

Things to consider when choosing a residential respite service

Choosing a residential respite service is an important decision. Choosing the right service will help you feel confident that you or your family member/friend will be in a safe environment where your needs are met, and have the opportunity to participate in enjoyable activities.

There are various things to consider when choosing the most appropriate residential respite service for you. The table below highlights some of questions to ask and things to consider.

Questions / Things to consider

Notes

Where is the centre located? (Is this convenient for you?)	
Are there dementia specific services? (If so, when are these offered?)	
Are there availabilities at the times you are interested in?	
What qualifications do staff have and how much dementia specific training and experience do they have?	
Does the service provide transport?	
What activities are available, including outings?	
What is the cost of services? If so, how is payment organised?	
What procedures are in place for emergencies?	
If you require particular care arrangements (e.g., medical, diet, cultural), how will these needs be met?	
What are the sleeping arrangements (e.g., single or shared rooms)	

If possible, you may find it helpful to spend some time at the service you are considering so you can get a 'feel' for the people and environment. During these visits, you may find it helpful to take a 'checklist' of things you want to observe during your visit. An example checklist is below:

Questions / Things to consider

Notes

How did you feel upon arrival to the centre?	
Did the staff and clients seem cheerful and comfortable?	
Was the centre easy and safe to navigate?	
Was the centre clean and pleasant?	
Was the furniture suitable? (e.g., sturdy, comfortable, etc)	
Was there a quiet place in the centre for individuals to sit if they need a 'break'?	
Were there various activities for clients to take part in? Also, were modifications made to the activities to encourage individuals with varying capabilities to participate?	
Were the sleeping facilities/bedrooms suitable?	
What type of food do they provide and does this suit your preferences?	
Was there a process for you to provide feedback and plan activities?	
Were staff able to explain the services offered by the centre and answer all of your questions?	