

Choosing the Right Care Provider for You

There will come a time when a person will need more care than can be provided at home. The individual may need to move into residential care, such as assisted living or a nursing home. Planning for a move into a care home should begin well before admission is required. This allows for you to learn about the care options available, anticipate the costs and determine which provider will best be able to meet your needs.

Much of the information contained here is from the Commission for Social Care Inspection (CSCI), who are responsible for inspecting and registering care homes, and the Department of Health's National Minimum Standards 'Care Homes Regulations 3rd Edition'. We have also included information on some aspects of running a care home that are required by law. We have highlighted different sections to identify what is required and what should be provided. Many providers will sell requirements for their registration as good features of their home, so be sure of the requirements before talking to a care provider. As the CSCI point out on their website:

“Don't be afraid to **ask questions** – remember you're **entitled** to expect a service that suits your needs. Any good care home or service will be more than happy to answer your queries.”

National Minimum Standards

These are provided by the Department of Health and are divided into several sections as follows: Choice of home; Health and personal care; Daily life and social activities; Complaints and protection; Environment; Staffing; Management and administration. We have included the main highlighted points from this 101-page document. Please see our links page to view the actual document.

1. The registered person produces and makes available to service users an up-to-date statement of purpose setting out the aims, objectives, philosophy of care, services and facilities, and terms and conditions of the home; and provides a service users' guide to the home for current and prospective residents.
2. Each service user is provided with a statement of terms and conditions at the point of moving into the home (or contract if purchasing their care privately).
3. New service users are admitted only on the basis of a full assessment undertaken by people trained to do so, and to which the prospective service user, his/her representatives (if any) and relevant professionals have been party.
4. The registered person is able to demonstrate the home's capacity to meet the assessed needs (including specialist needs) of individuals admitted to the home.
5. The registered person ensures that prospective service users are invited to visit the home and to move in on a trial basis, before they and/or their

representatives make a decision to stay; unplanned admissions are avoided where possible.

6. Where service users are admitted only for intermediate care, dedicated accommodation is provided, together with specialised facilities, equipment and staff, to deliver short-term intensive rehabilitation and enable service users to return home.
7. A service user plan of care generated from a comprehensive assessment (see Standard 3) is drawn up with each service user and provides the basis for the care to be delivered.
8. The registered person promotes and maintains service users' health and ensures access to health care services to meet assessed needs.
9. The registered person ensures that there is a policy and staff adhere to procedures, for the receipt, recording, storage, handling, administration and disposal of medicines, and service users are able to take responsibility for their own medication if they wish, within a risk management framework.
10. The arrangements for health and personal care ensure that service user's privacy and dignity are respected at all times.
11. Care and comfort are given to service users who are dying, their death is handled with dignity and propriety, and their spiritual needs, rites and functions observed.
12. The routines of daily living and activities made available are flexible and varied to suit service users' expectations, preferences and capacities.
13. Service users are able to have visitors at any reasonable time and links with the local community are developed and/or maintained in accordance with service users' preferences.
14. The registered person conducts the home so as to maximise service users' capacity to exercise personal autonomy and choice.
15. The registered person ensures that service users receive a varied, appealing, wholesome and nutritious diet, which is suited to individual assessed and recorded requirements, and that meals are taken in a congenial setting and at flexible times.
16. The registered person ensures that there is a simple, clear and accessible complaints procedure, which includes the stages and timescales for the process, and that complaints are dealt with promptly and effectively.
17. Service users have their legal rights protected, are enabled to exercise their legal rights directly and participate in the civic process if they wish.
18. The registered person ensures that service users are safeguarded from physical, financial or material, psychological or sexual abuse, neglect, discriminatory abuse or self-harm, inhuman or degrading treatment, through deliberate intent, negligence or ignorance, in accordance with written policies.

