Sample Guidelines for Transitioning

**All highlighted areas need to be adapted to community’s language**

There are a number of reasons why it might be necessary for an aging (religious) to leave a community that has been his home for many years. Transitions are best where there is a place of hope to which a person can move.

Transitions are also best tolerated when the man is accepting of and ready for the move and is in relatively good health. For many older (religious), aging is a particularly difficult time because they find themselves with little to do after a lifetime of busy apostolic life. Concrete plans for part time ministry, leisure, hobbies and spiritual renewal should be encouraged. Devoting the annual retreat to asking the Lord where he is leading us as we age is appropriate. It is wise to consider this transitioning process as early as 40 or 50 years of age. Men should be encouraged to consider possibilities for their future. What leisure time activities, hobbies, and other ministries is a man called to in the future?

1. It is important to consider that changes in older (religious) should not be attributed to old age. Although decline does occur with aging, many of the changes that occur can be reversible. Appropriate assessment and treatment is essential to be sure that there is no underlying medical problem causing the change.
2. Common criteria that may indicate a need to transition to another setting.
3. Illness that leaves the individual (religious) incapable of independent living
4. When the day to day care needs of the individual (religious)exceeds the ability of his current community to serve its assigned apostolate
5. Gradual functional decline noted in any one or more of these areas of self-care
6. Ability to bathe and dress self
7. Ability to use the toilet and manage any incontinence
8. Ability to get to meals or prepare meals if needed
9. Ability to walk independently, with assistive devices if needed (cane, walker, or scooter)
10. Ability to manage own medication
11. When there is a concern expressed from others in the community for the member’s safety in moving about or presence in the community
12. Problems with memory
13. Weight loss
14. Disheveled or unclean appearance
15. Frequent need of medical or nursing assistance
16. Onset of unusual behavior that is uncharacteristic for that man
17. Ideally, after dialog between the man and his Superior,( the Province Health Care Representative) can assist superiors in planning for the care of men. It is possible that adaptations in the current environment can assist a man to remain an active member in that community. Short-term options with a Home Health Agency and/or respite stays at( the Province retirement community )could be considered, in addition to the decision for a permanent move to (the Province retirement facility.)
18. When it is decided that transitioning for health reasons is necessary the following is a list of steps that can be taken.
19. The Superior has a responsibility to assist the man in discerning an alternate community assignment that will optimize his vowed life as (religious). If the above criteria are met, in most cases this will indicate a transition to (the Province retirement community.)
20. The Superior would consult with (the Province Health Care Representative).
21. The Superior would then contact (the Director of Province Health Care) to ascertain room availability at (the Province retirement community).
22. The Director of Health Care would then make the necessary contacts with the new Superior, facility intake person, and new physician if needed.
23. The local Superior and the man would determine the best date for the move.
24. The local Superior would then request a Mission letter from the Provincial.
25. During this transition phase the sending community should make every effort to assist the man in telling his family, colleagues, and friends.
26. When it comes time to move it is preferable that someone from his sending community should accompany him to the new community and assist the man in settling in. This is an important step so that the man who is moving does not feel dropped off and abandoned.
27. Within reason, every care should be taken to ensure that a (religious) take his personal belongings with him to the new community. Special care should be accorded to significant mementos, especially photographs, etc.