



305 WEST END

ASSISTED LIVING

THE NEW YORKER'S GUIDE TO MEMORY CARE IN MANHATTAN

What to consider when choosing an Alzheimer's disease or dementia care community for a loved one or client.

EXPLORE WHAT PROGRAMS MEMORY CARE COMMUNITIES TYPICALLY PROVIDE AND WHAT QUESTIONS YOU SHOULD ASK IN THIS COMPREHENSIVE GUIDE.



INTRODUCTION

Memory care communities are designed to offer seniors living with Alzheimer's disease and dementia support, safety, and a sense of purpose.

However, the decision to seek memory care for a loved one can be difficult for everyone involved. Concerns over safety and quality of life, as well as uncertainty about the future, are all common.

In addition, there are numerous luxury memory care communities located within New York City which can make choosing what is best for your loved one confusing.

This guide from 305 West End Assisted Living shares what to look for and what questions to ask when evaluating memory care communities in Manhattan.

WHAT TO LOOK FOR IN A MEMORY CARE COMMUNITY



When evaluating memory care communities, there are four primary pillars of care and service you should consider. The first is the overall safety and cleanliness of the community. The second is the expertise of the staff, followed by the personal and social enrichment opportunities offered to residents, and finally the extent and substance of the community's memory programs.

As you begin your search, keep in mind your loved one's preferences, as well as any special needs they might have. Also note that many memory communities have waiting lists, so starting your search sooner will give you more options to choose from.



Safety

Safety considerations become especially important as Alzheimer's disease progresses. Changes in the brain due to dementia can affect your loved one's safety, and may include poor judgment, confusion, and irrational behavior. Trouble maintaining balance and altered senses (i.e. changes in vision, depth perception, sensitivity to hot/cold temperatures) are also common during the middle and later stages of the disease.

When evaluating memory care communities, secured exits are important. However, you should also consider less obvious features like how the community is designed. For instance, is it easy to navigate so your loved one won't become lost? Is there plenty of natural lighting so your loved one can see as clearly as possible?

QUESTIONS TO ASK ABOUT SAFETY:

1. How is the community secured?
2. Are on-site medical services available?
3. How do you address disruptive behaviors?
4. Does the community have emergency alert systems?
5. Does the community have special features that are designed to support seniors with dementia?
6. Are hallways and common areas free of potential tripping hazards?

SAFETY AT 305 WEST END ASSISTED LIVING

Reflections is 305 West End's private memory care neighborhood for older adults living with Alzheimer's disease and other types of dementia.

Starting with two private floors that are electronic keypad-protected, safety has been woven into the design of Reflections. As a result, residents experience a comforting and familiar environment that enables them to safely participate in daily activities.



Experience and Expertise

Since memory care communities are regulated at the state level, training and certification requirements vary. It is a good idea to familiarize yourself with your state's licensing requirements as you continue your search. You should also take into consideration how long each community has been providing memory care services, as well as their commitment to ongoing staff education.

In addition to dementia-specific training, there are a variety of certifications available, which include becoming a certified dementia care practitioner (CDP). Staff members who receive this certification have completed extensive training and are committed to continuing education within the field.

QUESTIONS TO ASK ABOUT STAFF TRAINING AND EXPERTISE

1. How long has the community been providing memory care services?
2. Do any of the staff members hold special certifications, like certified dementia care practitioner?
3. Do staff receive ongoing training?
4. What is the staff-to-resident ratio?
5. What is the staffing ratio between day and night?
6. Does each resident have an individualized care plan? If so, who creates it?
7. How are staff trained to handle disruptive behaviors?
8. Are you able to care for residents with mobility challenges?
9. How often are families or guardians updated about a resident's health and well-being?

EXPERIENCE AND EXPERTISE AT 305 WEST END ASSISTED LIVING

305 West End Assisted Living is managed by a team that has overseen senior living communities throughout the tri-state area since 2000, and is fully licensed by the New York State Department of Health. The staff undergoes extensive industry education and ongoing training, which is reflected in the care they provide to residents.

The memory care recreation program at 305 West End is led by Nancy Sondag. She has over 20 years of experience providing creative arts therapy and recreation opportunities for individuals with dementia. Ms. Sondag is a Licensed Creative Arts Therapist, a Registered Drama Therapist, a Board Certified Trainer, a Certified Dementia Practitioner, a Certified Alzheimer's Disease Dementia Care Trainer, and a Certified Montessori Dementia Care Professional.

