



Information about choosing a care home

We can provide this information in another format like large print, audio or Braille. Or in a language other than English. Telephone 0117 922 2700.

This fact sheet is for people thinking about moving into a Care Home. It explains where to get more information, things to think about and questions to ask.

Making your mind up

If you are thinking of moving into a Care Home you should contact us. We'll provide advice and may be able to arrange to visit you to assess your needs. During the assessment we'll ask about your situation and find out what is best for you. Your views will be an important part of the assessment. Our leaflet HSC41 "Assessments: what to expect" explains more about assessments.

We'll help you consider other options like help to continue living in your own home or if another type of accommodation - like sheltered housing or extra care housing- might be available and suitable. Extra care housing has self-contained flats with communal opportunities to socialise. The flats have call alarms and services available including personal care and domestic help. Flats are available for rent and for purchase.

You must be sure that moving into a Home is the best thing for you. It's important you make the right choice. You may also be eligible for a Direct Payment where you are given money by the Council to organise your own care and support.

To contact us:

Care Direct

Telephone: 0117 922 2700

Fax: 0117 903 6688

Textphone: 0117 903 6689

E-mail: adult.care@bristol.gov.uk

Choosing a Home

You can get a list of Homes in the area of your choice from the:

CQC National Customer Service Centre

Citygate

Gallowgate

Newcastle uponTyne

NE1 4PA

Tel: 03000 616161

www.cqc.org.uk (including an online enquiry form)

The CQC registers and regularly inspects Homes. The CQC can provide the latest inspection reports for Homes. Alternatively, each Home should be able to show you a copy of their inspection report when you visit.

You can also find information about assessments and getting help with residential charges on our web pages.

Some things to think about and questions to ask

Try to visit several Homes that look suitable. Have a look around, talk to residents and staff. This list of questions will help you with what to consider and ask.

Where is the Home?

- Will it be easy to keep in touch with your family and friends?
- Will you be able get to the shops or any other places you want to go?
- Is there transport to help you get around?

What is the building like?

- Is there a garden that residents can use?
- Is there a lift?

- Are there call bells in all the rooms?
- Is there a Loop System for those with hearing impairments?

What is your first impression?

- Is the atmosphere friendly and welcoming?
- Do the residents seem happy and interested in what is going on in the home?
- Are the rooms clean and fresh?
- Are there other people of your age or with similar impairments?
- Do the residents seem to be treated with dignity and respect?
- Does the home smell fresh and appear to be clean and well cared for?

Accommodation

- Ask to see the room(s) available and check they meet your needs – if you can't manage the stairs can you have a ground floor bedroom or are there lifts to help you?
- Are there rooms with their own bathroom and toilet en-suite?
- Are you able to bring some of your own furniture, TV and other belongings?
- Can you lock the door of your room?
- Can you have a telephone installed?
- Have toilets and bathrooms been adapted and easy for residents to use?
- Is there a toilet within easy reach where ever you are?

Day- to-day life

- Are you comfortable with the house rules?
- Is there a way of having your voice heard e.g. a Residents' Council?

Spiritual and cultural needs

- Are you able to practice your religion?
- Are staff sensitive to residents' spiritual and cultural needs?

Visitors

- Are friends and family encouraged and welcomed into the home at all times?
- Will there be privacy for you?
- Will they be able to join you for a meal?

Meals

- Does the menu give a choice of dishes and do they seem balanced and nutritious?
- Can special diets or food preferences catered for?
- How flexible are mealtimes - can you have meals in your room or make a snack or a drink?
- Can you see examples of the home's menus.
- Are you able to request new dishes be added to the menu?
- Can residents have drinks outside of normal mealtimes?
- Is alcohol allowed?

Domestic arrangements

- Can you get up and go to bed whenever you want to?
- Will your room be cleaned everyday and will your bed be made - can you help if you wish?
- Is it possible to buy small items - stamps, sweets, toiletries, newspapers etc?
- Does a hairdresser visit the home and how often do they come?

Personal possessions

- Is there a secure place where personal monies and valuables can be kept?
- What are the arrangements for insurance?

Leisure

- What activities are available to participate in?
- How often do these activities happen?
- Is there a charge for activities?
- Are you able to continue with your hobbies?
- How often are social events and outings organised?
- Is there a member of staff responsible for organising social events – try to speak to them to talk about your needs.

Personal care

- Do the staff seem caring and attentive?
- Are there enough members of staff on duty to be able to give everyone individual attention?
- Can relatives and friends help with personal care if you want them to?
- A care or support plan is usually agreed for each resident; ask about this and how flexible it can be. Can you, for instance, plan your own day eg what time you get up in the morning and go to bed at night? Will you have your own care plan – with written details of what will be provided for you?
- Would there be a member of staff - a key worker - whose job is to take a special interest in you?
- Can the staff communicate well with deaf or hard of hearing residents?

Health care

- Can the Home meet all your medical, nursing and special needs?
- Can you keep the same doctor that you have now, or is there a local doctor who accepts patients from the Home?
- What arrangements are there for you to see a doctor when you need to?
- Do dentists, opticians, physiotherapists, occupational therapists and chiropractors visit the home?

How is the Home run?

- Who runs the Home - the owners or a manager?
- How long have they been running the home and how can they be contacted?
- How many care staff are on duty at different times and what qualifications do they have?

Terms and conditions

Note: if Health and Social Care is paying for you to stay in a Home we'll deal with the terms and conditions.

- Is there a written contract/agreement and will you have a copy?
- How long a trial period can you have?
- What happens if you are not happy? Who can you talk to?
- How much notice must be given if you want to leave the Home?
- What are the arrangements for payment and how will you be invoiced?
- How often do fees change?
- What are the fees for keeping your room if you are away from the Home for a short time?
- Could there be any reason why you might be asked to change your room or leave the home entirely?

Costs

- What is the weekly charge and what does it cover?
- Is anything else charged for additionally?

Problems

- How do you make a complaint?

Paying to live in a Home

When we assess your needs we will explain about how we may be able to help and how any amount you pay is calculated. Our leaflet Residential Charges (HSC37) explains about charges.

Other places to get information

The Elderly Accommodation Counsel

Telephone 0800 377 7070

www.eac.org.uk

A national charity offering independent advice on residential and care Homes. The website includes a searchable database of Homes.

Age UK (Bristol)

Telephone 0117 929 7537

www.ageuk.org.uk/bristol

Age UK's detailed fact sheets cover many aspects of selecting and funding places and other issues around living in Care Homes.

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