



Assisted Living vs. Short-Term Rehabilitation in Skilled Nursing

Making sense of care options helps families choose the right path for recovery, ongoing support, and peace of mind.

Skilled Nursing vs Assisted Living

Assisted Living focuses on support and independence, while Skilled Nursing provides medical care and therapy services with 24/7 clinical oversight.

What Is Assisted Living?

Provides medically stable residents help with activities of daily living such as bathing, dressing, and medication management in a home-like community focused on independence and social engagement.

What is Skilled Nursing?

Skilled nursing is licensed medical care provided by nurses and clinical staff. It includes medication management, wound care, IV therapy, clinical monitoring and assistance with daily activities. It can be short-term for rehabilitation or long-term for ongoing medical care, depending on the individual's needs.

Category	Assisted Living (ALF)	Skilled Nursing (SNF)
Level of Care	Non-medical supportive care	24/7 medical care
Clinical Services	Limited (med administration, coordination of care)	Extensive (IVs, wound care, therapy, clinical monitoring)
Staffing	Caregivers, limited nursing	Licensed nurses 24/7
Typical Resident	Medically stable with predictable need for assistance with activities of daily living	Medically complex due to post-hospital recovery or ongoing illness
Length of Stay	Long-term residential	Short-term rehabilitation or long-term care
Environment	Apartment-style, social	Clinical, structured
Focus	Independence and lifestyle	Medical stabilization and recovery
Cost	Private pay or individual long-term care insurance	May be covered by medical insurance for short term rehabilitation

Simple Rule

- If someone needs help with living, assisted living is appropriate.
- If someone needs medical care, skilled nursing is the right level of care.

Skilled Nursing vs Short-Term Rehabilitation

Skilled Nursing refers to the level of medical care and setting, while Short-Term Rehabilitation describes the goal of care, which is recovery and returning home. These often occur together, but they are not the same.

What is Short-Term Rehabilitation in Skilled Nursing?

Short-term rehabilitation is a stay in a skilled nursing community that is a temporary, goal-focused recovery program designed to help individuals regain strength, mobility, and independence after surgery, illness, or injury. The stay is managed by an interdisciplinary team of professionals. The team including physicians, nurses, social workers and therapists (physical, occupational, and speech.)

Category	Skilled Nursing	Short-Term Rehabilitation
Primary focus	Ongoing medical care and monitoring	Recovery after illness, injury, or surgery
Length of stay	Short-term or long-term	Temporary (days to weeks)
Goal	Maintain health and safety	Restore independence and return home
Typical residents	Chronic or complex medical needs	Post-hospital recovery
Therapy intensity	Moderate/supportive	High, goal-oriented therapy
Discharge plan	May be permanent	Planned discharge home

How They Overlap

Many individuals receive short-term rehabilitation in a skilled nursing facility. In this case, the facility provides the medical care, while the rehab program provides the recovery plan.



How Is Assisted Living Paid For?

- Private pay (monthly rental and care fees)
- Long-term care insurance (if applicable)
- **Not covered by Medicare**

Ideal for individuals who are medically stable and need personal care rather than continuous medical treatment.

How Is Short-Term Rehab in Skilled Nursing Paid For?

Typically, the stay is paid by Medicare or Medicare replacement Insurance. The insurance benefit for length of stay is based on resident's ongoing progression toward meeting the established recovery goals.

Coverage is short-term and medically driven, based on physician orders and progress.

Choosing the Right Care

The right level of care depends on medical needs, safety, recovery goals, and physician recommendations. Our team is here to guide you every step of the way.



As part of Liberty Senior Living—with over 150 years of trusted experience—The Templeton of Cary and Swift Creek at Templeton offer Independent Living, Assisted Living, and Memory Support services all on one campus. Residents enjoy comfortable surroundings, personalized support, and an engaging lifestyle.

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For Templeton residents who require skilled nursing care, Bloomsbury at Hayes Barton Place offers priority access to skilled nursing and short-term rehabilitation services. Whether for short-term recovery or ongoing support, residents can feel confident in a seamless continuum of care.

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