

SUMMER ISSUE | JUNE/JULY 2021



Choose Well

Member Newsletter



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Health | Technology Solutions



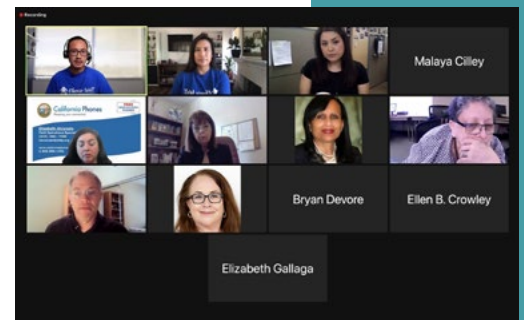
What's *INSIDE!*

- 02 Choose Well Member Advisory Meeting
- 03 Housing and Care Options for Older Adults
- 06 Facility Feature: Fredericka Manor

MEMBER COUNT

By HHSA region, this is how Choose Well membership is distributed countywide.

HHSA Region	Total in Region
Central	15
East	32
North Central	44
North Coastal	43
North Inland	52
South	16
County Total	202





Choose Well Member *Advisory Meeting*

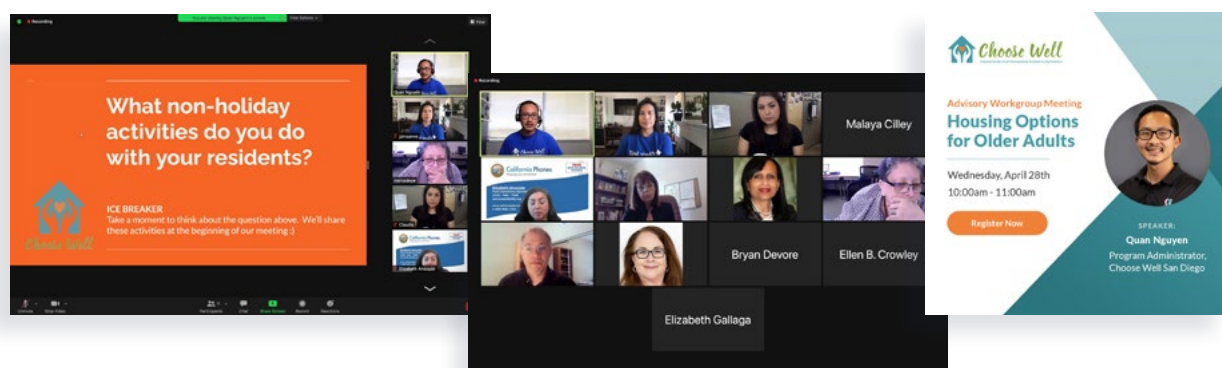
Choose Well held a Member Advisory Meeting on April 28, 2021. The meeting invited Choose Well Member RCFEs, resource navigators, and social workers to learn about housing options for older adults and network with professionals in the adult care field in San Diego. RCFE admin and staff were able to introduce themselves to social workers and share the activities they have for residents at their facilities.

Social workers and resource navigators learned the differences between assisted living,

independent living, and skilled nursing facilities so they are better able to refer their clients to the most appropriate older adult housing option. Attendees also had fun playing the price matching game with actual older adult housing facilities in San Diego.

Choose Well plans to record these Advisory Meetings in the future and publish them on the Choose Well website.

Thank you to everyone who joined our meeting!



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Housing & Care Options for Older Adults

There are many housing and care offerings available for older adults with different amenities, levels of care, and cost, depending on insurance coverage. This article discusses several common housing options, including independent living, assisted living, and skilled nursing.



Independent Living

Independent living communities can be single-family homes with multiple residents, or larger communities with many apartments, in which residents are required to be able to live safely by themselves. Older adults residing in an independent living community should require little or no assistance. These communities do not provide supportive services, or help with activities of daily living¹. A private room can range from \$700 to \$1,000 per month², usually not including meals. Caregivers are available through private pay, or through the state's In-Home Supportive Services (IHSS) program and subsidized by Medi-Cal, to provide scheduled non-medical care. A resident in an independent living home, whose health declines to the point where they need more advanced care, will have to find alternative housing.



Assisted Living

An assisted living facility refers to a special combination of housing, personalized supportive services, and health-related care designed to respond to the individual needs of those who require help with activities of daily living¹. Assisted living provides services such as three meals a day, medication management, and assistance with bathing, dressing, and laundry. In California, assisted living facilities that are licensed by the state are called Residential Care Facilities for the Elderly (RCFE). Single-family homes that have been converted into an RCFE are sometimes called “board and care” facilities, while larger communities with dozens to hundreds of apartment units can be marketed as a “retirement community” or “senior living community.” All RCFEs are regulated and licensed by [California's Department of Social Services](#) and receive regular, random inspections by the state and are held to rigorous licensing standards. Updated on a quarterly basis, Choose Well lists only licensed RCFEs in San Diego County and monitors compliance with the requirements that licensed facilities must follow.

