The essential guide to finding the right care solution

When it comes to arranging care, knowing the right questions to ask makes choosing the best type of care simpler.
Finding an agency you can trust with your care requirements is a daunting experience for anyone. Whether you’re new to care or have made these decisions before, there is a wealth of options – ranging from residential care facilities to live-in care at home – that can make it hard to know what will best meet your needs.

But choosing a care provider doesn’t have to be intimidating. By simply being prepared and knowing the right questions to ask, you can easily make an informed decision about the options open to you.

This straightforward guide is here to help you know what to ask and what information you should expect from the care agency you speak with.
New to care?

Don't be afraid to call a care provider and ask all the questions you need answered to make the right decision for you and your family.

Here are some of the most common questions we get here at Elder:

What's the difference between a care home and live-in care?

Care homes are residential care facilities which allow people to live communally under the care and supervision of nurses and care workers. People living in care homes may have their own private room with some creature comforts from home.

Live-in care is when a dedicated care professional lives in the home with the person requiring care and, most importantly, companionship. Not only can a care professional help with the daily acts of living—such as washing and toileting, meal preparation, eating and even some light housework—they also offer a comforting and friendly presence in the home.

Why choose live-in care at home over a care facility?

When you or a loved one reaches the point of requiring around-the-clock attention, many people turn to residential care simply because they’re not aware of options such as home care.

More questions? Call our Care Support Team on 033 3920 5473
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**What is the role of a Care Professional in live-in care?**

**Personal care:**
A live-in carer can assist with all types of daily functions, such as:

- Help with toileting and washing needs
- Meal preparation and eating
- Light housework
- Errands and assistance getting to social activities
- All-important companionship

People with special requirements, restricted mobility or dementia for example, can request carers that are experienced in areas that suit their needs.

**Can they administer medication?**
Care professionals can remind you or your loved one when it’s the right time to take medicine by keeping track of medication schedules.

**Carer rotations:**
Live-in care usually involves a primary care professional who will provide care for a six week period followed by a one week break during which another care professional will provide care.

It’s a good idea to think about continuity of care when making your decision. Choose an agency that can keep the care professionals as consistent as possible, while also being flexible to your needs.

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How does the recruitment process ensure quality care and the safety of me or my loved one?

This is a vital question to ask any potential care provider. A rigorous vetting process will ensure the carer you receive is highly experienced and of excellent quality. Vetting should include face-to-face interviews, background checks and collection of references.

In relation to the background checks, make sure to check that the care provider has completed an enhanced DBS background check on the care professional which is crucial when working with vulnerable or older people.

Many companies will also ask themselves the question “would I let this person care for my mum?”. If a care agency trusts a person enough with their own family, you can feel comfortable with them yourself.

How many hours will a care professional work each day and can they get up throughout the night?

This will vary slightly for each care provider. An Elder Care Professional works a 10 hour day with a 2 hour break, which can be taken at an agreed upon time throughout the day. Care providers are also likely to have their own approach to care throughout the night, so be sure to ask each agency what their policy is.

What happens in an emergency?

In a medical emergency, or if there is a risk to safety, a Care Professional will immediately call 999, before getting in touch with family and your care provider’s headquarters. Care agencies will have procedures in place for reporting incidents like this.

For non-urgent emergencies, companies will have contact hours. For example, Elder’s are 8am-8pm, 7 days a week.

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How much does live-in care cost?

Prices will vary depending on the specific requirements of you or loved one’s situation. Elder prides itself on being a very cost-effective, high-quality provider with a fixed price of £770 per week. Please give one of our friendly Care Support Team a call for an informal chat about which options would suit your situation best.

Will prices increase on bank holidays?

Bank holiday charges vary from company to company. Some keep their live-in rates the same throughout the year, regardless of bank holidays, whereas others will adjust their prices. Asking the question now helps avoid surprises later.

Can live-in care be funded by the council?

Depending on your care needs, live-in care may be funded by your local council. Elder’s Care Support Team will be able to explain your options if you give them a call on 033 3920 5473.
If you’ve arranged care for yourself or a loved one before, you probably have an idea of what to expect from a care agency. This time around, consider how you can get more from your care by getting down to the finer details and asking the tougher questions.

How are carers selected for care recipients?

The relationship between a carer and their care recipient is important to get right. You should ask care agencies about their recruitment process and how they ensure that carers are kind, compassionate and a good match with those they will be caring for.

Will there be a written record of the care?

Carers will keep a record of care and any incidents. This is usually in a logbook provided by the council or, in some cases, the care company.

Will I need insurance?

The types of policies available vary from agency to agency, so make sure when you speak with a care provider to ask about how well you’ll be covered. Elder offers a bespoke insurance policy that covers people receiving care and their care professionals.

What happens if my carer is sick or goes on holiday?

Most care providers will provide a replacement carer to fill gaps due to holiday or illness. Elder guarantees replacements so that you or your loved one will never be left without support.

More questions? Call our Care Support Team on 020 3504 8902
Elder offers a complimentary care appraisal to assess your individual needs in order to provide a personalised, quality care experience. Our carers are stringently vetted, highly experienced care professionals. We look forward to speaking with you!

Our Care Support Team will be happy to answer any additional questions you have. Simply call 033 3920 5473 to get in touch.