

Choosing a care home

Everyone will have different views about what makes a 'good' home and each person's needs will differ. Here are some questions to consider. Some may be more important to you than others

Questions to consider

Location and building

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?

Are there areas for smoking and non smoking?

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?

Choosing a care home – Questions to consider

Day-to-day life

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 / 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 residents and family encouraged to give feedback?

Is there a residents' committee?

Do you have access to advocacy services?

Choosing a care home – Questions to consider

Your care needs

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

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

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

When are incontinence pads and catheters used?

What will happen if your needs change or increase?

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

Does the home have bathing facilities that meet your needs?

Who decides when a check-up is needed?

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

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

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

How many staff are employed per resident?

Are toilets available in all parts of the home?

How are they trained?

Are they equipped with handrails and other mobility aids?

Is there a manager on duty at all times?

What is the turnover of staff?

Choosing a care home – Questions to consider

Contracts and fees

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?

Useful contacts

Age Cymru

Tŷ John Pathy
13/14 Neptune Court
Vanguard Way
Cardiff CF24 5PJ

Helpline: 0800 169 65 65
Website: www.agecymru.org.uk
Email: enquiries@agecymru.org.uk

Care and Social Services

Inspectorate Wales

4-5 Charnwood Court
Heol Billingsley
Parc Nantgarw
Nantgarw CF15 7QZ

Tel: 01443 848 450
Website: www.cssiw.org.uk
Email: cssiw@wales.gsi.gov.uk

Hugh James Solicitors

Hodge House
114-116 St Mary Street
Cardiff CF10 1DY

Tel: 029 2022 4871
Website: www.hughjames.co.uk
Email: nursing.care@hughjames.com

Elderly Accommodation Counsel

3rd Floor
89 Albert Embankment
London SE1 7TP

Tel: 020 7820 1343
Website: www.housingcare.org
Email: enquiries@eac.org.uk

Care Quality Commission

Citygate
Gallowgate
Newcastle Upon Tyne NE1 4PA

Tel: 03000 61 61 61
Website: www.cqc.org.uk
Email: enquiries@cqc.org.uk

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Age Cymru is a registered charity 1128436.

Registered office address:

Tŷ John Pathy, 13/14 Neptune Court, Vanguard Way, Cardiff CF24 5PJ.

Age Cymru is working in partnership with local Age Concerns.

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