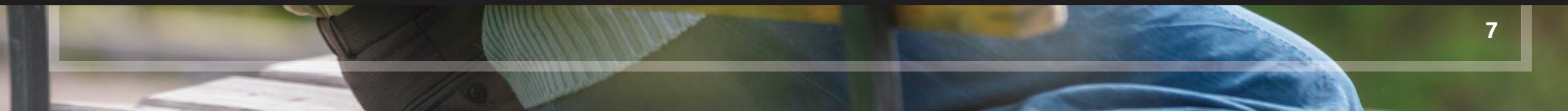
"I am privileged to be working with an extraordinary group of people who have lived amazing lives and now need our help. We learn from each other and find meaning and joy in our lives. I am proud of our Reflections staff and residents and the community that we have created."

**— NANCY SONDAG,
REFLECTIONS RECREATION COORDINATOR**



Social and Personal Enrichment

Isolation is a major concern for older adults, especially those living with Alzheimer's and dementia. Most memory care communities offer robust social calendars that include a variety of activities to help residents stay engaged. Enrichment programs at 305 West End are centered around the needs and interests of residents. 305 West End is fortunate to partner with some of New York's leading cultural institutions such as Juilliard, Steiner's, and the NYU Tisch School of the Arts to offer residents educational lectures, chamber concerts, drama presentations, and more.





"I often hear from residents, 'I'm so grateful for my friends here.' That's a big thing. They've made friends. There's a sense of community."

**— NANCY SONDAG,
REFLECTIONS RECREATION COORDINATOR**

QUESTIONS TO ASK ABOUT ENGAGEMENT AND ENRICHMENT

- 1.** Does your activity schedule offer diversity in programming?
- 2.** How do you encourage residents to participate in activities?
- 3.** Do you tailor activities to meet each resident's cognitive ability?
- 4.** Do you partner with local cultural institutions to provide programming?
- 5.** What events are the most popular?
- 6.** What do community outings look like?
- 7.** Do you listen to resident feedback when creating the activity schedule for the month?

Many memory care communities invest in life enrichment programs such as these at 305 West End Assisted Living:



ALZHEIMER'S FOUNDATION OF AMERICA (AFA)

In partnership with 305 West End Assisted Living, the AFA has developed "The Teal Room" initiative, which provides dementia-friendly activity programming to individuals living with dementia-related illnesses and their caregivers in the surrounding community.

"305 West End Assisted Living and their staff are passionate about high-quality care and improving the lives of families impacted by dementia."

- CHARLES J. FUSCHILLO, JR.,

ALZHEIMER'S FOUNDATION OF AMERICA PRESIDENT & CEO



marlene
meyerson jcc
manhattan EVERYDAY EXTRAORDINARY

THE MARLENE MEYERSON JCC MANHATTAN'S WECHSLER CENTER FOR MODERN AGING

This organization envisions an engaged and connected cohort of older adults who find deep meaning in community, who are treasured by the broader Jewish community for their wisdom, and who will develop the tools and attitudes to successfully transition through life as they age.



Memory Programs

There are many therapeutic treatment programs for those experiencing cognitive decline. Specific types of therapies, such as music and creative arts programs, have been shown beneficial to improving the quality of life for those with Alzheimer's and dementia.

THE HEALING POWER OF MUSIC

Research has demonstrated that music therapy can provide both emotional and behavior benefits for individuals with dementia. Musical memories are usually unaffected by Alzheimer's disease because the areas of the brain linked to these memories experience less damage. Music has also been shown to relieve stress, reduce anxiety and depression, and decrease agitation in people with dementia.

In the book *Musicophilia*, Dr. Oliver Sacks, a Professor of Neurology at New York University School of Medicine, mused that:

"Music... can lift us out of depression when nothing else can. It can get us dancing to its beat. But the power of music goes much, much further. Indeed, music occupies more areas of our brain than language does – humans are a musical species."

Music is transcendental, making it a key part of most memory care programs. When evaluating memory care communities, ask how they incorporate music into their programming. Is it individualized and central to the programs delivered to residents?

