The Kings Fund>
Ideas that change
health care

University
of Worcester

Association for
Dementia Studies

Is your care home dementia friendly?

EHEEnvironmental Assessment Tool

SAMPLE

CARE HOME

Third edition

The EHE assessment tools

In order to help as many health and care organisations as possible to develop more supportive design for people with dementia, in 2014 The King's Fund developed a suite of environmental assessment tools for use across health and care settings. This 2020 version of the tool has been produced by the Association for Dementia Studes, University of Worcester, with the kind permission of The King's Fund.

How to use the care home assessment tool

The assessment tool can be used by a single individual but involving others who have a different perspective, for example; people with dementia or a family member; clinical, managerial or estates staff; or dementia specialists, can offer valuable opportunities for gaining different views on the care environment and how to improve it. Completing the tool together can also encourage constructive conversations about the philosophy and purpose of care.

The assessment tool contains seven sections and a set of questions to prompt discussions and should be completed in full. Walk around the care home and consider each of the questions in turn. Give each question a score out of five, where five indicates that it is met completely and one indicates it is barely met.

A summary sheet has been provided at the end of the assessment tool which should help pinpoint the areas that might be considered for initial improvement. Notes about how others have used the results, together with The King's Fund's overarching design principles for dementia friendly design, are reproduced at the end of the tool.

How the tool was developed

The 2014 assessment tools were developed in collaboration with organisations delivering care to people living with dementia, including organisations who had participated in The King's Fund's Enhancing the Healing Environment (EHE) programme. The 2020 editions have been updated to reflect the latest research evidence, best practice and survey responses from those who have used the tools in practice.

Each of the sections draws on this evidence to form a rationale for effecting change in care environments. The rationales recognise that people with dementia often have co-morbidities together with sensory impairments and can experience visuospatial problems.

Before using the tool

The assessment should be undertaken during normal working conditions. However, if this is not possible due to exceptional circumstances, for example control of infection requirements that limit visiting, please mark any appropriate questions as non-applicable and note the reason under 'areas of concern'.

Before carrying out the assessment please ensure that all relevant management backing has been secured to build support and commitment to the results. It may also be useful to take photographs as these can be used to mark progress and act as a record of improvements. If photographs are taken all relevant permissions need to be obtained.

SAMPLE

Date ....

Care home

....

Assessment carried

out by..

1 The environment promotesmeaningful interaction and purposeful activity between residents, their families and staff

Rationale

Uncared for and unwelcoming spaces can cause anxiety and provoke concerns both for residents and their relatives about the standards ofcare. Furniture arrangement gives clues to the use of the space. A quiet area should be available for residents. Activities encourage socialisation and should be chosen to reflect individual residents' interests, age and culture. Pleasant smells can be evocative whereas unpleasant odours can cause distress. Dementia is a terminal illness and research indicates that people prefer to die in places and amongst people that are familiar to them.

Questions

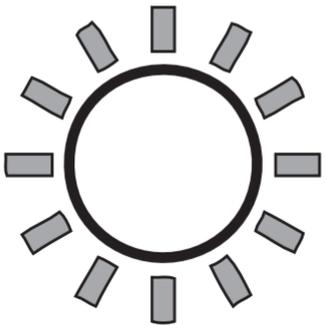Please score each answer from 1 – 5
(1=barely met, 5=totally met)

A. Does the approach to the care home look and feel welcoming? ☐

B. Is the entrance obvious and the doorbell/entry phone easy to use? ☐

C. Does the care home give a good first impression i.e. does it look clean, tidy and cared for? ☐

D. Are there social areas such as day rooms, dining rooms and dedicated quiet spaces? ☐

E. Is there a choice of seating e.g. settees as well as single chairs with arms, and are chairs arranged in small clusters to encourage conversation? ☐

F. Are there resources for individual and group activities e.g. music, books, memorabilia, artworks, crafts? ☐

G. Does the environment support residents to engage in home life e.g. doing laundry and gardening? ☐

H. Are pleasant smells used to encourage reminiscence and has the use of heavily scented air fresheners and other materials been avoided? ☐

I. Do family carers have extended visiting opportunities and is there provision for them to stay overnight? ☐

Please give examples of good practice/ areas of concern

SAMPLE

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2 Theenvironment promotes well-being

Rationale

Questions

Please score each answer from 1 – 5
(1=barely met, 5=totally met)

SAMPLE

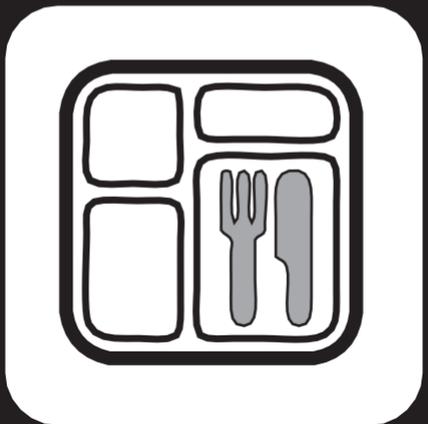# 3 The environment encourages eating and drinking

