

What to look for when selecting a Nursing Home

It is most important that you visit the nursing home you or your family are considering. Remember there is no substitute for a visit. Even if your telephone enquiries have left you with only one nursing home, you should go and visit the nursing home. If possible make two visits one announced and the other unannounced.

Prior to your visit to the nursing home, print a copy of the Nursing Home Checklist. This checklist is designed to help you evaluate and compare nursing homes that you visit.

Learn as much as possible about each nursing home by:

- Reading their Information Brochure
- Talking with residents, relatives, staff and
- Observe the quality of life and care provided in the nursing home.

You may also find it useful to look at the inspection reports for individual nursing home which are produced independently by Health Information Quality Authority (HIQA)

Before you visit, write down any personal questions that you would like to address during your visit to the Nursing Home.

Details of Nursing Home

Name of Nursing Home:

Address:

Telephone Number:

Contact Person:

Tick appropriate:

First Visit: Second Visit:

Time:

Morning Afternoon Evening

Day of the Week:

Mon Tues Wed Thurs

Fri Sat Sun

First Impressions

Yes No

Did you receive a warm and friendly welcome?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Is the atmosphere homely and welcoming?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Is the home clean and pleasantly furnished?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Does the Nursing Home smell fresh or otherwise?/Does the home smell pleasant?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Are there other people with similar care needs to your loved one?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Are residents provided with a welcoming and information pack?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Is the Nursing Home accepting new residents?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Location

Yes No

Will it be easy for friends and family to get to the Nursing Home?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Is the Nursing Home convenient for shops, club, church, or other places/events that you want to get to?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Is the home convenient for shops, public transport, etc?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Is there transport to help you get where you want to go?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Moving In

Yes No

What is involved in moving in - is there an initial assessment done?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Can time be spent in the Nursing Home before admission?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
How long is the trial stay period?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Is there a program to help new residents adjust?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Ask for a copy of the Nursing Homes Information Booklet?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Is each resident provided with a written contract of care?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Bedrooms

Yes No

Bedrooms - Can you have a single bedroom room if you want one?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Can you see the room that is available? Is it bright and well decorated?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
If you have to share a room can you meet the other person beforehand to see that you get on?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Can you have a different room if you don't get on with the person you are sharing with?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Can you have your own TV in your room?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Can you bring some of your own furniture and belongings, photographs?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Can you have a telephone in your own room?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Is there a telephone you can use without people overhearing what you are saying?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Can you choose to have a bath or a shower?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Can you make drinks or snacks for yourself?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Accommodation	Yes	No
Are there single rooms with their own bathroom and toilet en-suite?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Does each room have a call bell system?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Are there individual temperature controls for each room?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Are there screens in shared rooms to give privacy?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Does the Nursing Home have suitable assisted bathing facilities?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Are there toilets within easy reach of all parts of the Nursing Home?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Is the furniture in the communal rooms arranged in a comfortable way?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Is there a quiet room with no TV?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Are there handrails in the toilets and corridors?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Is there easy access for wheelchairs and walking frames?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Is there a safe garden that residents can use?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Can residents keep pets in the Nursing Home?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Security	Yes	No
Is there a lockable drawer or cabinet in the bedrooms?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Can residents lock their room?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Is the Nursing Home locked at night?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Are there special security and monitoring systems in place to safeguard residents well being?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Does the Nursing Home take responsibility for insuring your possessions?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Safety

Yes No

Are there smoke detectors, an automatic sprinkler system and portable fire extinguishers?

Are exits clearly marked and exit signs illuminated?

Is an emergency evacuation plan posted in prominent locations?

Staff

Yes No

Does each resident have a member of staff particularly responsible for their care?

Did you observe staff being friendly and caring towards residents?

Do staff members respond promptly to residents requests?

Are call bells responded to in a timely manner?

Do staff treat residents with dignity and respect?

Is privacy respected?e.g. Do staff knock on resident doors and ask permission before entering?

Are residents addressed according to their first name or preferred name?

Do staff wear name tags?

