

Preparing for a move to a care home: advice, suggestions and practical support

Moving to a care home can be an emotional time for both residents and their families. However, if you follow these simple suggestions it can be a very positive experience for everyone involved.

The move will be less stressful if your loved one has familiar objects around them. So, spend some time deciding what personal items your loved one wishes to take with them.

Prepare in advance and fill your loved one's room with personal items, which will make it feel more like home.

Consider decorating a loved one's room in a favourite colour scheme and complement with matching soft furnishings.




Have shelves put up so that ornaments and personal items can be displayed.



Fill the walls with treasured pictures or paintings. The care home's maintenance team will be more than happy to hang them for you.

Add a favourite chair, foot stool or small pieces of furniture from home.





Ask the care home's chef in advance to prepare a favourite family meal, which can be enjoyed by you all when the hard work of moving in is finished.

FAQs

Q. What and how much should we pack?

There is no right or wrong answer to this question, but we advise you to bring enough changes of clothes and toiletries for two weeks. Try to pack toiletries that your loved one regularly uses because familiar smells will help with the settling in process.



Q. How long should we leave it before we visit a loved one after they move in?

This is a frequently asked question and one that doesn't have a right or wrong answer. Everyone is different and some people settle in quicker than others. No-one knows your loved one better than you, but we want you to talk openly with us about any concerns you may have. It may be useful to begin with a short visit, but this can be discussed with the care team at the early stages of the admission process.



Getting to know your loved one


Something that all colleagues in a care home find useful in advance of an admission is details about their new resident's life. We often ask families to assist us with preparing a **life history book**. This can take some time, however if you are able to prepare a short story our colleagues can use this information to develop relationships with new residents through conversation.

Residents will feel more at home if our care home team are able to have conversations with them about special events in their lives. We will treat this information with the up-most care and respect. Photograph albums are a great tool to use when starting a conversation with a resident so if you have copies of pictures that you can put in an album for us then that would also be useful.

Things to include in the life story:

- Where did your loved one grow up?
- When did they get married?
- How many children do they have?
- Did they have a favourite pet?
- What was their occupation?

Important things to remember



There will be many people and organisations that you will need to contact when a loved one moves into a care home. Banks, utility companies, local councils, GPs, dentists and opticians are just a few, but there will be many more.

On the day

On admission day, give yourself enough time to do whatever comes up, and be prepared to stay for the day. To help make the day run as smooth as possible, try to fill out forms and carry out important tasks beforehand. Find out from the home what the day will be like, and what you need to do.

Experience tells us that residents settle in more quickly and loved ones feel more assured if they spend some time at the care home before moving in.

Getting to know members of the care team, making friends with other residents and seeing what happens on a daily basis will make all involved much happier.

We welcome these visits and look forward to meeting you.

