



**Department for
the Aging**

Guide to Social Adult Day Care

Social adult day care (SADC) facilities can be resources for individuals seeking socialization and other services whose needs cannot be met at an older adult center (OAC). Read on for more information and some tips on selecting an SADC.

SADCs vs. OACs

What is an older adult center (OAC)?

There are more than 300 OACs and affiliated sites located throughout the five boroughs that provide healthy meals, fun activities, classes, fitness programs, and social services. OAC membership is free and open to all New Yorkers ages 60 and older. Both in-person and virtual activities are designed to meet the needs of members. Read more about OACs and how to find one [here](#).

What is a social adult day care (SADC)?

An SADC is a structured program that provides functionally impaired adults of any age with socialization, supervision and monitoring, personal care, and nutrition in a protective setting. A person with a functional impairment needs the assistance of another person in toileting, mobility, transferring, and/or eating, or needs supervision due to cognitive and/or psycho-social impairment. SADCs are meant to serve people needing a higher level of care than OACs can provide but are also different from adult day health care programs in that they do not provide any medical services. SADCs are not free, but many participants have their membership covered by a [managed long term care](#) plan.

How do I find a social adult day care?

If you believe that your needs or those of a person you care for cannot be met by an OAC, consider an SADC. All SADCs operating in New York City must register with the New York City Department for the Aging. You can search for a registered SADC in NYC [here](#). Below are some tips on choosing an SADC for yourself or a loved one.

- Many people have their SADC attendance covered by their [managed long term care](#) plan (MLTC). If you are covered by an MLTC and want it to pay for your SADC, **contact your MLTC** to ask if you're eligible and which SADCs have contracts with them.

- **Visit.** Before signing up to attend a SADC, visit it, ideally multiple times, including at least once when the SADC is not expecting you. Before you visit, think about questions about what's important to you that you might want to ask SADC staff and participants. Look for the following:

1. **Adequate staffing, monitoring, and supervision.** SADCs should have adequate staff to provide participants with substantial assistance with tasks like eating and mobility. Typically, this ratio of staff to participants is 1:7. If the participants have higher needs—for example, if some have dementia—the ratio may be more like 1:5. Observe the staff who are present during your visit. Are there enough of them to serve participants? Are they actively monitoring and engaging with participants? Are they encouraging and stimulating participants to interact with each other? Do they seem professional, kind, and supportive? If you or your loved one will need to have a home health care aide attend with you, will the SADC allow that?
2. **Structured social, intellectual, cultural, educational, and physical group activities.** SADCs should provide all of the above, and these should be led by a staff member or volunteer and based on participants' interests and capabilities. If you visit an SADC and do not see structured activities occurring, but rather just participants watching videos or chatting among themselves, the SADC may not be providing the services that it is supposed to.
3. **Nutritious meals for participants at normal meal times and snacks and liquids at other appropriate times.** SADCs must generally also provide special menus to meet dietary needs arising from health requirements, religious requirements, or ethnic backgrounds of eligible individuals. Try to visit during breakfast or lunch and be sure to sample the food!
4. **A safe, clean, accessible, and orderly facility.** Check that the SADC does not seem overcrowded and that bathrooms, dining tables, and other areas look clean.
5. **Qualified, caring, and present leadership.** An SADC should have a director who understands the services that SADCs are supposed to provide to their participants and has adequate experience and education to make sure participants are well served. The director should spend most of their time on site, actively supervising other SADC employees. Ask to meet with the director when you visit. If they are not present or cannot answer your questions about the SADC, this is a good indication that they are not providing adequate supervision and guidance.
6. **Tailored service plans for each participant.** The services that each participant receives are supposed to be based on an individualized service plan that the SADC creates within 30 days of a participant's admission with the participation of the participant and, if necessary, their authorized representative. Ask the director about the SADC's procedure for creating

service plans. Does it sound thoughtful and thorough? What sorts of goals do they set for participants, and how do they measure whether participants have reached those goals?

7. **Additional services to meet participants' needs.** If you or your loved one would need additional services, such as transportation to and from the SADC, enhancement of daily living skills (such as using transportation, cooking, or handling personal finance), caregiver assistance, or case coordination and assistance, ask about the SADC's ability to meet those needs. Who provides transportation, and how are those providers vetted? What does the SADC do to facilitate respite for caregivers? What sorts of referrals to other services does the SADC make?
8. **Participants who look happy and engaged.** Participants should generally be participating in activities or socializing with others. Try to speak to some participants, and ask if they like the SADC and any other questions you have.
9. **If you start attending an SADC and realize it's not right for you, don't be afraid to change.** Talk to your managed long term care plan about other SADCs that they have contracts with, and be sure to visit and gather information about any other SADCs you're considering.
10. **If you have a complaint about an SADC, you can submit it [online](#), by calling 311, or by emailing sadc-ombuds@aging.nyc.gov.**