19. The location and layout of the home is suitable for its stated purpose; it is accessible, safe and well-maintained; meets service users' individual and collective needs in a comfortable and homely way and has been designed with reference to relevant guidance.
20. In all newly built homes and first time registrations the home provides sitting, recreational and dining space (referred to collectively as communal space) apart from service users' private accommodation and excluding corridors and entrance hall amounting to at least 4.1sq metres for each service user.
21. Toilet, washing and bathing facilities are provided to meet the needs of service users. There are accessible toilets for service users, clearly marked, close to lounge and dining areas. There should be 1 assisted bath (or assisted shower provided this meets residents needs) to 8 service users.
22. The registered person demonstrates that an assessment of the premises and facilities has been made by suitably qualified persons, including a qualified occupational therapist, with specialist knowledge of the client groups catered for, and provides evidence that the recommended disability equipment has been secured or provided and environmental adaptations made to meet the needs of service users. Service users have access to all parts of service users' communal and private space, through the provision of ramps and passenger lifts. Aids, hoists and assisted toilets and baths are installed which are capable of meeting the assessed needs of service users.
23. The home provides accommodation for each service user which meets minimum space as follows: single rooms have a minimum of 12sq metres usable floor-space (excluding en-suite facilities); room dimensions and layout options ensure that there is room on either side of the bed, to enable access for carers and any equipment needed; rooms which are currently shared have at least 16sq metres of usable floor space (excluding en-suite facilities) and are shared by no more than 2 users who have expressed a positive choice to share with each other.
24. The home provides private accommodation for each service user which is furnished and equipped to assure comfort and privacy, and meets the assessed needs of the service user.
25. The heating, lighting, water supply and ventilation of service users' accommodation meet the relevant environmental health and safety requirements and the needs of individual service users. Water is stored at a temperature of at least 60°C and distributed at 50°C minimum, to prevent risks from Legionella. To prevent risks from scalding, pre-set valves of a type unaffected by changes in water pressure and which have fail-safe devices are fitted locally to provide water close to 43°C.
26. The premises are kept clean, hygienic and free from offensive odours throughout and systems are in place to control the spread of infection, in accordance with relevant legislation and published professional guidance.
27. Staffing numbers and skill mix of qualified/unqualified staff are appropriate to

the assessed needs of the service users, the size, layout and purpose of the home, at all times.

28. A minimum ratio of 50% trained members of care staff (NVQ level 2 or equivalent) is achieved by 2005, excluding the registered manager and/or care manager, and in care homes providing nursing, excluding those members of the care staff who are registered nurses.
29. The registered person operates a thorough recruitment procedure based on equal opportunities and ensuring the protection of service users. This includes obtaining a police check on all new staff.
30. The registered person ensures that there is a staff training and development programme which meets National Training Organisation (NTO) workforce training targets and ensures staff fulfil the aims of the home and meet the changing needs of service users.

Ask to See

There are several documents you should ask to see when visiting the home for the first time as well as particular facilities. These include, but are not limited to:

- Information about the services the home provides.
 - The official document explaining this is called the statement of purpose.
 - The version for people who use the service - which should be easy to understand - is called the service user guide.
- The latest CSCI inspection report about the home.
- A blank copy of a service user plan drawn up by the home. This is a document that sets out how a person's health and welfare needs will be met, and deals with things like medication, special equipment or special diet.
- An example of an agreement covering a person's stay in a home. This may be a formal contract, which is issued to privately funded residents, or a more general description of the terms that apply to a local authority funded resident.
- Evidence of the qualifications of trained staff.
- Evidence of safety and regulatory compliance, e.g. fire assessment, health and safety inspections, etc.

Questions to Ask

There are always many questions to ask and it is all too easy to forget to ask particular questions when visiting a care home. Here we have provided an example list of questions to ask in a simple form to print and take with you. Suffice it to say, the Normanhurst will provide all of these.

Care Provider Questions

Home 1:.....

Home 2:.....

	Home 1	Home 2	Normanhurst
Are you allowed your own personal possessions in your room, such as pictures, plants and furniture?			✓
Can you have your room decorated to your personal taste?			✓
Is there privacy and a clean, hygienic and homely environment?			✓
Is there a choice of what and when to eat every day?			✓
Do dedicated trained chefs, in proper commercial kitchens, provide the meals?			✓
Are special diets catered for?			✓
Can you invite relatives and friends to come and have a meal with you?			✓
Do you have the flexibility to have visitors pop in to see you at any time?			✓
Can you use the communal areas at any time of the day or night?			✓
Do you have the choice of when to get up in the morning, and when to go to bed?			✓
Is there a telephone in all rooms to make private calls?			✓
Are televisions provided for you in your room?			✓
Do you have the freedom to come and go as you please?			✓
Is there a range of activities to take part in?			✓
Is the location convenient for shops, public transport, etc.?			✓
Will it be easy for family and friends to visit you?			✓
Is there private outside space that you can use?			✓
Does there appear to be a happy and positive atmosphere to live in?			✓