

Visiting a Care Home Prompts & Questions

First impressions

- What are your first impressions on arrival?
- Is there car parking or easy access to public transport?
- Will the home be convenient for visiting friends and relatives?
- Is the outside clean and tidy with pretty flowers on display?
- Are you made welcome as you enter the home
- Are there any nasty smells or odours?
- Does the home look clean and well cared for?

The feel of the home

- Can you sense a warm and happy atmosphere?
- Are you offered a cup of tea?
- Do you feel at home in the environment?
- Do you see resident's privacy and dignity protected and respected?
- Can you talk with other residents?
- Are you offered a trial visit for lunch or afternoon tea?
- Are visitors openly welcomed?

The bedrooms

- Can you view an available room?
- Is the room clean and has it been redecorated?
- Is the room fully furnished?
- Can you bring in your own furniture?
- Is there a television and a direct dial telephone?
- Is the room en suite or is there a bathroom nearby?
- Does the room have a nurse call system?

The staff

- What training do the staff receive?
- Are you allocated one member of staff who is responsible for key aspects of your care?
- How many of the staff have qualifications in health and social care?
- How many staff are on duty at any given time?
- Are the staff smartly dressed with name badges clearly displayed?
- Are the staff very attentive to the residents and is everyone happy?

More...



The food

- Can you see a typical menu and try the food?
- Is there a choice of menu at meal times?
- Is the food freshly prepared by qualified chefs?
- Does the chef find out what your likes and dislikes are?
- Can the home cater for special diets?
- How do the staff help residents who need assistance with eating?
- Can you choose your meal times?
- Can your friends and family also have a meal?
- Do the other residents like the food?

Activities

- Can you see a diary of planned activities?
- Are there dedicated activities staff?
- How are your religious needs met?
- Are residents consulted on the activities programme?
- Are there visiting entertainers and other groups invited on a regular basis?
- Are birthdays, special events etc. celebrated?
- Can you still do some gardening and grow your own vegetables?
- Do you get a choc-ice with the afternoon film?

Anything else you can think of

- Do you have to pay for telephone calls?
- Can you get a daily newspaper of your choice and is it free?
- Has the home explained how its complaints procedure works?
- Have you seen the latest inspection report for the home?
- Did you see a typical room contract and was it clear what the fee covers?
- Can you see written policies and procedures for the home?
- Is there a manager in place?
- Can the home provide all of the specialist equipment you might need?
- Are you encouraged to help develop your care plans?
- Are care plans reviewed regularly?
- Is there a visiting hairdresser, chiropodist, optician etc.?