Memory Programs at 305 West End Assisted Living

At 305 West End Assisted Living, music therapy is an integral part of the memory care programs we offer. These music initiatives take advantage of the wealth of world-class talent in Manhattan. Some of the 305 West End music therapy partners include:

ORPHEUS REFLECTIONS

Orpheus Reflections was designed to give individuals living with dementia and their caregivers the opportunity to participate in intimate performances and socialize with Orpheus musicians in comfortable, accessible settings.

SFYS: SING FOR YOUR SENIORS

Sing For Your Seniors sessions are hour-long concerts featuring professional performing artists from Broadway and beyond. Residents enjoy entertainment and engagement through the universal language of music with songs from the Great American Songbook, Broadway, and Jazz.



BERKO MUSIC THERAPY

Experienced Board-Certified Music Therapists and Licensed Creative Arts Therapists work with Reflections memory care residents through virtual sessions. Their creative person-centered therapy provides residents with interactive music experiences that promote a positive sense of self.

CONCERTS IN MOTION

Concerts in Motion is a New York City-based 501(c)(3) not-for-profit organization. 305 West End residents enjoy Virtual Visiting Concerts online via Zoom. These concerts feature interactive performances by both professional and youth musicians in a wide variety of genres from Classical to Jazz, Broadway to Klezmer.

CREATIVE ARTS AND MEMORY

The creative arts are a wonderful outlet for individuals with Alzheimer's disease and dementia. Those who routinely participate in creative pursuits like painting, drawing, or creative writing, are less likely to be depressed or feel isolated.

Another added bonus – creative arts provide plenty of opportunities to practice decision-making skills.

An article published in the [International Journal of Environmental Research and Public Health](#) sums up the power of the arts nicely:

“There is a growing recognition that the arts can make a contribution to the quality of life of people living with dementia. This impact can be direct, by bringing emotional release or pleasure to the person affected. It can also be indirect, by giving carers a stronger sense of purpose, resolve, and commitment, or by making the wider community more compassionate and aware.”

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— INTERNATIONAL JOURNAL OF
ENVIRONMENTAL RESEARCH AND PUBLIC HEALTH

MEMORY PROGRAMS AT 305 WEST END ASSISTED LIVING

The 305 West End Reflections staff understands the unique needs of the brilliant people it serves. Ms. Sondag says, “Our location in the heart of Manhattan means we are able to offer continuing education programs with composers, musicians, and artists. Our residents want to feel vital, smart, engaged.”

305 West End’s creative arts program has also become a field site for New York University graduate students in drama therapy and Pratt Institute graduate students in dance/movement therapy. Two graduates of those programs are now credentialed and working in Reflections.

Additionally, 305 West End partners with The American Folk Art Museum to provide residents with a Folk Art Reflections program that brings the world of folk art to life for individuals with memory loss through conversation and guided artmaking. Trained museum educators bring touch objects, art materials, and fresh ideas to spark ideas and share opinions in these fun and interactive groups.

Be sure to ask about the creative arts programming offered by each memory care community you evaluate.

QUESTIONS TO ASK ABOUT MEMORY CARE PROGRAMS:

1. What types of programs do you offer that are designed for those with dementia?
2. Are you able to send me materials that describe your programs and/or a calendar of scheduled events?
3. Do you partner with any local creative arts agencies or organizations to create programming?
4. What experience and certifications does the head of your programming have?
5. Are you able to provide "bridge" services from earlier-stage dementia to the later stages? What does this look like and how does the care change?
6. What does a typical day look like for a resident here?

In Conclusion

The type of memory care programs offered - and the expertise of the staff coordinating it - will play a large part in the quality of life your loved one or client experiences.

Don't be afraid to contact your representative at the community as many times as you need. They are there to assist you in the decision-making process and should be willing to answer any questions you might have.

Luxury Memory Care in the Heart of Manhattan

We invite you to learn more about Reflections, 305 West End's private memory care program. With two private floors fully dedicated to residents living with memory-related cognitive disorders, our luxury program is staffed with a team of certified professionals trained in proven therapies to help aging adults manage memory loss – and do so with dignity and grace.



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To schedule a private tour,
call (646) 679-5880
or visit

305westendassistedliving.com/contact-us/.

305 West End Assisted Living
305 West End Avenue at 74th
New York, NY 10023