

Guidelines for choosing a long term facility

First Impressions

Accessibility of the home

Rules and regulations

Finances

Residents

Staffing

Safety Awareness / Emergency Procedures

Funding of the home

Bedrooms

Bathrooms

Kitchens, Food and Beverages

Gardens

Intimacy and Privacy

What additional services are provided by the home?

Frail care Facilities

Visitors

Other

Accessibility of the home

- Is it close to family and friends?
- Is it within safe walking distance to: place of worship; shops; bank, post office?
- Is it close to activities in the community that the resident is still involved in?
- Is it in a familiar environment or a new area?
- Is the area safe?

First Impressions

- What reception did you receive if you arrived unannounced?
- Friendliness of the staff?
- Is it safe, clean and attractively decorated?
- Are there noticeable odours (especially urine)?
- Do the residents seem to be happy and occupied, or are they sitting staring into space?
- Did you see staff and residents sitting talking to each other?
- Were any of the residents restrained in their chairs?



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Rules and regulations

- Check the licensing and registration of the home.
- Do you feel comfortable with the rules and regulations of the home?
- Is it very regimented?
- Do residents have to go to bed at fixed times?
- Are visiting times strictly enforced?
- What is the policy about restraining frail residents?

Finances

- Will you be able to afford the fees for the home?
- What is the annual increase in fees?
- Will you be able to afford the payments indefinitely?
- If you have any medical aid / disability cover / insurance – will it cover any of the costs of the home?
- Are there additional costs in the home not part of the monthly rental / levy?



Ref. cbonita.brinkster.net

Residents

- Is there a residents committee?
- Are there channels for residents to complain to? Is there an ombudsman?
- Are residents encouraged to remain physically and mentally active and to see to their own needs where possible and suitable?
- Are residents allowed to assist in chores/activities in the home?
- Are residents called by name by the staff?
- Do other residents seem congenial?
- Is it a mixed sex residence?
- Are residents encouraged or forced to leave their rooms during the day?

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Staffing

- There needs to be a high quality staff – resident interaction.
- Does the home have a high staff turnover ratio?
- Are there an adequate number of caregivers on duty for every shift?
- What staff are on-call / available 24 hours per day?
- Does the staff get ongoing training?

Safety Awareness / Emergency Procedures

- Are there ramps and is there easy access for wheelchairs throughout the home?
- Is there adequate lighting in the home?
- Are there safety rails in the corridors?
- Are the floor surfaces non-slip?
- Are there easily accessible panic buttons:
- Are the passages and stairs well lit?
- Is there a lift if the home has more than one floor?
- Is there a disaster plan for evacuating the home?
- Are there visible and accessible fire hydrants?
- Are there smoke alarms?
- Do they have regular fire drills in the home?
- Are they linked to an armed response company?
- What other security arrangements are there at the home?
- Is the home secure in terms of controlled access / perimeter fencing, etc.?
- What emergency medical equipment is available on the premises?
- Are safety deposit boxes available for the residents?
- Are portable panic buttons available for residents when they go outside?

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Funding of the home

- Who are the major funders of the home?
- Is it a profit for gain or non-profit organisation?
- Is there any form of financial assistance (if frail care or additional care is needed) if the resident is not able to afford it?
- Is it a life right scheme?

Bedrooms

- Is there a view from the room?
- Is there adequate lighting?
- Is there a problem with damp in the room?
- Are the rooms furnished or unfurnished?
- Is it a single or double room?
- Is the resident allowed to have a kettle, toaster, etc. in the room?
- Are there sufficient plug points in the room (for bedside light, kettle, radio, hairdryer, etc.) if not, are adapters allowed?
- Is there an emergency bell/panic button in the room?
- Are there sufficient cupboards and drawers in the room?
- What personal furniture and belongings are allowed?
- Are residents allowed private telephones in their room?
- Are visitors allowed in the rooms?
- Are residents given meals in their rooms if they are not feeling well?

