**Visiting someone in a care home** [web page]

**Care homes are people’s home**

Moving into a care home can be a difficult time for your loved one, so it’s important for them to see a familiar face. To help them feel at home, they should be able to welcome you in the same way they did before they started living there.

**Care homes should support visits**

The staff should make it as easy as possible for you to visit your partner, relative or friend. They should respect your relationship and give you as much privacy as they can.

**Visiting someone can help improve their care**

Visiting someone gives you the opportunity to:

* find out how they are and see how well they are being looked after
* ask the staff who are caring for them about their happiness and health
* answer any questions the staff have for you – especially if your loved one finds it difficult to communicate or to make decisions for themselves
* tell the staff about their likes, dislikes or needs, so they can arrange their care in a suitable way.

**A good, open relationship with staff is best for your loved one**

The staff and managers in a good home should want to involve you in the care of your partner, relative or friend. They also, however, have a duty towards other residents and staff and will expect you to treat them with dignity and respect.

During a visit, you may do something without knowing it that’s not in the best interests of your loved one or other residents. This could be something like helping them stand when they should use a hoist.

In these sorts of cases, staff and managers should give you advice so that you know what to do in future. They should talk openly with you to prevent any issues becoming more serious or difficult to deal with.

**Staff should seek your views and the views of your loved one**

Staff and managers should be keen to learn from people’s feedback – both positive and negative. If you see or hear anything that concerns you during your visit, you should speak to a member of staff or contact the care home.

All care homes must have ways to gather and respond to feedback and complaints from residents and their families and friends. They must investigate complaints and make improvements if necessary. We check how well a care home listens to people’s complaints and whether it learns from them.

**Making a complaint should not cause problems**

You might worry that complaining will make it harder to visit your loved one, or that it might affect their care, or even that they are asked to move to a different home. None of these things should happen.

Care homes must follow rules that prevent people who complain being discriminated against or victimised. Our guidance says: “People's care and treatment must not be affected if they make a complaint, or if somebody complains on their behalf.”

We check that people feel comfortable sharing concerns and complaints and we take action when we find homes are not following the rules.

**Support if you don’t think your complaint has been resolved**

If you make a complaint but you’re not happy with the care home’s response, there are other organisations that can give you support. See our [Complain about a service or provider](http://www.cqc.org.uk/content/complain-about-service-or-provider) page for more information.

**Getting in touch with us can help to prevent poor care**

We can’t make complaints for you or take them up on your behalf. That may seem confusing but it’s because we don’t have powers to investigate or resolve them. The only exception to this is for people whose rights are restricted under the Mental Health Act.

If you do give feedback or make a complaint to a care home, we really want to know too. Your information will help us to protect others from going through the same experience. You can do this on our [Share your experience](http://www.cqc.org.uk/sye) page.

**Find out more…**

For more detailed information about visiting a loved one in a care home, including the rules care homes must follow, see our Information on visiting rights in care homes.