Is there a staff member who can speak your language?

What qualifications and training do the staff have?

Is there adequate staff?

Health Care

Yes No

How are residents and families encouraged to participate in developing their care plan? How often is the care plan reviewed?

Do residents have input in the development of their care plan? How often is the care plan reviewed?

How are residents and families encouraged to participate in developing their care plan?

Will you have access to a doctor at all times if required?

Do other health professionals such as chiropody, physiotherapy and occupational therapy visit the Nursing Home regularly?

Can the Nursing Home offer care suitable for your needs? If your care needs change can you continue to live at the Nursing Home?

Does the Nursing Home offer/arrange complementary therapies?

Does the resident receive appropriate information on their medication?

Does the Nursing Home provide services for terminally ill residents and their families?

Will I receive end of life care that is appropriate to my needs and wishes?

Meals

Yes No

Do the menus include foods which you like?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Do the menus give you a choice of dishes?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Can special diets be catered for?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Can you have a snack/drink when you want?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Can you have meals in your room?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Can residents make themselves a drink?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Are copies of current menus available for you to look at?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Can residents choose who they sit with in the dining room?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Can relatives and friends have a meal with you?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
For residents who need help with eating, are staff trained to do this sensitively?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Activities and Leisure Time

Yes No

Is there a weekly plan of activities? Did you see an example?

Are residents consulted on what hobbies/ interests they have?

Are special events, eg birthdays celebrated in the home?

What form of exercise, if any, are residents encouraged to take?

Is it possible to take part in activities/trips outside the home?

Are daily newspapers available for residents?

Does the Nursing Home have access to a library facility?

Are there opportunities for adult education or life long learning?

Can residents take part in the daily activities within the home, if they wish, eg gardening, cooking?

Are activities offered for residents who are relatively inactive or confined to their rooms?

Are there arrangements in place for residents to vote?

Day to Day Life

Yes No

Can you influence what happens in the Nursing Home? Is there an independent Residents' and Relatives' groups?

Can you get up and go to bed when you want to?

What arrangements are in place for personal laundry?

Does a hairdresser or barber visit the Nursing Home?

Is it possible to buy small items in the Nursing Home?

Are you comfortable with the "house rules" about Smoking, alcohol, and other requirements such as keeping or visiting pets?

Does the Nursing Home provide support residents following bereavement of a relative, friend or another resident?

Religion

Yes No

Will you be able to practice your own religion?

Are there religious services held in the Nursing Home?

Does the Nursing Home have a separate room for reflection?

Visitors

Yes No

Are there set visiting times or are visitors welcome at all times?

Can children visit?

Can visitors stay overnight if they have travelled a long way or a resident is ill?

Are there places where residents can spend time in private with your guests?

How the Nursing Home is
Managed

Yes No

Who is the registered provider of the Nursing Home?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Are they the owner or the manager of the Nursing Home?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
How long have they been managing the Nursing Home?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Who is the Person in Charge of the Nursing Home?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
How many residents are there?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Is there a qualified registered general nurse on duty and in charge of the Nursing Home at all times?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
How many care staff are on duty: in the morning, afternoon, evening, at night?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Are qualified night staff awake or on call?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
What training do staff receive?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Is there a list of policies available for the Nursing Home? Are the policies listed in the Information Booklet?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Is there a list of policies for the Nursing Home?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Is the latest Nursing Home inspection report available?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Thinking about the Future

Yes No

Is there a bed available?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Is there a waiting list?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
What's included in the weekly fee and what are 'extra' charges?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Are all services covered in the weekly fee? If not, what services are not covered and what is there cost?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
What would be covered in your agreement/contract of care?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
What happens if I become more dependent?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
What happens your room if you are away short-term on holiday or in hospital?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
How can you make a complaint if you need to? Is there a complaints policy/procedure?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
In what circumstances might you be asked to leave?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
What notice must be given if you want to leave the Nursing Home or hostel?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Don't forget to ask: Did you feel that your individual needs and preferences could be met by the nursing home when you visited?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

