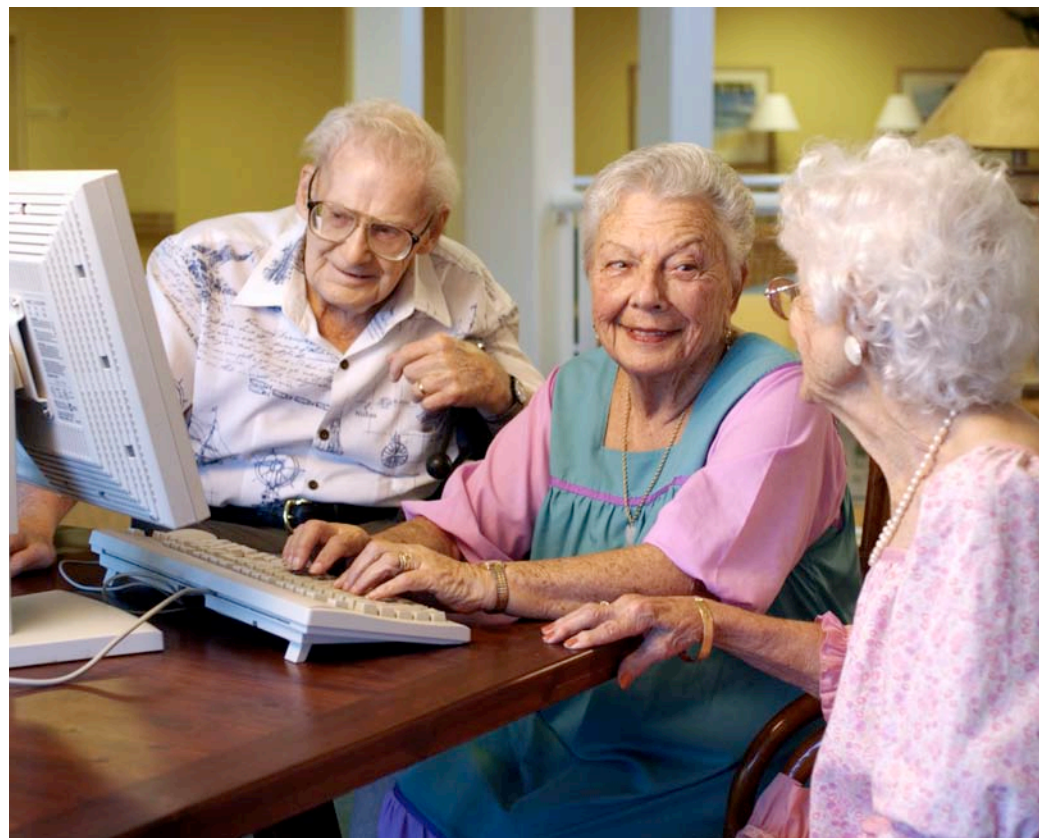
**Helpguide**

Helpguide is a website established by the Center for Healthy Aging in Santa Monica, CA and the Santa Monica Rotary Club. Its goal is to provide accurate and easily accessible information to provide individuals with the tools to make educated health and lifestyle choices. It provides information on a variety of aging and health care issues. Caregivers will find resources related to a variety of topics. The site provides a dis-

cussion entitled *Adult Day Care Centers: A Guide to Options and Selecting the Best Center for Your Needs* which can be accessed at: [http://www.helpguide.org/elder/adult\\_day\\_care\\_centers.htm](http://www.helpguide.org/elder/adult_day_care_centers.htm). To access the main site go to [www.helpguide.org](http://www.helpguide.org).

**Internal Revenue Service**

The Internal Revenue Service has a comprehensive site that includes Dependent Care Credit information and downloadable PDF publications and forms. You may go to [www.irs.gov](http://www.irs.gov) and search for “Dependent Care Credit” information or call 800-829-3676 and ask for Dependent Care Credit information.



## Adult Day Center Evaluation Form

If you decide a program is right for your loved one, be sure to give the center a trial run for a few days or visits. Make sure your loved one feels safe and comfortable before making a commitment. All ADC programs are not the same, so you should feel free to continue to look and evaluate different ADC programs and facilities until you find one that best serves your loved one's needs.

