Factsheet 1

Improving the
Care Environment
for people with Dementia

Top tips

Design should enable people living with dementia to make the best use of all their senses they are still able to use.

Design aims should include:

- Achieve familiarity
- Relieve stress
- Furnish with easy to use and understand items
- Provide clear visibility and multiple clues
- Minimise distractions
- Maintain activity, encourage exercise, especially outdoors

Try following these principles when designing living spaces

- ✔ Soft co-ordinated colour
- ✔ Soothing
- ✔ Absence of glare
- ✔ Matt or satin paint finish
- ✔ Use pictures of local landmarks

Avoid the following

- Dark or glare in corridors
- Long unbroken distances
- Deafening communal spaces
- Not able to get outdoors
- People getting lost or confused trying to find places
- Avoid dark shadows
- Avoid glare and reflection e.g. shiny surfaces

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Factsheet 2

Improving the
Care Environment
for people with Dementia

Top tips

Colour & Contrast

Colour and contrast can be used to help people to identify different rooms and key features inside and outside of their homes. This can facilitate independent living by supporting people to find their way around unassisted.

- It is worth thinking about how older people can experience colours as 'faded' particularly so with **blues**, **greens** or **purples**

- Painting bedroom doors in a range of colours may assist people to find their rooms

- Using *contrasting* colour from the **background** draws attention to features and makes them easier to find, e.g. light switches and sockets, railings and hand rails

- Providing *contrasting* furniture to the walls helps people to recognise where they are and find their way around

- Doorways in a *contrasting* colour and contrasting handles help people to find and use them

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Improving the
Care Environment
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Top tips

Lighting

At all times try to **maximise** natural light

Artificial Lighting

- Consider carefully the quality and distribution of artificial lighting that will be used in different areas

- Task lighting is helpful in some areas – lights in shower areas and extra lighting for exterior doors

- The positioning of lighting is important- lighting placed directly over beds can be uncomfortable for people when resting

- Additional lighting can be provided through table lamps, standard lamps and angle –poise lamps.

- Background lighting may be preferable at night.

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Factsheet 4

Improving the
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Top tips

Fixtures & Fittings

Good design can ensure people living with dementia are able to identify and use fixtures and fitting

Handrails and grab rails are very important – should be easy to identify and of a design that will prevent trapped fingers

Rugs and mats – These present potential tripping hazards. The colour of any mats is very important as dark mats against a lighter colour will be perceived as a dark hole by somebody living with dementia

Use **memory boxes** and personal items such as **photographs** outside individual doors so people can recognise their own rooms

Employ good signage with pictures around the home as this will help people find their way around

Toilet

Dining Room

Soft furnishings should be **colour co-ordinated** in soft colours *without* fussy patterns

Floor coverings of individual rooms should co-ordinate with the flooring outside of the room to avoid trips and slips

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Factsheet 5

Improving the
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Top tips

Dining & Lounge areas

Dining Area

- Bright
- Open
- Domestic scale tables
- Contrasting comfortable fixtures and fittings
- Plenty of natural light
- Additional artificial light when required

Lounge Area

- comfortable domestic scale fixtures and fitting
- grouped for social activity
- chairs not lining the walls
- artwork and plants
- lots of natural light

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Factsheet 6

Improving the
Care Environment
for people with Dementia

Top tips

Bathroom design

Good bathroom designs can support more independence with washing, toileting and personal hygiene

- Good lighting in a bathroom increases independence

- Grab rails are helpful and in a contrasting colour so they are easier to

- Low profile shower trays and wet rooms also promote independence

- Toilet seats which contrast with the toilet and bathroom walls are useful

- Doors should be a different colour to other doors so bathrooms are easily identifiable.

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Improving the
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Top tips

Private & sociable space

Social

Long corridors could contain break out areas.

These could be:

- A Retro kitchen for people to meet up and chat
- Sensory room for various multimedia activities including showing films and Skype facilities

- Colour co-ordinated hair salon
- Domestic style living room

Private

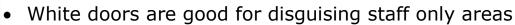Rose Court has a number of colour co-ordinated rooms which customers and their family can choose from

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Improving the
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Top tips

Sensory Enhancement

- Use coloured toilet seats and grab rails

- White doors are good for disguising staff only areas
- Use **matt** flooring as shiny floors look wet
- Customers may also confuse shiny floors as steps

- Use same flooring between **main** rooms and **corridors**
- Match the bedroom door colour with the colour scheme inside

- Deceive the eye with artwork to disguise doors opening onto the outside

Way out

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Improving the
Care Environment
for people with Dementia

Top tips

Outdoor Spaces

Going outdoors has multiple benefits including; providing physical exercise; helping maintain sleeping patterns and daily rhythms; improving mood and helping people to cope with stress

- Have easy access to garden spaces

- Ensure paths are well-defined and maintained, arranged in a loop design

- Handrails around paths and seat areas will prevent slips, trips and falls

- Plant things that make interesting sounds like grasses that rustle

- Plants with interesting and pleasant smells and texture which will provide additional sensory stimulation

- Bear in mind warm colours may be easier to pick out than cooler coolers

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