Depending on the location, community, size of apartment, and number of services needed, a private room in San Diego County can range from \$3,200 to over \$8,000 per month³. Assisted living services are almost always private pay because it is considered a non-medical service, and therefore not covered by health insurance nor Medi-Cal. Under very limited circumstances, a Supplemental Security Income (SSI) participant may qualify for placement into a facility under [California's Assisted Living Waiver](#) (ALW) program.

Participating in the ALW program requires the facility to have a licensed nurse present, however most facilities in San Diego do not meet this requirement, resulting in few ALW approved facilities³. There are fewer than 50



approved facilities for the ALW program in San Diego County and most do not have immediate openings. For an updated list of facilities participating in the ALW program, refer to the following: [List-of-RCFE ARF-facilities.pdf](#) (ca.gov). Residents living with dementia require a facility that is approved to provide care for residents with dementia, which is often marketed as a “memory care” community. These facilities have additional features, such as perimeter alarms, and staff who have received more in-depth training on dementia care.



Skilled Nursing

A skilled nursing facility (SNF), also referred to as a “rehabilitation” or “acute care” center, provides 24-hour skilled nursing care, as well as related or rehabilitative services⁴. Because it is medical care, skilled nursing care is covered by Medicare/ Medi-Cal. It is not long-term care, however, as a stay is limited to a maximum of 100 days at a time. After that, the patient must remain out of a hospital or SNF for at least 60 days in order to be eligible for Medicare coverage again. This duration where a patient receives Medicare-covered services is called a “benefit period.” Patients who have used up their benefit and do not qualify for a benefit period renewal must pay out of pocket if they wish to stay at the facility. Skilled nursing can cost between \$300 to over \$500 per day⁵. Read more about Medicare coverage for SNFs [here](#).

Conclusion

It is not uncommon for an older adult to transition from independent living to assisted living, and finally to skilled nursing, as their health declines. Knowing the basic housing and care options in California may help make the process of finding appropriate care less stressful, allowing families to focus their efforts on asking prospective facilities the right questions and learning specific details that may impact a resident’s health later in life. Assisted living facility operators also benefit from understanding various housing options so that they can better assist their clients and families when the time comes for residents to transition to a different level of care.

Sources:

1. Senior Housing Definitions, www.caassistedliving.org/about-assisted-living/senior-housing-definitions/
2. ILA San Diego County Database: www.ilacalifornia.org/san-diego-county/listing-search-results/
3. Choose Well Database: www.choosewellsandiego.org/facility-search
4. Skilled Nursing Facilities, www.aging.ca.gov/Care_Options/Skilled_Nursing_Facilities/
5. 2020 Nursing Home Costs by State and Region, www.medicaidplanningassistance.org/nursing-home-costs/



Featured Community

Fredericka Manor's "Phone Tree" Keeps Residents Connected During the Pandemic and Beyond

Throughout the pandemic, innovation and creativity among Fredericka Manor Retirement Community residents and staff were at their peak. In fact, one resident-led idea made sure residents stayed socially engaged with each other and loved ones, a best practice that will foster new friendships beyond COVID-19 restrictions.

When Fredericka Manor Executive Director Craig Sumner suggested a resident phone tree at the beginning of quarantine, resident Grace Johnson immediately volunteered to organize it. All callers are residents, including Fredericka Club board members and committee chairs. Interested

residents can reach out to Grace at any time to participate. Currently, there are 20 resident callers.

Over the past year, callers average two to three calls each week to their new friends. "We check on each other's wellbeing, catch up on the latest family news and community happenings, offer encouragement, or just say a quick hello. I have learned so much about my neighbors!" Grace said. "There is one resident, who chats for an hour. He needs to talk, and we are here to listen."

New friendships have also formed from the phone tree. "Some callers are looking forward to having



dinner with the residents they have been calling once it is safe to do so,” Grace said.

As president of the resident-led Fredericka Club, Grace felt it was her responsibility to organize the phone tree project. She also sends out bi-weekly “pep” emails to callers. The emails encourage them to keep up with their calls and include suggested talking points such as current books, TV shows, movies, poems, and quotes from famous people.



“We need communication among residents during these trying times,” Grace added. “The phone tree is very important. Both the callers and the residents they are calling benefit from connection and meeting each other.”

“Now with the easing of pandemic restrictions, residents are looking forward to face-to-face gatherings, dining together and group activities with their new friends,” Grace said.



Fredericka Manor offers independent living in charming cottages or apartments, Truly Yours assisted living, specialized memory care, and skilled nursing and rehabilitation care at Fredericka Manor Care Center with no entrance fee! If you have any questions, or would like to consider moving into Fredericka Manor, call (619) 205-4115 or go online at FrederickaManor.org.



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For information on other programs and resources for older adults and people with disabilities, visit www.aging.sandiegocounty.gov or call 800-339-4661.



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