

Care Agency / Nursing Home / Carer Comparison Chart

	Care Agency Carers	Care Home	HCC Live-in Full-Time Carer (Mary Poppins)	HCC Self-Employed Live-in Rota Carer
Safety	<p>Care agencies and care homes should be CQC registered and ('regularly') checked, although this doesn't guarantee standards, kindness or safety. Always ask to see the latest CQC report as standards vary enormously.</p> <p>Visit the office and take time to assess how it is run. Check how safe a care home feels from public access.</p> <p>Carers should all have DBS certificates (police checks) but DBS doesn't show up any carer who hasn't been arrested, prosecuted and found guilty.</p> <p>Most carers do not have written references. Make sure you see proof before committing.</p>		<p>You will hold copies of all carers' individual police checks, full written references (which are verified by transcribed phone calls where possible), full CV history, family's UK addresses, family's overseas address (if relevant), passports, driving licenses, personal photos and (for self-employed carers on rotas) a personal liability insurance certificate.</p>	
Calibre of Staff	<p>Variable. References, credentials and background checks are much more thorough in some agencies than others. Some carers have not worked in the UK before and some do not speak much English.</p>		<p>Consistently high – we only enlist the top 5% (approx.) of our applicants – most of who are former nurses and/or have extensive care experience. All our carers are British or already working in the UK and all have excellent references. All speak fluent / very clear English.</p>	
Choice of carers	Limited/none	Minimal but you can choose your care home.	100% Your choice.	
Knowing your carers' credentials	Usually none but clients should ask.		Full CV, references, photos, + more background information provided prior to you making a decision.	
Consistency of staff	Variable.	Dependent on staff training, morale, turnover and shifts.	One main carer only.	2-3 regular carers on a 2-3 week rota.
Charges £££	Care agency charges are often 65% - 100% of care staff earnings. Amounts usually not disclosed.	No commission but check extra charges as they vary from home to home.	£180 one-off set-up fee + one one-off introduction fee: (4 x weekly salary.) No charges if you do not choose a carer through us. No further charges.	£180 one-off set-up fee and then £27 per day administration charges.
Comfort	Comfort and security of being in your own home.	Variable – depends on how well care home is maintained / managed at any given time. Management may change often.	Comfort and security of being in your own home.	

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Care of pets and personal effects	Most agency carers will not tolerate pets but you can keep your possessions around you.	Usually no pets allowed and you can only take possessions that will fit in one room.	Carers can take care of your pets, all personal possessions in the home and can run the household if requested.	
Level of disruption	Security of being in own home. Different carers coming and going can be unsettling. Different levels of care / English can be challenging.	Initial disruption of moving can be unsettling but most homes run on scheduled daily routines which most people settle into.	Stability of being in own home. Just one or two carefully matched main carers can become very familiar with routine and running of your home how you like it.	
Covering waking nights	Agency staff will usually provide night rotas or shifts for extra fees.	Staff cover 24 hours.	Carers live-in but clients who need regular help at night need to employ an additional night carer.	
Gaps in care	Agency staff can cover 24/7.	Staff work 24 hours with limited cover at nights usually.	Care agency staff or local freelance carers or family needed to cover breaks, days off and holidays.	7 day a week cover, 365 days a year. NB carers need 2 hours off each day.
Control over your days (when you get up, go to bed, eat etc.)	Some control but limited by agency rotas and staff deadlines.	Care home rotas are usually fairly inflexible.	You control what you do each day and when. See also our table of expectations. Carers know exactly what is expected from day one.	
Welfare of Carers. (Happy carers = happy clients)	Variable.	Variable.	Carers do not need to pay for rent or bills or food anywhere else, so they can be much better off (& happier) than their counterparts.	Carers choose to be self-employed with no agency commission or fees to pay.
Keeping staff happy and fresh	Some work for up to 11 months without breaks. Ensure you are aware of their rota demands before deciding on your agency to ensure your carers are sufficiently trained, fresh and rested.	Staff usually have regular breaks, shifts, days off and holidays. Welfare varies from home to home.	This is the crème de la crème of care jobs, which is why we can choose the best Carers. Carers have at least two hours' break each day and statutory paid holiday, ensuring they are happy, fresh and able to give you the best levels of care.	Carers choose to live on a 2-3 week rota and stay fresh and well rested.

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Loneliness	Clients are often alone at home and only see carers when they come in on shifts, which are often rushed.	Varies from home to home.	Carers are chosen for their personality and compatibility. Clients can go out with their carer wherever they like and whenever they like. Most clients build great bonds with their carers.	
Levels of happiness	Some clients benefit from being in their own homes. Happiness levels vary depending on mobility, staff, ability to go out and relationships with staff at any one time.	Varies from home to home and also on how much clients like the staff or other residents who are there at any one time. Some make a good social life with other residents.	Clients benefit from being in their own home and choose what they do and who they see each day. Most clients benefit from great bonds with their carer and the ability to be taken out to see family and friends when they choose.	
How problems are handled	Agencies and care homes usually have a complaints procedure; however, clients often feel reluctant to complain to management for fear of causing more problems.		Close relationships are built with the family so most issues are easily resolved by personal communication. If a relationship wasn't working out, a carer can usually be switched for no extra cost (See T&Cs.)	
...and if things go really wrong...	Other care agencies are usually fairly easy to source but good ones are limited in numbers in most areas.	Move to another care home.	Carers are employed on contractual terms. Easily replaceable.	Carers are employed by the week. Easily replaceable.
Cost per week (average)	Up to £2000 per week + food and bills. NB Your fees need to cover the agency's staff, insurance, accountancy, training and office costs.	£600- £1,800 per week. NB Your fees need to cover buildings, staff, insurance, accountancy, training and office costs.	Companions from £550 per week. Carers £700-£880 per week average + cover staff to cover time off+ food and bills and holidays.	£775-£875 per week average + £189 in administration.
Agency fees	£1000 - £2,400 per month (av.) throughout engagement.	Usually undisclosed but often with additions / extras.	£180 set-up fee and then Just one, one-off introduction fee (average £3000).	£180 set-up fee + £189 per week.