

*Glossary of terms used within Assisted Living: Terms (S - X) used within Assisted Living*



Washington State **800-361-0138**

State of Oregon **800-757-0921**

Southern California **800-603-5833**

**Call seven days a week from 8:30AM to 8:30PM**

CHOICE provides help to seniors and their families to select appropriate housing and care options, when needed.

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**Sandwich generation** - A person who is in a situation where they are providing help or support to one or more parents and is also caring for one or more children

**Schizophrenic** - A psychiatric diagnosis describing a mental disorder. Characterized by impairment of perception or reality with significant social dysfunction.

**Scooter** - A motorized wheelchair that looks more like a motorcycle than a chair

**Section 8** - Low income housing for disabled or elderly

**Septic (or Sepsis)** - Extremely common cause of death in the elderly. Symptoms of sepsis are often related to an infection. The immunological response that causes sepsis is a systemic inflammatory response in the body, causing coagulation of pathways. This causes dysfunction of the circulatory system, organ dysfunction and eventually death.

**Senior Center** - Community-based programs providing an array of services like social activities, nutrition, and educational and recreational opportunities for older adults.

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**Senior I & A** - Senior Information and Assistance

**Sexually inappropriate** - A person who touches himself/herself in public, exposes him/herself or says things which are considered to be something a person should not say to someone they don't know intimately. May also denote actions a person takes outwardly, attempting to touch or make sexual advances towards another person

**Sheltering** - Protecting from

**Shingles** - Herpes zoster. Painful blisters prevalent in people age 60+. Early symptoms include headache, sensitivity to light and flu-like symptoms without fever. May involve itching, tingling or extreme pain in the area of the rash. Not contagious, except when in the blister-phase. Once the rash develops crusting, the disease is no longer contagious.

**Sibling rivalry** - Two children (likely adult children) act in a way that is unsupportive and competitive in nature. When two people disagree strongly and have a history of not getting along, decisions and actions are typically not made in a favorable light

**Skilled Care** - Daily nursing and rehabilitative care that can only be performed by skilled medical personnel or under the supervision of skilled medical personnel. This type of care is typically needed 24 hours a day, requires a physicians order, and must follow a specified care plan. This type of care is usually rendered in a skilled nursing facility but may also be received in other types of facilities.

**Skin integrity** - Term used to describe the condition of the skin - is it dry, is skin hanging from the muscle, are there sores or wounds?

**Sleep Apnea** - Pauses in breathing during sleep. The phrase means "without breath." Can cause blood oxygen desaturation as well as neurological arousal (waking up abruptly).

**SNF** - Skilled Nursing Facility (a.k.a. Nursing Home, Transitional Care, Rehab, Nursing Care)

**Social Security** - A program for individuals age 62+ (or disabled) to draw money from funds they have placed in the Government's care during their working years

**Socialization** - Interacting with other individuals

**Speech therapy** - profession of assisting with diagnosis and rehabilitation of communication, swallowing.

**Spend down** - A period of time that a person is using their money to pay for services or goods before they qualify for entitlement

**Spiritual** - Concerning matters of belief in something greater than life, afterlife or the supernatural

**SSI** - Supplemental Security Income. This is "Medicare for disabled individuals"

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**Stabilize** - To bring to a point where there is little or no change

**Stage 1, 2 or 3 wound**

**Stage 4** (as it relates to cancer)

**Stand-by assist** - A person is present to monitor when a resident is standing up or transferring, but likely does not touch the person unless they become unsteady

**Stasis dermatitis** - Persons who have poor circulation can have fluids which accumulate in the limbs, which causes swelling.

**Stasis Ulcer** (a.k.a. bedsores)

**STAT** - medical term meaning "immediately."

**Stress incontinence** - because of a weakening of pelvic floor muscle, small amounts of urine can be released from coughing, laughing, sneezing, exercising or moving.

**Stroke** - rapid loss of part of the brain function due to interruption in the blood supply to the brain

**Stutter steps** - a symptom of a neurological disorder which causes shuffling or poor balance due to varied and random size of steps.

**Subsidized housing** - Housing which is government funded and offers a highly discounted monthly rent as a means of providing low or lower income individuals with housing

**Sun downing** - Agitation which occurs in people with dementia in the evening or early evening.

**Survey (as it relates to quality assurance or obtaining opinions)** - A written instrument to collect feedback from participants or customers, or to solicit feedback from potential customers. Most frequently used when a business or agency wishes to understand consumer preferences or to determine satisfaction with a product or service.

**Survey (as it relates to a senior care community)** - An annual or recurring visit from regulatory agencies to determine if a community is following state laws, their own procedures and policies and is also supporting residents' rights. Survey also includes safety measurements such as review of evacuation plans, drills, food handler permits, etc.

**Supplement (as it relates to COPES)** - A fee paid privately above and beyond what the resident (participation) and the state (Medicaid) pay the provider for care. Such a fee must be for something which is NOT covered already by Medicaid, or it is considered then Medicaid Fraud.

**Support group** - Three or more people who meet together to talk or give mutual support to one another. There may be a group leader, who is most often referred to as the Facilitator or Support Group Leader.

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**Swallowing difficulties** - An effect some diseases or a stroke can have on a person in regards to being able to ingest liquids or solid foods.

