

Touring a Long-Term Care Home

Questions to Consider When Touring a Long-Term Care Home

Choosing a long-term care home is a big step, especially when dementia care is involved. As you tour, think about what matters most to you or your loved one. Here are some key questions to guide you:

Living Space and Comfort

- Are private rooms available, and how is privacy handled in shared rooms?
- Can residents personalize their rooms with furniture, photos (on walls), or small appliances?
- Are families allowed to use technology devices such as a tablet that has a drop-in ability to video chat, a monitoring device for sleep, and/or a camera in the room?

Costs and Financials

- What's included in the daily or monthly rate?
- What are the extra charges for services? (e.g. hairdressing; personal products; specialized care)
- What is the policy for refunds, deposits, and/or spending accounts?

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Dining and Nutrition

- Are menu choices flexible and accommodating to dietary or cultural needs?
- Can meals be served in-room if someone is unwell?
- Are healthy snacks and beverages easily available throughout the day?

Health and Personal Care

- What is the staff ratio per resident?
- Can our personal physician remain involved in care?
- How is bathing, toileting, and medication support handled when a person refuses?

Safety and Security

- What emergency plans are in place?
- Are there secure outdoor spaces for safe walking?
- Do bedroom doors lock?

Activities and Engagement

- What dementia-friendly activities, music programs, or outings are available?
- Are there options for spiritual care or pastoral support?
- How are families involved in planning activities and care reviews?

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Family Connections

- Are there flexible visiting hours?
- Can pets visit?
- Are there private spaces for family visits or celebrations?

Special Focus on Dementia Care

- Is there a separate wing or unit specifically for persons affected by dementia?
- Are there special programs for residents in moderate - late stages of dementia?
- How is staff trained to support people with cognitive decline and dementia-related behaviours?

Reminder:

While touring, pay close attention to the atmosphere—do residents seem engaged and content? Listen carefully—are the sounds calming and peaceful? Notice the scent of the home—does it feel clean and welcoming? Observe how staff interact with residents—is their approach warm, respectful, and attentive? Often, the overall feel of a place can tell you just as much as the answers you receive during your tour.

And remember, you don't have to do this alone. Reach out to us anytime for questions, support, or creative, personalized recommendations to help make this transition as smooth and positive as possible.