Bathrooms

- Own or shared?
- Bath and/or shower?
- Is there a panic button in the bathroom?
- Is it suitable for an older person (i.e. has it been adapted to the needs of the older person) – for example with non-slip surfaces in baths, handles, rails on baths, shower chairs etc.
- Is there easy access for a wheelchair in the bathroom?
- Is assistance with bathing and showering available to residents not requiring frail care, if needed?

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Kitchens, Food and Beverages

- What are the mealtimes?
- Is the food of a high quality and high variety?
- Are provisions made for special diets (e.g. high protein; diabetic; low fat; kosher; vegetarian; halaal; etc.)
- Do they have a dietician available to them?
- Is there variety in the weekly menu, and does the menu change regularly?
- Are desserts and fruit part of the regular menu?
- Are the portions sufficient? Is a second helping allowed?
- Are there separate areas for food preparation / dishwashing and garbage disposal?
- Are visitors allowed to have meals in the dining room? At what cost?
- Are there ever any special meals (e.g. for religious holidays, birthdays, etc.)?
- Can residents get packed meals if they are going out for the day?
- Are there regular teas supplied by the home (eg. Morning and afternoon) and is anything served with the tea?
- Is alcohol allowed on the premises?

Gardens

- Is there a garden?
- Is the garden easily accessible and available to the residents?
- Are more active residents encouraged to assist in the garden?
- Are there benches outside?
- Is there a suitable safe path to walk on in the garden? Are there rails along the path?
- Is the garden lit at night?

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What additional services are provided by the home?

- Podiatrist (chiropracist)?
- Hairdressing/Barber facilities?
- Aromatherapy/reflexology/other alternate therapies?
- Tuck shop or canteen?
- Day Clinic/Examination rooms?
- Is medication administered if non Frail Care residents require this service?
- What additional professional services are available (e.g. Social Work; Occupational Therapy; Physiotherapy; Speech Therapy)
- Is there a doctor on call for emergencies?
- Are there activity rooms?
- Is there a regular activity and exercise programme for the residents?
- Are residents encouraged to learn new skills?
- Are any outside trips, outings, lectures, talks and shows arranged for the residents?
- Is there any community involvement in the home?
- Do they have volunteers involved in the home?
- Is there a lounge with television and one without? Is the television on all day?
- Is satellite television available?

Intimacy and Privacy

- Are married couples allowed to share a room?
- Are residents allowed to be sexually active in the home?
- Are residents allowed privacy in the home?
- Do staff members knock before entering rooms?
- Is there privacy available for telephone calls?
- Is there a private visiting area available for residents sharing a room?

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Visitors

- Are residents allowed to go out for days/weekends and holidays?
- Can visitors come and visit at any time or strictly at visiting time?
- Is there a private room for visitors?
- Do visitors have to sign in on arrival?
- Are relatives / friends encouraged to participate in the care of the resident?

Frail care Facilities

- Establish what the additional costs/availability of frail care is, even if they are not initially required.
- Are there specially trained staff nursing in this area? (There should be a qualified Nursing Sister, not merely a Nurse Aid).
- Are you required to use the resident doctor or can you use your own?
- Are visitors allowed to visit frail care as wished?
- Is there any disability / illness that they are unable to cope with in the home?
- How is medical waste disposed of by the home?
- Are living wills recognized?

Other

- Are there demarcated smoking and non-smoking areas?
- Are pets encouraged for their therapeutic benefits and allowed in the home?
- Are residents allowed their own pets?
- Is the laundry done on the premises or contracted out?
- Will the resident be able to meet their spiritual needs at the home?

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- Is there any form of transport available to shops / outings / doctors appointments?
- If residents are still active may they have their own cars on the premises? Is there secure parking that is easily accessible?
- Have there been any complaints / cases against the home?
- Do they have a policy about elder abuse? How is it handled if it arises?
- What is the notice period if residents wish to leave the home?

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