

Care home checklist



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Helping you to make
the right choice
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*Age UK is the new force combining
Age Concern and Help the Aged.
With almost 120 years of combined
history to draw on, we are bringing
together our talents, services and
solutions to do more to enrich the
lives of people in later life.*

*The Age UK family includes
Age Cymru, Age NI and Age Scotland.*

Age UK is the new force combining


AGE
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HELP THE AGED **WE WILL**

Contents

Introduction	3
Location and building	4
Day-to-day life	8
Your care needs	14
Contracts and fees	18
Your questions	22
Additional notes	24
Useful organisations	26





Introduction

Choosing a care home is one of the important decisions you can make. After all, you want to be sure that your new home offers everything you need and is a place you will be happy to live in. Finding out as much as you can about a home will help you to make an informed choice.

Everyone has different ideas about what they want from where they live. What is especially important to you? This handy guide contains some of the questions that you might want to ask, with space on each page for your comments and a separate page for you to note down any other questions of your own.

Remember that if you're not happy with something, you can ask the home for an explanation.

For more information and advice about looking for a care home, see our free guide *Care homes* and our free factsheet *Finding care home accommodation*.

Location and building

Q Where is the home?

A

Q Will visitors be able to get there easily?

A

Q Are there transport links near by?

A

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

A

Q How accessible is the home?

A

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

A

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Q How good is the wheelchair access?

A
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Q Is there a lift?

A
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Q Does the home feel clean and inviting?

A
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Q Are there any unpleasant smells?

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

A
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Q Is there a relaxed and friendly atmosphere?

A
.....

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

A

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

A

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

A

Pros

Cons

Day-to-day life

Q Are there telephone facilities you can use in private?

A

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

A

Q Are books and newspapers available?

A

Q Does a mobile library visit?

A

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

A

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

A

Q How will you be told about upcoming events?

A

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

A

Q Are external doors kept locked?

A

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

A

Q Are you allowed to make choices about your daily routine?

A

Q Will you be able to get up and go to bed when you want?

A

Q Can you choose which clothes to wear each day?

A

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

A

Q Where can you spend time with your visitors?

A

Q Are there facilities for visitors to stay overnight?

A

Q Are young children welcome?

A

Q Is the home right for your cultural and religious needs?

A

Q Are there members of staff who speak your language?

A

Q Can the home meet your dietary needs?

A

Q Are there other residents from a similar background to you?

A

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

A

Q How are special diets catered for?

A

Q Can you prepare food and drink for yourself?

A

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

A

Q Are details of the complaints procedure readily available?

A

Q Are you encouraged to give feedback?

A

Q Is there a residents' committee?

A

Q Do you have access to advocacy services?

A

Pros

Cons

Your care needs

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

A

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

A

Q What will happen if your needs change or increase?

A

Q Does the home have bathing facilities that meet your needs?

A

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

A

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

A

Q Are toilets available in all parts of the home?

A

Q Are they equipped with handrails and other mobility aids?

A

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

A

Q When are incontinence pads and catheters used?

A

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

A

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Q Who decides when a check-up is needed?

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

A
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Q How many staff are employed per resident?

A
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Q How are they trained?

A
.....

Q Is there a manager on duty at all times?

A
.....

Q What is the turnover of staff?

A
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Pros

Cons

Contracts and fees

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

A

Q Can you see copies of recent Care Quality Commission (or equivalent in Wales, Scotland or Northern Ireland – see pages 26–28 for details) inspection reports?

A

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

A

Q What are the home's fees?

A

Q Is it clear how the fees are structured and calculated?

A

Q How are NHS nursing care payments accounted for in the fee structure?

A

Q How are fees collected?

A

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

A

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

A

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

A

Q What arrangements are there for handling your personal money?

A

Q How are your valuables kept secure?

A

Q What are the notice conditions in the contract?

A

Q Are any fees payable after a resident's death and how quickly does the room need to be cleared out?

A

Q Any other questions (see page 22)

A

Pros

Cons

Your questions

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Additional notes

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Useful organisations

Age UK

Age UK is the new force combining Age Concern and Help the Aged. We provide advice and information for people in later life through our Age UK Advice line, publications and online. Call Age UK Advice to find out whether there is a local Age UK/Age Concern* near you, and to order free copies of our information guides and factsheets.

Age UK Advice: 0800 169 65 65
www.ageuk.org.uk

In Wales, contact

Age Cymru: 0800 169 65 65
www.agecymru.org.uk

In Scotland, contact

Age Scotland: 0845 125 9732
www.agescotland.org.uk

In Northern Ireland, contact

Age NI: 0808 808 7575
www.ageni.org.uk

* Many local Age Concerns are changing their name to Age UK.

Care Quality Commission

Responsible for regulating social care services in England. You can read online or request copies of their inspection reports on care homes and home care agencies.

Citigate

Gallowgate

Newcastle upon Tyne NE1 4PA

Tel: 03000 61 61 61

Email: enquiries@cqc.org.uk

www.cqc.org.uk

Care and Social Services Inspectorate Wales (CSSIW)

Regulatory body for social care in Wales.

4–5 Charnwood Court

Heol Billingsley

Parc Nantgarw

Nantgarw CF15 7QZ

Tel: 01443 848450

Email: cssiw@wales.gsi.gov.uk

www.cssiw.org.uk

The Regulation and Quality Improvement Authority (RQIA)

Duties include regulating and inspecting nursing and residential care homes in Northern Ireland.

Tel: 028 9051 7500

www.rqia.org.uk

Scottish Commission for the Regulation of Care

Regulatory body for social and health care in Scotland.

Compass House
11 Riverside Drive
Dundee DD1 4NY

Tel: 0845 603 0890

Email: enquiries@carecommission.com

www.carecommission.com

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