

## LIVING

# Continuing care facility a choice worth exploring

**E**ighty-four percent of home owners over the age 65 have paid off their mortgages. If you are one of those, you might think that it would be less expensive and more financially secure to stay in your current home and not consider a continuing care retirement community (CCRC).

According to Ken Dychtwald, CEO of Age Wave, this is another myth concerning CCRCs.

Even if your home is paid for, there are a number of other expenses that need to be considered.

After moving into our current home, we have had the exterior and interior painted, replaced the roof, gutters, heating and cooling system, and the hot-water heater.

All are normal significant expenses for an aging home. The day-to-day expenses like electric, gas, water, insurance and taxes must be factored in as well.

"Living in a CCRC can offer a cost-effective lifestyle and can represent a sound investment in your future," Dychtwald said. "It can also provide



**Strategic Aging**  
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you with more predictable costs and offer greater financial piece of mind."

After you pay the entrance fee, the CCRC will have a set list of fees for whatever services you select.

Entrance fees vary and some may be returned.

Living on your own, if you do not have long-term care insurance, you may be faced with yearly fees from \$40,000 to \$80,000 for the care you need.

The monthly fees at a CCRC often include full prepayment for assisted living, memory support and skilled nursing care, if needed.

"It would be easy to get any care I might need at home," is also a myth. In reality, care at home can be challenging to arrange, complicated and time-consuming to manage and costly.

I have a friend recovering from hip

replacement surgery. She requires nurse visits, a therapist, and a home health aide. Fortunately, her neighbors are assisting with meals and household assistance. All this would be seamlessly provided in a CCRC.

"Almost two-thirds of all Americans will need some type of long-term care after they reach age 65, but only one-third believe that they will need such care," the Dychtwald study said.

"Eighty percent of elder care is by family members, yet most people say that they do not want to be a burden on their family," Dychtwald said.

The National Alliance for Caregiving reports that there are an estimated 66 million Americans providing care for a family member.

Selecting a CCRC can eliminate that burden and ensure that you have a continuum of professional care.

Dychtwald interviewed one CCRC resident who said, "It is the best thing you can do for your children, because you've already put in place all the systems to handle the problems that are going to come up, rather than asking

your kids to do that. It's a great gift to the next generation to have put that all in place."

The final myth is that CCRCs are filled with old people who are sick and dying.

Why do we have this view? It could be that your only experience was a visit to a nursing home to visit a grandparent who had had a stroke and was surrounded by similar patients in wheelchairs.

That image is not life in a CCRC. When I directed the ASU Gerontology Program, many of my colleagues and I offered classes at CCRCs. The CCRC, on whose board I serve, has three restaurants, a bar, fitness center, a hobby room and a number of other amenities within walking distance of all residents.

Next week: What do residents have to say?

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