

CORRIDORS

How can corridors be designed to enable a person living with dementia to find their way around a residential care home?

Corridors or hallways within residential care homes can be confusing when finding your way around: there may be many of them, each leading to different destinations, and varying in width and length – and yet somehow all looking the same.

People living with dementia are especially likely to find it difficult to navigate corridors. Some people may be troubled by a change in the floor finish leading into the corridor, while others may be worried about their mobility if they cannot see a place to rest along the corridor. At worst, a person with dementia may be reluctant to leave their bedroom at all if they come to see the corridor as some sort of barrier – and as a result they may become anxious and isolated.



What you can do now

- Involve residents and staff in finding ways to individualise corridors (e.g. are there particular objects, artworks, furniture that could make a corridor unique?).
- Create seating areas for residents to rest or take in a view along the route.
- Make it easier to see things from a distance by using contrasting colours when selecting objects and furniture.
- Camouflage dead ends such as locked exit doors or staff-only areas along the way.
- Store equipment when not in use, leaving corridors free of clutter.



What you can plan for the future

- Individualise corridors by providing a range of different features including colour, texture, artwork and style of furniture.
- Clearly indicate where the corridor is heading by framing views to other areas (e.g. to the dining, lounge).
- Vary corridor and hall widths to accommodate small sitting places (e.g. to the side, or seating within a corridor).
- Use contrast to make the floor, walls, ceiling and objects stand out to aid visibility.
- Locate storerooms and staff-only areas away from resident corridors.

Key Design Principles: Principle 2 Provide a human scale, Principle 5 Optimise helpful stimulation, Principle 6 Support movement and engagement
<https://dta.com.au/resources/environmental-design-resources-introduction>

Ageed Care Quality Standards: Standard 5 Requirement (b) (ii) The service environment enables consumers to move freely, both indoors and outdoors

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Consult the DTA Environments team for advice and support in making your environment dementia friendly

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