

Choosing a home checklist

This handy checklist will help you to think about what's important to you when looking for a residential or nursing home, and what questions to ask when you contact or visit a home.

Atmosphere

- Is the atmosphere friendly and homely?
- Are the staff friendly and approachable?
- Is the home well decorated and well kept?
- Does it have a pleasant smell?
- Are the residents happy and relaxed with lots to do?

Location

- Can relatives and friends get there easily to visit you?
- Is it easy for you to get to the shops, church or activities you want?

Accommodation

- Is there a choice of rooms and can you have a single room if you wish?
- If you do share, can you meet the person you will be sharing with?
- Are there en-suite facilities? If not, are there enough bathrooms and are they close to your room?
- Can you lock the door of your room?
- Is there a secure place for valuables and are they insured?
- Can you bring some of your own belongings? How many and which ones?
- Can you have a TV and a telephone in your room?
- Is the furniture in the communal rooms comfortable and arranged well?
- Is there a choice of lounges?
- Is there a garden you can access and is it well maintained?
- What is the smoking policy?

Accessibility

- Is the building easy to move around in?
- Are there rails and enough space for wheelchairs?
- If there is more than one floor, are there lifts?
- Are there call bells in bedrooms and communal areas?
- Are bathrooms adapted so that you can use the bath or shower?
- If you have a sensory impairment does the home have equipment to allow you to join in all their activities?

Daily life

- Is there a residents' committee? Would you be able to have a say about any decisions?
- Can you get up and go to bed when you want?
- Can you go out or have visitors when you want?
- Are you able to buy small items such as stamps, newspapers or snacks in the home?
- What arrangements are in place if you need to buy other items such as clothes, toiletries, presents or alcohol?
- Does the home offer any activities and outings that you would be interested in?
- Would you be able to continue with any hobbies you have?
- Can you keep a pet?
- Can you practice your own religion?

Staff

- Are there adequate staff on duty day and night?
- Are staff formally trained (eg safeguarding, moving and handling, first aid, dementia care)?

Meals

- Can you see a sample menu?
- Is there a choice of food each day?
- Is there a choice of when you can eat?
- Can special diets be catered for?
- Can you have a snack or a drink whenever you wish?
- Can you eat in your room?

Personal care

- Can you have a say in the way you are looked after?
- Is any equipment supplied if you need it?
- Does a doctor visit the home regularly?
- Would you be able to keep your own GP?
- Does a hairdresser / barber visit the home?
- Does a chiropodist visit the home?
- Would you be able to stay if your health got worse?

Terms and conditions

- Who owns the home and who manages the home?
- Is there a written contract or agreement?
- Can you have a trial period? How long for?
- What notice must you give if you wish to leave?
- What is the weekly charge?
- Is there anything that is not covered by this charge?
- How often do fees increase? Are they payable weekly or monthly?
- Are advance payments required?
- What happens if you are unhappy with the home after you have moved in?
- What are the terms for keeping the room if you need to go into hospital?
- What happens if you run out of funds?
- What do the CQC say about the home?
- Is the home on the Council's Recognised Provider List?

Personal requirements

This is an advice page from the Sheffield Directory website.
You can find the latest version of this information at:
www.sheffielddirectory.org.uk/carehomes. January 2018.