

Care home checklist

Location and building

Use our checklist to help you find out as much as you can about a care home and make an informed choice.

- Print the entire checklist and take it with you

Where is the home?

Will visitors be able to get there easily?

Are there transport links near by?

Are facilities such as shops, pubs, parks and places of worship within easy reach?

How accessible is the home?

Will it be easy for you to enter and leave the building, and move between rooms and floors?

How good is the wheelchair access?

Is there a lift?

Does the home feel clean and inviting?

Are there any unpleasant smells?

Do the rooms feel hot and stuffy or cold and draughty?

Is there a relaxed and friendly atmosphere?

Will you feel comfortable chatting and socialising in the home's public areas?

Are chairs arranged in groups or round the edges of the rooms?

Is there a quiet living room for reading, as well as one with a television?

Are the rooms a good size?

Will you have a room to yourself?

Is there any choice of rooms to accommodate preferences such as sun, shade or quiet?

Do the rooms have en suite facilities or basins?

Will you be able to bring your own possessions such as pictures, plants and furniture?

Does the home allow pets?

Will you be able to settle into the home?

Would you prefer a larger or smaller home?

Pros

Cons

Day-to-day life

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Are there telephone facilities you can use in private?

Can you access the internet, either in your room or on a shared computer?

Are books and newspapers available?

Does a mobile library visit?

Does the home arrange outings to the shops, entertainment venues or places of worship?

Are there any physical activities such as exercise groups or gardening?

How will you be told about upcoming events?

Are you encouraged to stay active and do as much as you can for yourself?

Are external doors kept locked?

Can you go outside for fresh air when you want to?

Are you allowed to make choices about your daily routine?

Will you be able to rise and go to bed when you choose?

Can you choose which clothes to wear each day?

Are there any restrictions on visiting times or numbers of visitors?

Where can you spend time with your visitors?

Are there facilities for visitors to stay overnight?

Are young children welcome?

Is the home right for your cultural and religious needs?

Are there members of staff who speak your language?

Can the home meet your dietary needs?

Are there other residents from a similar background to you?

Is there a choice of food and when and where it can be eaten?

How are special diets catered for?

Can you prepare food and drink for yourself?

Do existing residents enjoy the food and can you try it?

Are details of the complaints procedure readily available?

Are you encouraged to give feedback?

Is there a residents' committee?

Do you have access to advocacy services?

Pros

Cons

Your care needs

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Is the home registered to provide the level of care you need?

Do the other residents seem to have a similar level of need to you?

What will happen if your needs change or increase?

Does the home have bathing facilities that meet your needs?

If you need help with bathing, who will provide this?

Can you choose how often you have a bath or shower?

Are toilets available in all parts of the home?

Are they equipped with handrails and other mobility aids?

Are you helped to the toilet when you need to go, if necessary?

When are incontinence pads and catheters used?

Do you have your own GP and access to other health services such as opticians and dentists?

Who decides when a check-up is needed?

How will the home let friends and family know if you are taken ill?

How many staff are employed per resident?

How are they trained?

Is there a manager on duty at all times?

What is the turnover of staff?

Pros

Cons

Contracts and fees

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Can you see a copy of the home's brochure?

Can you see copies of recent inspection reports?

Can you see a copy of the home's contract/written conditions?

What are the home's fees?

Is it clear how the fees are structured and calculated?

How are NHS nursing care payments accounted for?

How are fees collected?

Do self-funding and local-authority assisted residents pay the same rates?

Is a top-up payment required for local-authority assisted residents?

Are extra items not covered by the basic fees clearly identified and accounted for?

What arrangements are there for handling your personal money?

How are your valuables kept secure?

What are the notice conditions in the contract?

Are any fees payable after a resident's death?

How quickly does the person's room have to be cleared out?

Pros

Cons
