
What to look for when choosing a care home

It is sometimes difficult to remember all the things you want to ask when visiting a care home so the list below can be used as a guide to prompt you.

HOMES DETAILS

Name of home:	
Address:	
Telephone no:	
Date of visit:	
Who you met/position:	

THE LOCATION

Is the home in the right location for you?	
Can relatives and friends easily visit?	
Is the home easily accessible by public transport?	
Is there a car park for you to use?	
Is the home close of local shops and other amenities?	

FIRST IMPRESSIONS

Is the outside area well kept and tidy?	
Is the home and reception area welcoming?	
Is the home odour free?	
Is the home clean and well maintained?	
Are staff friendly and welcoming?	

THE ATMOSPHERE

Does the atmosphere feel welcoming?	
Do the staff appear knowledgeable?	
Is everyone's dignity and privacy being respected?	
Are relatives and friends encouraged to visit?	
Are visitors welcome?	
Does the home feel homely?	

THE BEDROOM

Does the home offer the type of bedroom you want?	
Does the home offer single or shared rooms?	
Are you able to look at an available bedroom?	
Is the bedroom clean and bright?	
Does the bedroom have ensuite facilities?	
Is there a nearby toilet and bathroom?	
What furniture is provided by the home?	
Can i bring some of their own possessions?	
Does the room have a TV point?	
Is there a telephone point or can one be installed?	
Does each room have a nurse call system?	
Do the bedrooms include a fire alarm?	
Can you change rooms if you want to?	
Can you have my own room key?	

THE FACILITIES

Does the home have suitable facilities for your needs?

Are there lounges or other areas where you can relax?

Does the home have a number of bathrooms with showers or specialist baths?

Is there a lift serving all floors?

Does the home provide easy access for people in wheelchairs?

Are there handrails around the home?

Are there accessible gardens?

Are there regular visits from hairdressers, dentists, opticians?

Is the home safe and secure?

Are you offered a trial stay e.g. to visit for lunch or to spend an afternoon at the home?

Is there evidence of independence being maintained where possible?

Can you choose when to get up, what time to go to bed and when to have a bath?

THE CARE

Will you be assessed prior to admission to ensure your needs can be met?

Is the home equipped to handle a variety of needs?

Will you have access to all the specialist equipment you need?

What type of care is provided at the home?

Are residents registered with the local GP Surgery / dentist / optician? How often do they visit?

Are residents and relatives encouraged to contribute to care plans?

Are care plans reviewed regularly?

Are residents encouraged to remain as independent as possible?

THE STAFF

Will I have a keyworker?

What training do the staff receive?

Does the Manager give you confidence?

Are staff with the residents in the lounge areas?

Do staff interact well with residents e.g. show respect, knowledge of the residents?

Do the residents seem occupied and engaged?

DINING SERVICES

Is there a separate dining area?

Is there a current menu on display?

Is there a choice of menu at all meal times?

Can you choose the time you have your meals?

Can meals be taken in your room?

Are there snacks and drinks available at all times?

Is food freshly prepared in the kitchen?

Does the cook regularly discuss menu preferences?

Are special diets catered for?

Is help available to assist with eating?

ACTIVITIES

- Is there a regular activities programme?
- Will you be consulted on the activities?
- How do staff find out about your hobbies and interests?
- Are there individual activities available?
- How are your religious needs met?
- Are special events such as anniversaries and birthdays celebrated?
- Are there regular exercise opportunities?
- Does the home display details and photographs of recent activities?
- Are you encouraged to retain their independence?
- Can you help in the garden if you wish to?

POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

- Is the home's statement of purpose available?
- Does the home have a philosophy of care?
- Are quality audits carried out in the home?
- Is there a regularly residents meeting?
- Did you see an example of a contract?
- Is it clear what is included in the fee and what items are extras?
- Approximate cost of personal care extras eg. Laundry, hairdressing etc
- What are the Monthly fees?
- Does the home make available their latest inspection report?

