



# *Route 65's Checklist for Choosing an Independent Living Provider*

Choosing where to live can be difficult. Knowing what questions to ask when choosing an independent living home can help. This simple checklist will help you select an independent living home that you can have confidence in.

In addition to the items listed below, you should also consider checking whether the organization is Assurity certified (see the end of the document for more information).

	<b>What to ask</b>	<b>What you should look for</b>
<input type="radio"/>	Can I see a sample menu?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Meals should feature quality food and involve limited repetition.</li> <li>• Multiple menu choices should frequently be available.</li> <li>• Special dietary requirements can be accommodated.</li> </ul>
<input type="radio"/>	What kinds of activities are available?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• There are regular activities which take place at various dates and times.</li> <li>• Information about external community events should be made available to residents.</li> </ul>
<input type="radio"/>	How do residents share their feedback?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• There are regular opportunities for resident feedback on things like food, recreation, and maintenance.</li> <li>• This may include feedback mechanisms such as comment boxes, resident councils, surveys, and one-on-one meetings.</li> </ul>
<input type="radio"/>	What will I receive to prepare for the move?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• You should receive a comprehensive set of policies/protocols before moving in, this may take the form of a resident handbook and should include information about the following:               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Inspections</li> <li>○ Payments</li> <li>○ Repairs and maintenance</li> <li>○ Smoking</li> </ul> </li> </ul>

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Pets</li> <li>○ Resident conduct</li> <li>○ Parking</li> </ul>
○	What will happen if I need more support after I move?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● The independent living home should be able to clearly explain what kind of support they can offer a resident.</li> <li>● The organization may be able to offer support services a-la-carte, should a resident have health challenges or other needs. If so, staff should be able to provide approximate prices.</li> <li>● There should be a clear policy regarding under what circumstances a person would be required to move.</li> </ul>
○	What would the move-out process look like?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● There should be a written process in place regarding the moveout process, this should include things like inspections, notice required, deposit returns and the removal of belongings.</li> </ul>
○	What security measures are in place?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● There is a policy regarding when and how main entrances are secured.</li> <li>● There is an optional check-in process to ensure resident safety.</li> <li>● There is an emergency assistance procedure (this may include activating a call system, phoning 911, etc.).</li> </ul>
○	How do you prepare for an emergency?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● The independent living home should have an emergency preparedness plan in place.</li> <li>● All staff and residents should be familiarized with emergency procedures at onboarding/move-in.</li> <li>● Residents are reminded of emergency protocols twice a year (at minimum) and regular fire drills should take place.</li> <li>● Fire alarms should be tested monthly.</li> </ul>
○	Are things clean?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Practices should be in place to ensure appropriate cleanliness, including staff processes surrounding laundry, food services, housekeeping, and surfaces</li> </ul>
○	Do employees receive criminal record checks?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● All employees should receive criminal background checks before an employee is hired.</li> </ul>
○	Do you check new employee's references before they are hired?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● The organization should check references for all new employees.</li> </ul>
○	How do you protect against infection?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Employees should receive training on infection prevention and control, including hand hygiene, the use of personal protective equipment, not coming to work when sick, and sanitization of surfaces and other high touch areas.</li> <li>● Residents should be reminded about handwashing and respiratory etiquette on a regular basis.</li> </ul>

○	How is my personal information kept secure?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Your information should never be shared unless you or your representative says that it is okay. What information you are comfortable sharing and with whom (e.g., a family member), should be documented.</li> <li>• All information should be kept securely (e.g., under lock and key or password protected).</li> <li>• The organization should have privacy training for employees.</li> <li>• The organization should have a process for responding to a privacy breach, should one ever take place.</li> </ul>
○	How do you keep your employees safe?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The organization should be in good standing with WorkSafe BC.</li> <li>• There should be training for things like working with hazardous materials, such as certain cleaning supplies.</li> <li>• Regular risk assessments should be performed by the organization.</li> <li>• Employees should have the ability to identify problems, through avenues such as a Joint Occupational Health and Safety Committee.</li> </ul>
○	What if I have a complaint?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• There should be a complaints process that is easily available to residents.</li> </ul>

### What is Assurity?

The Assurity program was developed by [EngAge BC](#) to make it easier for seniors and their families to choose a home health or independent living organization that meets or exceeds industry standards. An Assurity home health certification means that the organization has the above items in place, along with additional criteria.

Before developing Assurity EngAge BC spoke to operators across the province to understand what it means to be a quality service provider. The Association also spoke to clients and family members about the things that were important to them when choosing an independent living home.

Visit [Route65.ca](http://Route65.ca) to find an Assurity approved home health provider in your community, or to learn more about [your options](#).

Have questions? Please contact [route65@engageseniors.ca](mailto:route65@engageseniors.ca).