

What Makes a Good Care Home?



*South Gloucestershire
Safeguarding Adults Board*
Guide for Residents and Families

Table of Contents

Introduction	1
Sight.....	2
Hearing.....	3
Smell.....	4
Taste.....	4
Touch.....	5
Would I like to live here?	5

Introduction

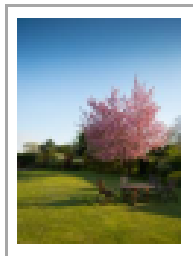
What makes a good care home?



This guide has been produced for people who already live in a care home or are thinking of moving to one. It can also be used by their families and friends, as well as professionals who may be involved in their care and support.



The aim of the guide is to help you think about what makes a good care home, and what you can do if you think a home is not as good as it should be.



Everyone will have different views about what makes a good care home, depending on what is most important to them personally. A large garden, being near the shops, or having pets in the house are just three examples. But there are other things that should apply to every home. When in a care home you should use all five senses to judge for yourself.

Sight

Whatever the building is like - old or new, an adapted house or purpose built, a good care home should appear as well looked after as its residents.

It should appear clean and tidy, and well-maintained. The outside spaces should be free of rubbish and clutter. Inside should be well-decorated and welcoming.

Decorations such as pictures and ornaments should add to the quality of the environment.

Staff should appear purposefully occupied - busy, but not rushed.

If they are sitting with residents in communal areas, they should be meaningfully engaged with them - in conversation or activities; not watching the television, talking to one another or playing with their phones.



Ask Yourself – Would I like to live here?

Hearing

Ask Yourself – Would I like to live here?

There will always be noise in a care home, but it should not be over-bearing or intrusive. Televisions and radios should not be turned on automatically as background noise, music should be appropriate to the age range of the homes residents.



Homes should offer residents the opportunity to engage in meaningful activities - both inside and outside the building.

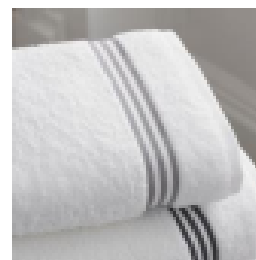
Even people confined to bed should be provided with opportunities to socialise.

The way that staff talk to residents and visitors will say a lot about their care. They should talk respectfully, without raising their voices.

When assisting people with care tasks staff should explain to the person what they are doing and why, rather than completing the task in silence, or talking over the person to their colleagues.

Smell

A good care home will not smell. There should be enough housekeeping staff employed to ensure that it is always clean and any accidents or spillages are quickly cleaned up. There will always be adequate supplies of hand wash, towels and protective equipment for staff such as gloves and aprons. Residents should be supported to maintain their personal hygiene in a discreet and professional manner.



Ask yourself - Would I like to live here?

Taste

Food is very important to anyone living in a care home and should always involve choice - not just what to eat but also where to eat and when. Snacks and drinks should be available 24 hours a day.



Special diets for cultural or health reasons should be properly catered for, and even simple likes and dislikes should be respected. There should always be a genuine choice of meals on offer. Menus should be displayed and if people are unable to read them, then picture images should be used.

Touch



Is there evidence of the personal touch? Do the staff get to know the people living in the home and treat them as individuals? Do they understand their likes and dislikes? Are they interested in what is important to each person?

What if I am worried?

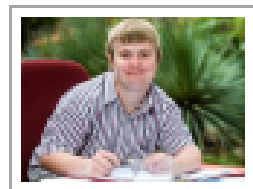
If you have any concerns about a care service, then you can report them to South Gloucestershire Council on 01454 868007.

Your concern will always be taken seriously and no matter how small it seems, you may provide a vital piece of information that will help improve the care of people living in the home.

Would I like to live here?



Above all a good care home will 'feel right'. The people living in it should not be restricted - they should not be locked out of their bedrooms or told where they should sit during the day.



Routines within the home should feel relaxed, not strictly regimented. Visitors should be able to come at any time, and should be able to see the person they have come to visit in private.

Ask yourself the question 'would I like to live here?' If the answer is no, think about why that is. Remember, if it doesn't feel right, it probably isn't.



South Gloucestershire Safeguarding Adults Board
<http://sites.southglos.gov.uk/safeguarding/>
If you need this leaflet in another format please call
01454 863136