



Helping people with memory loss move home

A guide for friends and family 

Moving home

Moving to a new home can be an exciting and emotional time for residents and their families. It can take time to get used to new places, new faces and new routines.

It is likely that your loved-one has lived in his or her current home for many years and has developed strong ties to the community, family, friends and daily routine. Packing and moving, for the older adult with decades of memories and possessions, can be a challenge.

These simple suggestions will help make the move a more positive experience.

Before moving in

- It's important to bring items that hold special memories. Moving into a new home might mean leaving some possessions behind, but do bring favourite things such as a comfortable armchair, footstool, pillows, pictures, tea-making equipment, radio, music etc.
- The move will be less stressful if your loved one has familiar objects around them.

Help them decide what personal items they wish to take with them.

- Provide photos of you or your family and other items personal to them.
- In most cases, the brighter and more cheerful, the better. In borrowing from the former home environment, try to go beyond just moving items from the old into the new. Instead, try also to capture and recreate the same mood, texture and tone.
- As soon as you know the date for the move get the phone line in the flat connected or set up a mobile phone to call friends and family.
- Remind the person why the move is positive. Let them voice their concerns, and be understanding in your replies explaining you can work it out together.

Moving day

Try to get the move underway so they are settled into their new home by 2 or 3 p.m. at the latest. As the day progresses a person with memory loss will not cope as well as the rest of us. Enlist more moving help if you need the extra hands.

- You, another family member or a close friend should be on hand throughout the process. If there's time before the move, take your loved-one to their new apartment to meet staff members.
- Give them time to say goodbye to their long-time home at their own pace.
- Make sure they know where all the basics are in their new home. Consider labelling drawers and cupboards as not knowing where everything is can be very disorientating.
- Make sure the bed is made up and everything your loved one needs for the first night and breakfast in the morning is visible and easy to use.
- Make sure they know how to contact the onsite staff if there is a problem they are worried about or if there is an emergency.
- Please, let the staff know when you plan to leave so they can provide support to the resident.

After the Move

- Arrange to come back to help unpack or make sure they have a full fridge and freezer.
- In the days following the move explore the building, or go for a walk in the garden – so you and your loved-one both get your bearings.
- Use the comforting power of food. Arrange for favourite and familiar foods for the first few meals in the new community. You or other friends and family could be there for a meal on the first day, for example.
- Staying in touch is really important. Even if you can't visit often, there are ways to stay in touch e.g. a mobile phone, or laptop so they can talk on Skype, or simply keeping a supply of stamps and notecards pre-addressed so your loved-one can communicate by post. Support to help residents get online is available at our Extra Care housing.

Useful websites

www.dementiaoxfordshire.org.uk
www.alzheimers.org.uk

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Polish

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