



## CARE ENVIRONMENTS : DINING AREAS

**1) Principle #1:** Furniture such as dining chairs must be comfortable and have good back and arm supports so that people can get in and out of them easily.

Include comfortable chairs which are light and can move and slide without tipping over.

If possible, provide a variety of chairs with different heights so people of varying stature can be seated comfortably.

**2) Principle #3:** Ensure that the colour of the table or table cloth clearly contrasts with the colour of the table settings and the carpet (see the info pages on “Colour”)

**Principle #2:** Consider having small groups of tables in a variety of shapes to create an informal and non-institutionalised feel. A small round table for example, can better accommodate wheelchairs and because it is more intimate, it can encourage

conversation as well.

**3) Principle #10:** Keep crockery, cutlery, glasses and other table settings on the buffet table in the dining room so that people can help set the dining tables for meals. This helps people with dementia to retain their skills and encourages independence and activity.

**4) Principle #7:** Adopt a person centred approach. Encourage the personalisation of the dining room and other shared spaces so that people feel at home not only in their rooms but in all the spaces.

**Principle #3:** Personal and unique items can also be used as cues for way-finding when they denote the use of the space. For example, plates are associated with eating, so when a person with dementia sees the china cabinet it acts as a cue indicating that they are in the dining room. (See the info page on “Orientation

and Way-finding” for more helpful tips).

**5) Principle #4:** Avoid directional spot lights and instead use even lighting above tables.

Ensure adequate lighting and window treatment to reduce glare and reflections.

**Principle #5:** Allow for ample daylight into the space through windows and skylights. Ensure that light levels are sufficient (see the info pages on “Lighting”).

**6) Principle #10:** Include a variety of furniture styles and upholstery patterns to create an inviting, ‘homely’ and non-institutionalised feel.

**Principle #3:** Ensure that the colour of the chairs clearly contrasts with the colour of the carpet. This will allow them to be clearly identified in the environment (see the info pages on “Colour”).



**Principle #4:** To add interest yet avoid overstimulation, use a variety of subtly patterned or textured upholstery in a similar colour.

**7) Principle #2:** Avoid large dining rooms. Instead allow for a small dining area or small groups of dining tables. A small, intimate setting is more conducive to conversation and can encourage greater socialisation in the space

**8) Principle #5:** Windows let in natural light and allow for engaging views out onto the garden. Ensure that blinds are fully open or curtains pulled back.

**9) Principle #3:** Locate outdoor dining areas near to the entrance with clear lines of sight.

**10) Principle #9:** Include artwork and other objects that reference the purpose of the space.

**Principle #5:** Artwork and wall hangings can be used to introduce stimulating colours.

**11) Principle #2; Principle #8:** Smaller tables for 2 people cater for those who wish to dine alone or for friends and family who want to have a quiet, more intimate meal together.

**Principle #2:** Small tables also enable those in bed-chairs to be included in the social activity of dining, encouraging engagement and participation.

**12) Principle #10:** Adopt a person centred approach. Consider using adaptive cutlery and crockery if needed.

**13) Principle #10:** Encourage the use of appropriately coloured china plates and elegant glasses or tea cups to make the dining experience enjoyable.

**Principle #7:** Encourage the use of familiar and personal objects such as a favourite mug

**14) Principle #2; Principle #6:** Ensure that there are no main circulation paths going through the dining room. The constant flow of people and the noise is likely to

disturb diners while they are having their meals.

**Principle #4:** Avoid patterned flooring that may be distracting for a person with dementia (see the info pages on “Colour”).

**15) Principle #3:** Colour contrast should be used to differentiate objects and also to make the edges of objects more obvious. So, ensure good colour contrasts between crockery, placemats and the table/tablecloth (see the info pages on “Colour”).

For those with colour perception difficulties, consider using bright blue or red coloured crockery that will contrast well with placemats, table cloths and also with the food on the plate.

**Principle #10:** Adopt a person centred approach. Consider the look and feel of crockery so that it is safe yet beautiful and ‘homely’; and tailor the choice of crockery and utensils to suit the individual.

