



How are Personal Care and Assisted Living Different?

Before 2011 in Pennsylvania, Assisted Living and Personal Care were pretty much synonymous, and communities used them interchangeably to describe a level of care where people wished to live independently but needed help with activities of daily living. However, in 2011, the Pennsylvania Department of Public Welfare Office of Long-Term Living began licensing Assisted Living facilities (referred to by the state as ALRs or Assisted Living Residences) and Personal Care Homes separately based on a few, small differences.

Because of this, people looking into Assisted Living or Personal Care for themselves or their loved one sometimes don't fully understand what differentiates them until it is further explained.

Here are the main differences between an Assisted Living Residence (ALR) and a Personal Care Home (PCH):

According to the Office of Long-Term Living, Assisted Living residences are different from Personal Care homes in 3 ways: concept, construction, and level of care.

1. **Concept:** ALRs follow the concept of allowing an individual to "age in place," which is a popular senior living industry term that means, regardless of the level of care becomes needed, the resident will not need to relocate to a different facility to receive it. However, continuing care retirement communities who offer Personal Care, like Phoebe, also offer every level of care at each community, applying this concept to their Personal Care offerings as well.
2. **Construction:** PCHs may have shared bedroom arrangements, while ALRs may not. ALRs also must offer private, locking bathrooms, and kitchenette accommodations. This does not mean that all PCHs only offer shared rooms, which is why touring various facilities is important. All four of Phoebe's Personal Care communities offer private rooms.
3. **Level of Care:** The most evident difference between ALRs and PCHs is the availability of an increased level of care available if it's needed. An ALR must provide skilled nursing for a resident, on-site, when their need becomes too great for just assisted living services. All of Phoebe's PCHs offer skilled nursing care at the same facility, eliminating the need for the person to move to another location.

It is important to recognize that, while state regulations clearly describe the differences between ALRs and PCHs, there are many PCHs, like Phoebe's, that offer services nearly identical to those offered in assisted living facilities.

Phoebe's [Allentown](#), [Berks](#), [Richland](#), and [Wyncote](#) communities offer every level of care along with private apartment arrangements in Personal Care. The best way to identify which is best suited to your needs is to take a personal tour of the facility. You can [inquire about our Phoebe communities](#) at any time, or call 610-435-9037.