



Water and Healthy Ageing Hydration Best Practice Toolkit for Care Homes

9 How good are your facilities? Facts and tips on providing fresh water

Take a look at your existing drinking water facilities to make sure they are appropriate. Photocopy this checklist and tick the boxes if you meet these statements.

How good are your facilities?

- We have specific facilities available for providing drinking water
- The facilities we have can provide enough fresh water, when it is needed, for all the residents and staff in our care home
- Facilities are in safe and suitable areas for residents
- Facilities are regularly cleaned and well maintained
- Residents have access to water throughout the day, free of charge
- Able bodied residents serve themselves
- Less able bodied residents serve themselves
- Clean cups and vessels are provided
- I would be happy to drink solely from these facilities every day
- Our facilities are supplied with fresh tap water and labelled as such
- The water we are offering the residents tastes fresh and palatable
- I have tasted it myself

How did you do? Is fresh and wholesome water available to your residents throughout the day?

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Facts and tips on providing fresh water

- The UK mains drinking water supply is safe to drink and of extremely high quality. Through strict regulation, the UK has one of the highest quality tap waters in the world.
- Make sure you always take your drinking water fresh from the mains water supply. Check that all staff and residents understand what this means.
- Avoid taking drinking water from taps that are fed by storage systems and tanks (see above).
- Normally, the tap in the kitchen will be the one providing fresh, wholesome, cool, mains-fed water.
- Provide a variety of beverage options for residents to help themselves, and support these with served water (see menu suggestions, *factsheet 7*).
- If you choose to use water coolers, mains-fed cooler systems are the most sustainable. They don't run out, they remove health and safety concerns regarding lifting and changing of bottles, and they save the inconvenience of storing bottles.
- Mains-fed water coolers are also the best option for saving money. Water from bottled-fed machines can cost £6 for each 19 litre bottle or around £1,000 each year to run each machine. The cost of supplying mains-fed water would be less than 2p for each 19 litres.
- Consider purchasing water coolers that serve both chilled water and water at its natural temperature.
- If you are not sure whether your water supply is safe or wholesome, contact your local water company or the Drinking Water Inspectorate. Contact details are available through the web pages supporting this toolkit – www.waterforhealth.org.uk

How good are your facilities? Turn over the page to use the toolkit checklist.