

COVID-19 Checklist for Choosing a Care Home

5 questions for residents, families, friends and carers to ask

Finding the right Care Home can feel overwhelming at any time. The COVID-19 pandemic means that care homes have had to learn to do things differently, like every household in the country. The focus remains to provide high quality care, with residents needs and wellbeing at the centre of everything.

You need to know the extra measures a home has in place so that you can be reassured that the health and wellbeing of the person receiving care is top priority. This short guide is here to help you think about what you need to know and the questions you might ask on your own behalf, or for someone else you are acting for, when thinking about a choice of home during COVID-19.

What is life like in the home?

It's not always possible to visit the home and bedrooms before making a decision about moving in during COVID-19. However, there are other ways homes are helping potential residents to see what is on offer:

All new residents have to go through 14 days of staying in their own room, away from other residents, when they first arrive. During this time a care team will be on hand to provide all the care and support that is needed. This care and support will include all health and personal needs. Some care homes are calling this a 'support bubble' of dedicated staff to help the resident settle in.



Some homes do allow a pre-arranged visit and will supply PPE to the potential resident or family member to take a look around.



Other homes are able to give a virtual tour using video links through their websites, or provide a photo gallery, a 'meet the team' and Latest News. You may also be able have information sent through the post if you prefer.

You should be able to speak to a member of the home's senior team to answer any questions you have about life in the home.



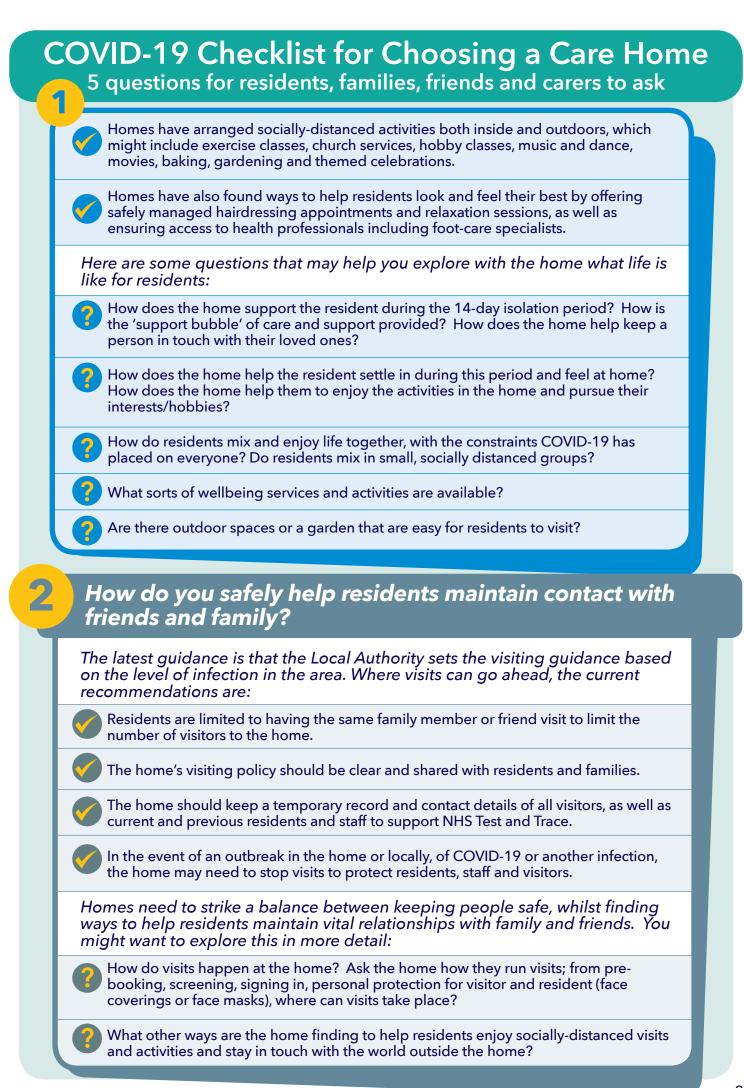
You can also look for reviews from residents and next of kin on websites such as www.carehome.co.uk or www.autumna.co.uk .

Once the 14 day isolation time is over, the home should want to make sure life for residents is as enjoyable and sociable as possible within the limitations that COVID-19 has placed on everyone. There are lots of creative and surprising ways that care homes have adopted to help support residents to enjoy life and stay connected to family and friends.



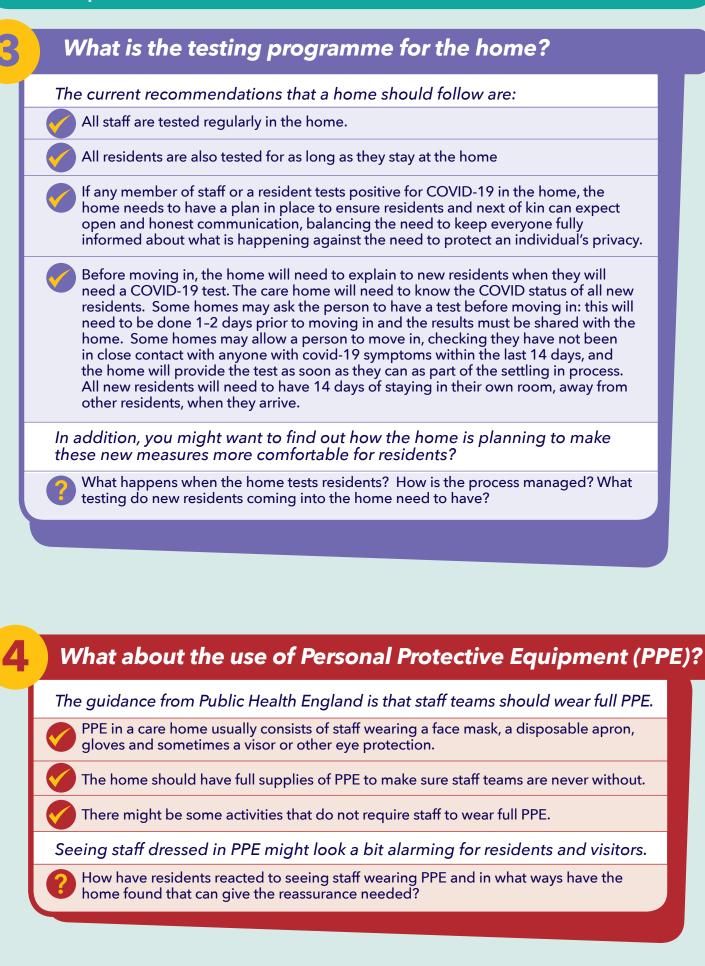
Some homes have helped residents enjoy socially-distanced garden visits, or set up a 'visiting pod' in a conservatory to stay connected with family.

Homes have also helped residents to stay connected through the technology of video calling, as well as more traditional ways like the telephone, letters and email.



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Staff have been trained to recognise the signs and symptoms of COVID-19 so they can respond quickly if anyone is unwell.

Staff receive regular training in Infection Control Measures and are following increased hygiene procedures.

Staff understand the latest advice and the importance of excellent personal hygiene is reinforced.

If you have other more general questions about COVID-19, then some of the following links may be helpful:

• The government's COVID-19 advice page -

https://www.gov.uk/coronavirus

• NCF's COVID-19's advice and guidance within health and social care -

https://www.nationalcareforum.org.uk/ncf-voice/covid-19-coronavirus/guidanceoverview/



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