

Choosing a care home for people living with dementia

*with support from
Barchester care homes*



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Most of us, given a choice, would choose to remain within our own homes for the rest of our lives. However, for some of us, this will not always be possible as we may need additional support to help us to maintain our physical or psychological well-being.



Moving to a care home is a big decision as the move needs to feel absolutely right for either you or someone you care about, and we would all want to find our new home as comfortable, safe and friendly as the one we have left.

But how do we make this decision? Homes are regulated by external inspectors and reports can be found either in the home itself or on the regulator's website. These reports can guide us but do remember that standards can change between inspections, and may either have improved or declined since the home was last inspected.

The best way to learn more about a care home is to visit it and take a look around. This will help you to make a decision as to whether it's the right choice for you or the person you are caring for. To help you further when making this decision, we have put together some questions to consider as you visit different homes and meet the people who work there. We hope you will find these questions useful.

Please do not hesitate to contact us if you would like any further advice or information.

Homely feel

1. Are you welcomed warmly and made to feel as though you are more than just a 'visitor'?



2. Do you notice a warm and friendly relationship between the staff in the home and the people who live there?



3. Have you asked people who currently live in the home what it's like to live there?



4. Does the home ensure people feel safe and secure without feeling too restricted?



5. Have you spent time in the home to get a feel for what it might be like to live there?



Environmental considerations

1. Are the home's interiors colourful, homely and stylish as opposed to bland, sterile and uninteresting?

2. Are the communal spaces arranged in a way that encourages social activity and creates a homely feel?

3. Does the design and layout of the home enable people to navigate their way around easily?

4. Do you notice the home using innovative ways to help people locate their rooms, such as placing items on doors which relate to the individual living there?

5. Have the home's outdoor spaces been set up as places for both occupation and relaxation?





Staff approach

1. Are staff flexible in their approach and do they create a relaxed atmosphere in the home?



2. Do staff display a positive attitude towards their role?



3. Have staff had specialist dementia training?




4. Do staff appear to work well as a team?





5. Do all staff members respond promptly when a resident appears anxious?





Interest/Activity

1. Do you see comforting items placed throughout the home and are there sensory objects for people to use? 


2. Do you feel as though life is carrying on as normal and that people are involved in everyday tasks such as making drinks and laying the tables? 


3. Do people seem happy and are they engaged in activities (either watching or taking part)? 


4. Is there a sense of community in the home?
For example, do you see people enjoying meals together? 


5. Does the home feel like an important part of the broader community and does it have links with local community groups? 


Person-centred approach

1. Do you observe staff connecting well with the individuals who live in the home? 

2. Are staff sensitive to each individual's unique needs, preferences and personal beliefs? 

3. Do staff demonstrate an interest in individual's life stories and take the time to help people reminisce? 

4. Do staff demonstrate a natural empathy with residents living in the home? 

5. Are you confident that at least one member of staff will take it upon themselves to personally get to you know you and your family? 

For further information about
dementia care, and to locate
homes in your area that offer
this service, please visit
www.barchester.com



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