



Choosing a care home

A Contemplation Guide



Home name:

Date of visit:



Choosing a care home

This checklist is designed to help you think about what is important to you when choosing a care home for yourself or a loved one. We hope it provides useful suggestions on what to ask and look out for when you visit any care home.

Location

- Is the home in the right location?
- Can the home be reached easily by relatives and friends who will be visiting?
- Is the home close to local amenities?
- Does the home have adequate car parking?
- Is the home easily accessible by public transport?

First impressions

- Is the outside of the home well kept and tidy?
- Is the home clean and well maintained?
- Are the staff friendly and welcoming?
- Do residents appear happy and content?
- Are you offered refreshments during your visit?

Personal care

- Does the home provide the right type of care for your needs?
- How often are care needs reviewed?
- Are residents and relatives encouraged to be involved in the decisions made about their care?
- Is there a registered doctor for residents to see?
- Do health care professionals such as dentists, opticians, chiropodists and physiotherapists visit the home?

- Does the home offer complementary therapies?
- Are relatives advised immediately if a resident is taken ill?
- Does the home have suitable equipment and facilities such as baths, hoists, electrically operated beds and wheelchairs?
- Is there a hairdresser based at the home or one that visits on a regular basis?

Staff

- Do staff appear to interact well with residents?
- Do staff appear to respect residents' privacy and dignity?
- Do staff receive regular, appropriate training?
- Does each resident have one member of staff in particular who is responsible for their care?
- Does the Home Manager appear to be knowledgeable and friendly?
- Do staff get to know residents and understand their personal likes/dislikes/needs?
- Do staff appear friendly, approachable and caring?
- Can staff be seen around the home?

Bedrooms

- Does the home offer single or shared rooms?
- Can residents bring their own possessions and furniture?

- Are the bedrooms clean and well decorated?
- Do the bedrooms have en-suite facilities?
- Are the bedrooms well furnished?
- Do bedrooms have a nurse call system?
- Are there a variety of living spaces such as lounges, quiet rooms and dining rooms?
- Is there an accessible and safe garden?
- Is there easy access for wheelchairs and walking frames?
- Do the lounges or other sitting rooms have pleasant views?
- Does the home have other communal facilities such as a hairdressing salon or therapy room?
- Are there lifts in the home?
- Are residents encouraged to use the garden?

Dining

- Can residents eat when they want to?
- Are residents offered a choice of menu for each meal?
- Can meals be eaten in a resident's room if desired?
- Are special diets catered for?
- Does the chef consult with residents regularly to discuss meal choice preferences?
- Are snacks and drinks available at all times?
- Are current menus on display or available for you to look at?
- Are residents able to have assistance with eating if required?
- Can residents make drinks for themselves?

Visitors

- Are there set visiting times or are visitors welcome at any time?
- Can children visit?
- Can visitors stay overnight if necessary?
- Can visitors dine with their relative/friend?
- Is there a relatives/friends committee?

Activities and hobbies

- Are residents encouraged to continue with their own hobbies and interests?
- Is there an activities programme?
- Are there dedicated activities staff in the home?
- Are outings and activities outside the home arranged?
- Are relatives and friends able to participate in activities?
- Does the home display photographs and information about recent activities?
- Are special events, such as birthdays, celebrated in the home?
- Does the home have access to transport for activities outside the home?
- Are residents' religious needs met?
- Are individual activities available for residents who are not able to, or who do not wish to participate in group activities?
- Does the home provide the opportunity for residents to assist with daily activities within the home such as gardening and cooking?
- Are external entertainers and groups of interest invited into the home?
- Are there regular exercise opportunities available to residents?
- Are residents consulted on what activities are planned?

General

- Is the home's Statement of Purpose available to read?
- Is the home's latest CQC inspection report available to read?
- Does the home have a Philosophy of Care?
- Is there a complaints procedure?
- What is included in the weekly fee?
- What services/facilities/items are charged as extras?
- Are quality audits carried out regularly in the home?
- Is there a residents committee?

