

### **What is an assisted living residence?**

Assisted living residences (ALRs) are highly flexible, supportive housing communities that offer older adults apartment living, an active, social lifestyle, and staff support for activities of daily living (ADLs), the basic personal care activities necessary to care for one's self and to maintain independence, such as bathing, dressing, grooming, and mobility. Meal preparation, medication management, and transportation are among the other key services typically provided. These resident-centered, supportive services are designed to meet needs that are both regularly scheduled and unexpectedly needed.

These residences are the next logical step in the continuum of care for those adults who do not require complex medical care, but want some support in an environment that prioritizes freedom of choice, independence, and quality of life. Assisted living also can provide a structured setting for residents who are experiencing cognitive impairment, memory loss, or symptoms of Alzheimer's disease and related dementias.

### **What are the existing laws pertaining to assisted living?**

The Commonwealth of Massachusetts' Executive Office of Elder Affairs (EOEA) regulates assisted living residences by implementing Massachusetts General Law, Chapter 19D: *An Act Establishing Assisted Living Residences*. Regulations are found in 651 CMR 12.00 et seq. A variety of additional state laws and regulations pertain to assisted living residences as well, such as consumer protections, landlord-tenant processes, anti-discrimination and service delivery rules, to name a few. For more information, visit Mass-ALA's website [www.mass-ala.org](http://www.mass-ala.org) (Public Policy section.)

### **How many assisted living residences are there in Massachusetts?**

Currently, 240+ assisted living residences are certified by EOEA to operate in Massachusetts, providing over 15,000 apartments ("units") and serving over 16,000 residents. Nearly 25% of these individuals live in special memory care apartments that support those living with Alzheimer's disease or other dementias.

### **How is an assisted living residence different from a nursing home?**

An assisted living residence and a nursing home are different options available to older adults and those with chronic health conditions who can no longer live independently in the community. While both offer personal care services, assisted living residences provide resident-centered, apartment living for residents with freedom of choice, independence, and a quality of life experience often similar to previous living arrangements.

Personal care services offered in assisted living cover a broad range of activities of daily life to assist the resident in maintaining the highest level of dignity and independence possible. An individualized functional assessment and service plan are developed for each resident and are revised as new needs arise. The individualized assessment and service plan identify and monitor resident needs and implement plans to meet those needs.

Because assisted living staff is not permitted, per state regulations, to provide skilled nursing care services, a resident may, at their cost, bring in private services such as hospice or a visiting nurse to provide assistance with skilled care.