

# Aged Care Tour Tips

## Taking a tour of an aged care home? Here are the 14 questions you should ask to find your perfect match

When finding and choosing a new aged care home for yourself or a loved one, there is a lot to consider – the location, costs of care, amenities, etc. To help find your perfect match in aged care, start by thinking about what is important to you and what will make you feel most at home.

Do you like having a glass of wine with meals; is reading a book in the sunshine your idea of a well-spent afternoon; or do you want to ensure your GP can still be your attending doctor? It is worth making a list of what is important to you and take it with you when you do a tour to ensure you can have all your questions answered.

Here are the top questions we think you should ask to make sure you've found the perfect aged care home match.

### 1. Are my friends and family allowed to come and have lunch with me?

Visitors are warmly welcomed to visit you; visitors are also welcomed to join you for a meal. If they plan on bringing lunch for you to share, the home may have a food safety plan which may require certain transport and storage requirements are met for cold and hot food. If you'd prefer to leave the catering to someone else, the aged care home may be able to accommodate this at a small cost.

### 2. Who are your key staff members – will I have the same staff member daily?

Consistent staff in the same area is important and within reason, should be expected; they will get to know you, your likes and dislikes and you can build a relationship with them.

### 3. Is there a restriction on visiting hours due to COVID-19?

In general, there should be no restrictions on visiting hours, however there may be restrictions as a result of COVID-19 and Government policies in place. These change regularly and your aged care home can advise you of any relevant restrictions at the time.

If you decide to share a suite with another person, it is desirable that you do not have visitors after 8.30 pm.

### 4. If I had a compliment, complaint or concern who would I talk to?

Your first point of contact will likely be the Care Manager, they should either be able to assist you themselves, or direct you to the correct person.

Whilst we hope you don't have any complaints or concerns, The Aged Care Complaints Commissioner is an external service that can handle complaints:

[agedcarecomplaints.gov.au](https://agedcarecomplaints.gov.au), telephone: 1800 550 552.

External complaints handling brochures are available at each home.

### 5. What would my first week in an aged care home look like?

In your first week, all your rights and entitlements, services and care will commence; these will be provided to you to assist you in maintaining your physical, social, cultural, spiritual wellbeing and lifestyle in your new home.

On arrival you should be greeted by your home's reception team and introduced to a staff member who will orientate you with your suite, the communal living areas and the general operation of the home including when and where meals are served.

The home will also develop an interim care plan to look after your overall health and wellness.

For more information about your first week in your new home, see our blog '[Starting out in aged care – your guide to the first 7 days](#)' and ask any other questions you have during your tour.



### 6. Will my clothes be labelled?

Clothing is laundered in commercial washing machines, and so all clothing is to be clearly labelled. The aged care home is unlikely to provide this service, however they may be able to assist.

As a guide, you should bring comfortable, wash and wear clothing, which is suitable to be laundered in commercial washing machines.

## **7. Will somebody explain my contract to me?**

It is very important that you understand exactly what agreement you are entering into with your new aged care home, and what fees and charges you will be required to pay. All your questions should be answered fully before you officially sign any contracts.

Aged care staff should not provide any financial or legal services to you. We strongly recommend seeking independent professional financial and legal advice before becoming a permanent resident in any aged care home.

## **8. Who is your pharmacy? Can I use my own if I want?**

Aged care homes have their own pharmacy; staff coordinate with the pharmacy to ensure all medication changes and deliveries are met.

If you would prefer to use your own pharmacy and the aged care home allows this, you will need to arrange for your pharmacy to pack your medication in the home's preferred dose administration aid and deliver those medications to the home weekly and during emergencies with medication signing sheets.



## **9. Where can I eat my meals?**

You may wish to eat your meals in the communal dining room, or in the privacy of your suite; during your tour you can find out what options are available to you.

### **10. Can I get a copy of the menu?**

The majority of homes prepare their meals fresh onsite, however some do opt to have their meals prepared in a central location, chilled and then heated at the home. Ensure you ask where meals are prepared at the home you are touring.

At each mealtime you will have a choice of entrées, mains and desserts that are appealing to a wide variety of tastes. You should be encouraged to have input into the menu. Find out what consultation is involved in the menu design process, how often the menu is reviewed and request to see some example menus that have been served at the home.

### **11. What activities do you provide and do they run 7 days a week?**

Wellness is not just looking after your care needs but also other areas of your life including looking after your social, spiritual and emotional wellbeing. The care and lifestyle staff at your home should work with the other members of the healthcare team to provide holistic care for you.

The aged care home you are touring should be able to provide you with a list of the activities they provide for residents, these activities may include bingo, exercises, yoga, reminiscing, bus outings, happy hour, movies, entertainers, gardening, art, craft, men's groups, etc.

### **12. Are there regular outings?**

The home you are touring should have a lifestyle program which includes regular outings; these may include morning teas, lunches, concerts, or scenic tours. Ask about what activities are available, how transport costs are covered, and how any food and beverage costs are paid for.

### **13. Can I go out for a walk by myself?**

All efforts should be made by your aged care home to accommodate your preferred daily activities, including going out for a walk by yourself.

During your initial month of entering care permanently, aspects of your daily routine will be monitored and assessed to determine the level of care you require – this will include, in this instance, determining if you are able to go for a walk by yourself, or if you will require assistance to facilitate your stroll outdoors.



#### 14. How do you do things differently to other aged care homes?

This is a great question with many possible answers. This question may help you make the ultimate decision between one aged care home and another.



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fi

The advertisement features a central image of two hands, one younger and one older, holding a heart shape. A stylized orange 'fi' logo is positioned to the right of the text. The background is a light grey gradient with a large orange curved shape on the right side.

When choosing your new home, ensure all your questions are answered and you are happy with the responses you receive; you will then have all the information to make an informed decision and find your perfect match in aged care.

**Find Aged Care wish you and your family every success in your aged care home journey. If you would like more information, please [visit our website](http://findagedcare.com.au) or call us on 1300 509 992.**

# find aged care