Based on NADSA Guide to *Selecting Quality Providers*  
National Adult Day Services Association (NADSA)  
[www.nadsa.org](http://www.nadsa.org), accessed 12/8/06

What is the cost? \_\_\_\_\_

Is there an hourly, daily, weekly or monthly charge for the program?  
\_\_\_\_\_

What charges are extra? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

What are the hours of operation? \_\_\_\_\_

Is it open on Saturdays or holidays? \_\_\_\_\_

Does the center provide transportation? \_\_\_\_\_ If so, what is the charge?  
\_\_\_\_\_

Is the center licensed or certified if required by your state? \_\_\_\_\_

What is the staff-to-participant ratio? \_\_\_\_\_

Is it a safe and secured environment? \_\_\_\_\_

What types of social activities are offered? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Is there a choice provided of group and individual activities? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Is assistance offered with activities of daily living, such as toileting, eating or ambulation? \_\_\_\_\_

Are licensed health care professionals on staff and available on a daily basis? \_\_\_\_\_

Is help with personal care functions provided, such as bathing, shampooing or shaving? \_\_\_\_\_

Is assistance with taking prescription medications available? \_\_\_\_\_

Are health screens offered such as taking blood pressure or monitoring food and liquids? \_\_\_\_\_

Are meals and snacks provided? \_\_\_\_\_ If so, is there an extra charge?  
\_\_\_\_\_

Are accommodations made for special diets? \_\_\_\_\_

What types of exercises are offered — physical and mental? \_\_\_\_\_

What is your overall impression of the center? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

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## The National Adult Day Services Association (NADSA)

The National Adult Day Services Association is the most prominent nationwide organization of adult day centers. The site includes a national directory and a guide to choosing an adult day center which can be found at <http://www.nadsa.org/default.asp>. For more information about adult day centers call 866-890-7357 or access the main website at [www.nadsa.org](http://www.nadsa.org).

## National Association of Area Agencies on Aging (N4A)

N4A is the national organization of Area Agencies on Aging throughout the United States, which provide information and services for older adults and their caregivers. The website can be accessed at [www.n4a.org](http://www.n4a.org). This site allows you to directly connect to the *Eldercare Locator*.

## Useful Tools

Attached is a tool to help guide you in your search for an Adult Day Center.

- Adult Day Center Evaluation Form

### Endnotes

<sup>1</sup> *Adult Day Centers: The Facts*, National Adult Day Services Association, <http://www.nadsa.org/adsfacts/default.asp>, accessed via internet December 2006.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid.

<sup>3</sup> *Adult Day Care: One Form of Respite for Older Adults* ARCH Factsheet Number 54 National Respite Network & Resource Center.

<sup>4</sup> LivOn, *Adult Day Care: Care and Companionship All Day* via the Internet at: [www.livon.com/whatsnew/adc.html](http://www.livon.com/whatsnew/adc.html).

<sup>5</sup> [www.irs.gov](http://www.irs.gov).

<sup>6</sup> Murphy, Brugger, M., National Adult Days Services Association, National Council on the Aging, National Institute on Adult Daycare Standards and Guidelines (1997). *Standards and Guides for Adult Day Services*, pp. 65-66.





## *About the Authors of Since You Care®*

*Since You Care* guides are prepared by the MetLife Mature Market Institute in cooperation with the National Alliance for Caregiving and MetLife's Nurse Care Managers.

**MetLife Mature Market Institute®** is the company's information and policy resource center on issues related to aging, retirement, long-term care and the mature market. The Institute, staffed by gerontologists, provides research, training and education, consultation and information to support Metropolitan Life Insurance Company, its corporate customers and business partners. MetLife, a subsidiary of MetLife, Inc. (NYSE: MET), is a leading provider of insurance and other financial services to individual and institutional customers.

**MetLife Nurse Care Managers** are available to MetLife's long-term care customers and their caregivers to help identify and resolve care-giving questions and concerns through counseling and referral.

## **National Alliance for Caregiving**

Established in 1996, the National Alliance for Caregiving is a non-profit coalition of national organizations that focuses on issues of family caregiving across the life span. The Alliance was created to conduct research, do policy analysis, develop national programs and increase public awareness of family caregiving issues.

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*This booklet offers general advice, however, it is not a substitute for consultation with an appropriate professional. Please see a health care professional, attorney, or other appropriate professional when determining how the information and recommendations discussed in this booklet apply to your specific situation.*