

chapter 4

MOVING YOUR LOVED ONE

Once the facility has been chosen, you can take steps to make the moving process less traumatic on the resident. First, plan the admission carefully. If you know the resident becomes very difficult to deal with in the late afternoon, plan the admission for mid-morning. Next, complete the admission paperwork before your loved one actually moves into the facility. This will allow you to spend the first few hours they are there with them, getting them settled and making them feel secure in their new living environment.

Bring along some familiar items for the resident, so that his or her room will feel more like home (but keep in mind that space is limited, especially in a semi-private room). Mark every piece of clothing with a permanent laundry marker. When a facility is washing clothes for 120 people, things occasionally end up in the wrong room, but that is less likely if the item is properly marked. If you are going to do your loved one's laundry, post a sign on the closet door to notify staff, and provide a laundry bag or basket where dirty clothes can be placed.

Keep in mind that the staff of the facility is just meeting your loved one for the first time. They do not know his or her likes or dislikes, or those little nuances that make providing care go more smoothly. The best way you can help your loved one is to tell the staff, in writing, as much information as possible about your loved one, including his or her likes and dislikes, typical daily schedule, pet peeves, and so on.

Get to know the people who are caring for your loved one. Most important, stay involved. Let everyone know how much you care

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and how committed you are to your loved one's care. Also understand you will not help your loved one by becoming anxious or emotional. Assure him or her that although this is not an ideal situation, you will be there to make it as painless as possible.