



# HOUSTON COUNTY

611 Vista Drive  
Caledonia, Minnesota 55921

---

## Topics on this page:

- Thinking about nursing homes?
- What is Long Term Care Consultation?
- Who can Receive a Consultation?
- What will the consultant recommend?
- Voluntary or mandated?
- Is there help to pay for services?
- Who is responsible to arrange for consultation?
- **Contact Information**

## Thinking about nursing homes?

There may be an alternative! For many elderly people and their families, the possibility of moving into a nursing home is a very emotional issue and complicated decision. If you or a family member are facing that decision, a consultant can help you decide whether placement in a nursing home is necessary. You may be able to delay nursing home placement by choosing other healthcare options.

## What is Long Term Care Consultation?

Long Term Care Consultation is an evaluation of your actual needs and preferences. The professional consultant considers your health, financial situation and the availability of alternative services in your community.

Consultation is done by a public health nurse and a social worker. Your physician may choose to be involved. Family members, neighbors, existing home care providers, local service agency staff, and hospital nurses or social workers may also be consulted. They will work together to help you determine how you can continue to live most independently.

## Who can receive a consultation?

Anyone can request Long Term Care Consultation. There is no charge for this service. Anyone entering a certified nursing home or boarding care home will have their needs and preferences reviewed by a Long Term Care Consultant. Any senior wanting to plan ahead for needed services may contact Houston County Public Health to discuss long term care options.

## What will the consult recommend?

After your needs have been identified and resources evaluated, the consultant will make a recommendation. The recommendation will either say that a nursing home is appropriate for you or will develop a plan to provide the services you need to remain in your community. That plan may suggest moving to an alternate housing setting, instead of a nursing home. The consultant is

responsible for helping you plan services to meet your needs and for connecting you to agencies that provide the services you need. The consultant will regularly check back with you to see if your need or services have changed.

The consultant will let you know which services are available in Houston County. Some of the services you may be offered are: Homemaking; Home Health Aide; Foster Care; Respite Care; Adult Day Care; Personal Care; Case Management, Chore Services; Transportation; Nursing Care; Meals on Wheels; Senior Companions; Alternative Housing; Counseling and Referral Services.

A combination of these services in the home or in assisted living often cost less than the cost of care in a nursing home. The consultant will review these options with you, along with the costs of these services.

## **Voluntary or mandated?**

The elderly person makes the decision whether to remain in the community or enter a nursing home. The individual may choose not to follow the consultant's recommendation. Even if home care or assisted living is recommended the applicant has the right to choose nursing home placement instead.

## **Is there help to pay for services? Yes.**

***Alternative Care*** and ***Elderly Waiver*** funds are available to help pay for community service if you choose that option. The consultant will determine whether you qualify either for payment by ***Medical Assistance (MA)*** or would be eligible for the *Alternative Care* program. To receive services under the *Alternative Care* program one must meet certain income and assets guidelines. However, most people who are eligible for MA within 180 days after nursing home admission will qualify for the *Alternative Care* program. If you are "180 day eligible," the team will use a ***sliding fee*** scale to determine your share of the costs for the alternative services until you become eligible for Medical Assistance. MA clients will receive alternative services at no charge.

To receive services funded through *Alternative Care* and *Elderly Waiver* you must have Long Term Consultation to review preferences and determine plan of care.

## **Who is responsible to arrange for consultation?**

When you apply to a nursing home, they will ask you or your family to contact your local Long Term Care Consultant, or, with your consent, will contact the county agency directly to arrange for the service. Seniors themselves, family members, physicians, neighbors, or hospitals may also request consultation.

When you need Long Term Care Consultation, please call Houston County Public Health at (507) 725-5810. Our helpful staff are ready to answer your questions about choices and services in Houston County.