**Systemic disease** - One that affects a number of organs in the body as a whole

**Tax credit** - (not to be confused with a tax deduction) - Having the net effect of increasing net income

**Tax deduction** - (not to be confused with a tax credit) - an expense incurred by a taxpayer what is subtracted from gross income and results in a lowering of taxable income

**Tax deferred** - Tax has to be paid at a later date

**Tax exempt** - Free of tax

**Tax favored** - A financial instrument which gives a financial tax benefit to the issuer or the holder of the instrument. For instance, in retirement living, some communities are built with tax-favored bonds. The community must offer back something specific to the community in order to receive this tax-favored benefit - for instance, a community may be required to offer a certain number of living units to individuals who earn a lower income (please note - this is not LOW income) annual earnings

**Tax qualified** - A term used to describe retirement-type investments which grow tax free, until such time that the funds are accessed

**Tax sheltered** - A financial term which indicates that tax is not being assessed on an annual basis; however, when funds are taken out, they are taxed

**TBI** - Traumatic brain injury; may be from a work-related, auto accident or other unfortunate event which causes injury to the brain. Individuals with TBI may appear to have memory loss, may behave in the way a child would, and may be uninhibited by other people or themselves, thereby causing themselves to be at risk

**TCU (Transitional Care Unit)** - Intended to be a short-term transition location for a patient within an acute care setting (hospital). An area of the hospital which is focused on therapy and treatments rather than emergency care

**TDD (a.k.a. TDDY)** - Assistive phone device for people who are deaf or are hard of hearing. The device transfers speech into written words. The device also allows the person to type on a keyboard and an electronic voice sends out a reply from the person using the device

**Ted hose** - Supportive foot coverings which are extremely tight, intended to reduce edema (collection of water in the limbs) and to assist in reducing pain experienced in the legs

**Telephone reassurance** - A telephone call to check in on someone to be certain that they are doing well

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**Telephony** - Technology having to do with the telephone; for instance, in-home care uses this technology to have caregivers "clock in" when they arrive at a client's home by dialing a phone number and then entering a series of codes or information

**Tenant in common** - a form of real estate ownership where two or more persons or entities have an undivided interest in an asset, where ownership shares are not required to be equal and where ownership interests can be inherited.

**Terminal** - A disease or illness which cannot be treated to return a person to wellness

**Testate** - Dying with a legally valid will in place.

**Thickener** - Substance placed into liquids to help individuals who easily aspirate (choke) on thin liquids

**Thromboembolism** - frequently called simply an "embolism" or blood clot

**TIA's** - Mini-strokes

**Tinnitus** - Ringing in the ears

**Toileting program** - A schedule intended to be of help to an individual who is incontinent. By taking an individual or by reminding an individual to visit the bathroom every two hours or on a specific routine, it is possible to manage incontinence more effectively

**TPN** - Nutrition given through the nose

**Transfer assist** - Help getting from one place to another; whether it be from a bed to a chair, from one chair to another chair; from a wheelchair to a commode, etc. Transfer assistance is provided to people who have difficulty standing on their own, or who may easily pass out when standing up on their own. It is also provided to people who have compromised circulation or diseases which affect the muscles

**Transfer pole** - A beam from floor to ceiling placed next to a bed or chair. This is an assistive device which allows a person to self transfer (for instance, get out of bed on their own by using their arms rather than their legs)

**Transition Period** - The time it takes for a person to become accustomed to their new living environment and begin to develop new routines of familiarity

**Transitional Care** - This phrase is typically used for skilled nursing care which is intended to be short-term and rehabilitative in nature. This care may be offered in a section of an acute setting (hospital); or within a skilled nursing facility. The patient is most often recuperating from surgery, illness or episode of a disease. The intent is to be discharged to leave this care setting within a few days to several months time period

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**Trapeze** - An assistive device used by a person who needs to hold on to something in order to sit up in bed or to be able to elevate oneself

**Trial period** - A testing time to determine if something is going to work out

**Trust** - A legal document which places real, and perhaps personal, property in the name of a "non-existing" entity. For instance: The Trust of Mrs. James Smith. All property is still controlled by the person named in the trust document; however, the real and personal property are not owned in the actual name of Mrs. James Smith, but rather in the name of "The Trust of Mrs. James Smith."

**Under the table** - Payment made unethically or made to avoid paying taxes

**Urge Incontinence** - involuntary loss of urine without feeling the need to urinate

**Urologist** - A physician specializing in the bladder

**Urostomy** - A stoma, which is an artificial opening into the urinary system.

**UTI** - Urinary tract infection (many people misspell this as "track") A bacterial infection that affects any part of the urinary tract. Most common type of bladder infection is called cystitis (an inflammation of the urinary bladder)

**Utilization review** - A process of looking at how certain medical services are requested and performed. This term is used to define how medical professionals are effectively using resources to resolve problems or to take preventative measures.

**VA Benefit** - An entitlement program provided to individuals who have served in the US military at least one day during active duty time. This program is intended for individuals who require care services in a care setting. The benefit is not available for in-home care at this time

**Vascular Dementia (a.k.a. Multi-infarct dementia)** - written as VD; refers to a group of syndromes caused by different mechanisms all resulting in lesions on the brain.

**Vegan** - A strict type of diet where the person eats no meat, fish, eggs or any product from an animal

**Ventilator** - An electrical device which assists a person to breathe

**Viatical Settlement** - A cash payout on a life insurance policy before a person dies

**Vitals** - Blood pressure and pulse

**Void** - To urinate

**WAC (not the Washington Athletic Club!)** - Washington Administrative Code, also known as laws

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**Wanderguard** - This is a brand name of an alarm system designed to alert care givers when a person has crossed a path or opened a door or window

**Wandering** - People who are confused walk about, not knowing what they are doing or what they are seeking

**Well spouse** - The person who does not require care, and is likely remaining in the home

**Western State** - A mental institution located in Tacoma. Where people go who have severe mental illness, psychosis or mania which cause them to be a threat to themselves or to other people.

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