Rationale

Questions

Please give examples of good practice/ areas of concern

SAMPLE

4 The environment promotes mobility

Rationale

Questions

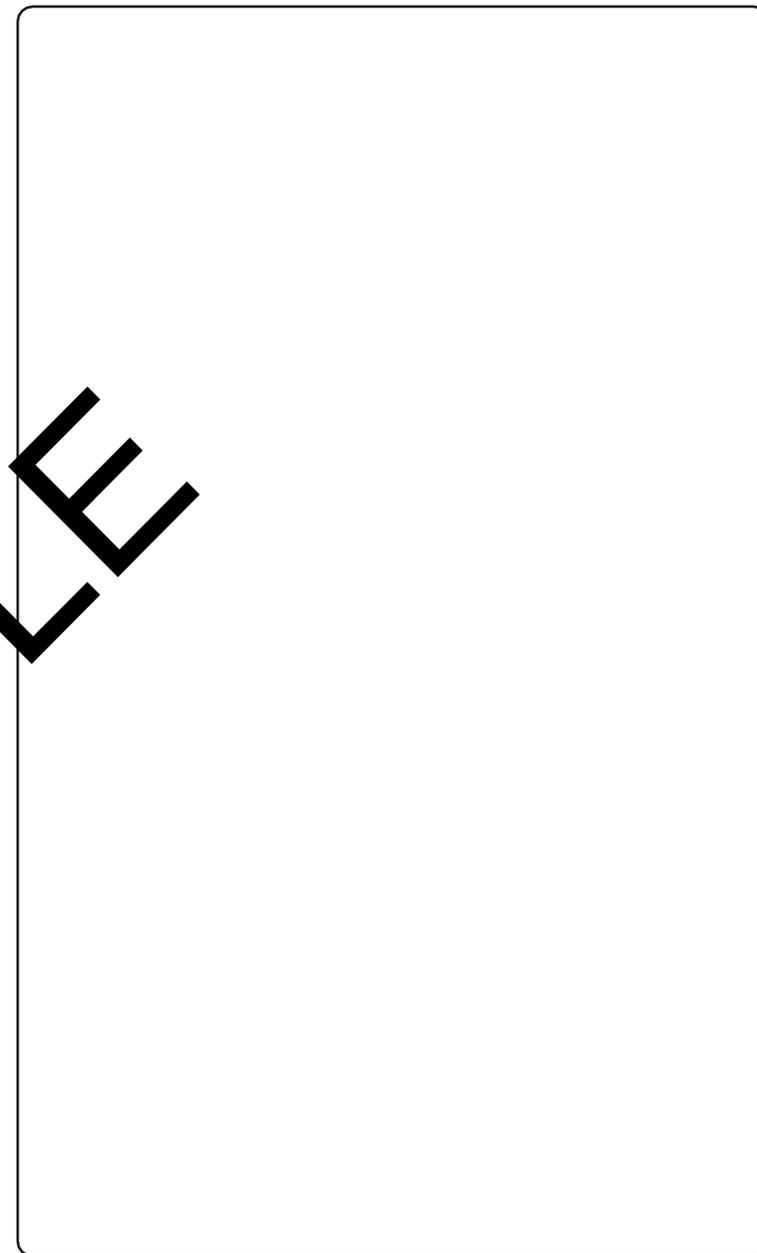Please give examples of good practice/ areas of concern

SAMPLE

5 Theenvironment promotes continence and personal hygiene

Rationale
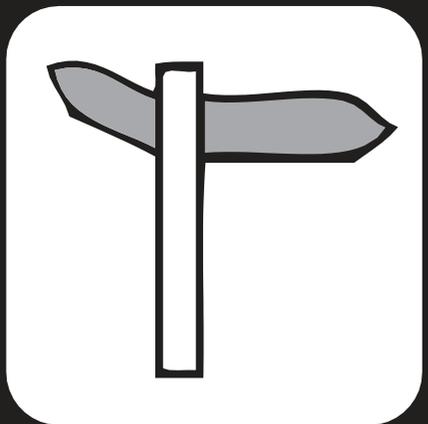
Questions

SAMPLE

6 The environment promotes orientation

Rationale

Questions

SAMPLE

7 The environment promotes calm, safety and security

Questions

Please give examples of good practice/ areas of concern

SAMPLE

Summary

Please add your scores for each criterion here

A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H	I	J

1 The environment promotes meaningful interaction and purposeful activity between residents, their families and staff
☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐

2 The environment promotes well-being
☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐

3 The environment encourages eating and drinking
☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐

4 The environment promotes mobility
☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐

5 The environment promotes continence and personal hygiene
☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐

6 The environment promotes orientation
☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐

7 The environment promotes calm, safety and security
☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐

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For further details about the EHE programme go to www.kingsfund.org.uk/dementia

For further details about the assessment tools go to www.worcester.ac.uk/discover/kings-fund-environmental-assessment-tools.html

If you would like to provide any feedback on the tool or to contact us please email dementia@worc.ac.uk

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Overarching design principles

The design principles focus on promoting well-being and independence rather than providing detailed room by room guidance. They have been developed as a result of the EHE programme and bring together best practice in creating more supportive care environments for people with cognitive problems and dementia. The principles are drawn from a number of sources, including research evidence and the learning gained from changes tested in a range of care environments. www.worcester.ac.uk/documents/Assessment-Tool-Bibliography-2020-FINAL.pdf

Each of the five sections contains a list of design elements that are known to support, encourage and enable people with dementia in care settings. It is unlikely that all the elements can be addressed at the same time unless a new build or comprehensive refurbishment is being planned. However, many of the principles are simple, can be introduced with very little financial outlay and are known to be helpful in creating a more supportive physical environment for people with dementia and those that care for them.

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