

Your Parents need Residential Care

Therapy Professionals has work in Aged Care since 1985 and we have seen the industry grow and develop from almost a cottage industry to the corporate dominated industry it is today. We have personally experienced and watched others struggle to navigate their way through the whole process of entry into residential care.

We know how hard it can be for you and your parents to accept it's time for residential care (rest home, hospital, dementia and special care hospitals). Once this decision has been made knowing how to access care is not always straight forward.

This information from the Ministry of Health can be very helpful when negotiating your way through the process.

This link will take you to the following questions and answers on the MOH website.

<https://www.health.govt.nz/our-work/life-stages/health-older-people/long-term-residential-care/residential-care-questions-and-answers>

What is residential care?

Is there a list of residential care providers?

Who is responsible for funding residential care services for older people?

What are the criteria for entry into residential care?



How does a person apply for residential care?

How does a person apply for a residential-care subsidy?

What happens if the circumstances of the person in long-term residential care change?

While the person is in care, what individual services/items do they have to pay for that are not covered by Government funding (the residential care subsidy)?

What is a License to Occupy?

If a person is admitted to hospital whilst in a residential care facility, do they have to continue paying for their bed at the facility?

How does a resident make a complaint?

Once you have the residential subsidy or have freed up the funds to enter residential care, you then have to choose which facility will suit your parent/s and you. Working this out will be limited by the availability of beds. At the time residential care is needed your preferred option may not be available.

When looking at the options you need to have some way of comparing them. Consumer did a Rest Homes Checklist a number of years ago which we have added a few items to. You may find this helpful.

https://d3c7odttnp7a2d.cloudfront.net/assets/8159/Rest_Homes_checklist.pdf

Rest Home Checklist

Atmosphere

- Is the home warm, clean and homely? ☐
- Are there comfortable social areas where residents can gather? ☐
- Are there quiet places, other than bedrooms, where they can relax? ☐
- Is there a nice garden and places to stroll or relax outside? ☐
- Are there any unpleasant odours noticeable? ☐

Private Rooms

- Are the rooms clean and comfortable? ☐
- Do the rooms get any sun? ☐
- Is there adequate lighting? ☐
- Can the bedroom temperature be individually controlled? ☐
- Are the rooms well insulated? ☐
- Are the call button and reading lamp easily accessible from the bed? ☐
- Are there outlets for a private phone and TV? ☐
- Can residents bring their own furniture, or hang things on the wall? ☐
- Are toilets and showers easily accessible and private? ☐
- Are there policies and procedures to protect residents' possessions? ☐
- Are pets allowed? ☐
- Are the rooms large enough for hoists? ☐
- Are bathrooms shared or en-suites? ☐

Meals

- Are meals reviewed by a Dietitian? ☐
- Do meals look appetising, smell and taste nice? ☐
- Is accommodation made for residents with special eating needs or diets? ☐
- Is there a variety of meals on the menu? ☐
- Can residents help themselves to hot and cold drinks and snacks at any time? ☐
- When are the meal times? ☐
- How early is the evening meal? ☐

Activities

- Is there a good range of leisure facilities, such as a pool table, music room, library, TV room? ☐
- Are there regular outings to the beach, museums, concerts etc? ☐
- Is there a swimming pool? ☐
- Is there a gym? ☐
- Is there a formal activities programme? ☐
- Are activities overseen by a registered occupational therapist? ☐
- Does the therapist work individually with residents who aren't interested in group activities? ☐
- Are residents able to access spiritual care within the home? ☐

Current Residents

- Do they appear happy and relaxed?
- Do they appear clean and well cared for?
- Are they treated with respect by staff?
- Can residents choose to have breakfast in bed and get up when they like?
- Can they choose to stay up late at night?

Staff

- Are staff warm and friendly to residents, visitors and each other?
- Do staff knock and wait for an invitation before entering a residents' rooms?
- Do they listen carefully when residents talk to them?
- Do they address residents by their preferred names?
- Are they observant and responsive if a resident requires any sort of help?
- Is there a formal schedule of on-going staff training?
- Does staff have a system for communicating with each other between shifts?
- Is there frequent staff turnover?
- What qualifications do the main caregivers have?
- What is the care staff ratio to residents?
- What is the manager turnover rate?
- How many caregivers are present on each shift?

Don't trust an answer which refers to the 'staffing ratio' which may include administrators, gardeners, cooks and cleaners. Also be wary of homes which have fewer caregivers on duty in the weekends.

Medical Care

- Is a GP on call at all times?
- Can residents retain their own GP
- How many registered nurses are present on each shift?

Is a registered nurse on duty at the home at all times?

Does each resident have a care plan, outlining how their care will be managed over time?

Caregivers should read care plans at the beginning of their shift every day, to ensure they're up to date with residents' needs

If a resident has an accident, is the event recorded, the family informed and steps taken to prevent it happening again?

Are there regular visits by other professionals, such as dentist, podiatrist, physiotherapist, dietitian and occupational therapist?

Does the home have a system to ensure residents receive the correct medication?

How often is medication reviewed? Ideally the pharmacist, registered nurse and doctor should review medication together.

What happens if a resident's condition deteriorates?

When are their needs reassessed? Could family or friends ask for reassessment?

If a resident has a particular condition such as Parkinson's, what relevant facilities does the home provide and does the staff have special training?

What specialist training do staff have in dementia?

Medical Care continued...

What specialist training do staff have in dementia?

How does the home deal with incontinence?

Be wary of an all-pervasive smell of urine in communal areas, and corridors. It's also not a good sign if chair cushions have been recovered in vinyl.

How is wandering and restless behaviour managed? *Check the security of gates and fences in a secure unit.*

What is the policy on resuscitation?

What is the policy on restraint and sedation

A good answer will explain the circumstances when restraint is used, what would be tried first who would be consulted, how long the resident would be restrained, and the follow up.

What mobility equipment is - walkers hoists, wheelchairs. Are the chairs provided in a range of sizes and heights?

Safety

Is there an evacuation plan?

Are exits clearly marked?

Are there adequate smoke alarms/sprinklers

Is there easy access between areas, eg no tricky stairs to climb?

Does the home keep an emergency contact list of residents' family, friends, medical contacts?

Are family members expected to notify the rest home if they go on holiday?

Family involvement

Can family and friends visit anytime?

How are the family members involved in planning care?

How does the rest home keep family members informed?

Is there a family members' group?

Complaints

Is there a clear and adequate complaints procedure?

Is there are residents' committee to act as a forum for complaints, thoughts and suggestions?

If there an independent resident to advocate to help resolve the problems?

Has the home been the subject of any complaints?

If so, what was the outcome?

Fees

How much are the fees?

What is not budgeted in the fees and should be budgeted for as an extra expense?

Certification

When was the home last audited against the Health and Disability Services Standards?

Did the audit report identify any problems?

If so, what were they, and have they been rectified?

Will the home give you a copy of its latest audit report?

How long has the home been granted certification for? *The usual length of certification is three years.*

Notes:

Voluntary Accreditation

Does the home have accreditation from any voluntary aged care accreditation scheme



The main schemes you're likely to hear about are the Eden Alternative and Quality Health New Zealand accreditation programme.



If you have an elderly family member struggling at home or in care and you want additional rehabilitation, just contact us at

Phone: 03 377 5280

Email: admin@tpl.nz