

For housing and care professionals

EAC
IN FOCUS

An electronic copy of this publication, containing links to all the resources mentioned in it, can be found on the EAC www.HousingCare.org website.

Celebrating sheltered and retirement housing



Retirement housing with resident scheme manager, Hungerford, Berkshire.

EAC is introducing its own kitemark, the **EAC Quality of Information Mark**, to encourage and help housing providers deliver better and more consistent information to older people about all forms of retirement housing.

Our aim is to ensure that older people, their families, carers and advisors, understand the variety of models now available, and are able to make well informed choices about which will best meet their housing, support and care needs, and their aspirations.

The launch of the *Mark* is timely, coinciding with the Government's long awaited *Strategy for Housing in an Ageing Society*. It offers an opportunity to celebrate and promote the innovative role that specialist housing for older people has played over many years, from the first almshouses to today's extra care schemes and retirement villages.

The National Database of Housing for Older People

EAC launched its National Database of Housing for Older People in 1993. Since then, thousands of landlords, managers and developers have helped shape this into the only comprehensive picture of retirement housing throughout the UK.

Many providers have found our questionnaires, and the way we present their schemes on our own website and in our printed guides, helpful in rethinking the way they promote their own provision.

The database now includes 25,700 schemes and 2,000 managers. It covers all forms of retirement housing, for rent or sale. But although much of the information is excellent, some remains thin or dated; and for schemes that aim to deliver housing with care, the format had become increasingly restrictive.

The EAC Quality of Information Mark will up the game for all of us, by requiring and presenting for each scheme:

- a comprehensive description of its buildings, services, lifestyle features, intended user base, and costs;
- its statement of purpose (the 'service promise');
- information about how its outcomes for residents are measured.

Read on for more about the Mark, and why it is important to you.





The EAC Quality of Information Mark

your questions answered

Q

What is the Elderly Accommodation Counsel?

A

EAC is a registered charity that runs a website www.HousingCare.org and a telephone advice line **020 7820 1343**, both offering free information to older people and their carers to help them make informed choices about the accommodation and services which best meet their needs.

EAC has supported and promoted sheltered and retirement housing for many years by compiling its unique *National Database of Housing for Older People* and making this accessible to the public, and to professionals that work with older people, through its website, Advice Line and publications.



Retirement housing with resident scheme manager, Bristol

Q

What is the aim of the EAC Quality of Information Mark?

A

EAC believes that retirement housing is a valuable option in later life for many more older people than choose it at present. We see evidence every day of how ignorant many older people are about what it offers; too many regard it as a 'less bad' option than a care home; few are aware of the range of options and choices now available to them.

We believe that a *higher profile* for retirement housing is long overdue; that *good information* will encourage more older people and their families to take a look at it; and that *comparable information* will help them assess which model is right for them. *The Information Mark* aims to help on all these fronts.



Almshouse, Leiston, Suffolk

Q

What else will EAC do with the information we provide?

A

EAC's *National Database* provides supply-side information to help:

Strategic planning of services for older people;

Local planning and commissioning of new developments and remodelling;

Individual providers understand the pattern of local provision, compare their model with others, see how trends are moving, and identify opportunities for new projects.

We also help a number of providers promote their own schemes by providing a scheme finder facility within their own websites.

Q

How will my organisation benefit from this?

A

More interest in your schemes from the public; more appropriate applications and enquiries; ultimately, more satisfied residents;

A better understanding of how your provision compares with partners and/or competitors;

Higher profile amongst your peers.

The EAC Quality of Information Mark

your questions answered continued

Q

How much information do we need to supply

A

To gain an **EAC Quality of Information Mark**, we require a fully completed questionnaire for each scheme. The amount of information requested depends on the range of facilities and services available at a scheme (*If your scheme provides meals, we ask you about them; if it doesn't, you skip these questions*). We also require a statement of purpose and information on how you measure outcomes for residents.

We encourage you to provide photographs, brochures, plans, reviews, videoclips & virtual tours – and will make these available through our websites.

Q

Is there a cost?

A

No, there is no charge for having your schemes included in the *National Database*, or for a *Quality of Information Mark*.

Q

How do I obtain EAC QI Mark questionnaires?

A

1. download from the website
www.HousingCare.org Select *For Providers/ Update housing info* from the left menu.

2. from EAC

If you require a batch of questionnaires, either scheme-specific, or blank, email your request to **alex.billeter@eac.org.uk** or call **020 7820 3755**.

3. Complete/correct the questionnaire(s) by hand and return to:

Elderly Accommodation Counsel
3rd floor, 89 Albert Embankment
London SE1 7TP



The **Quality of Information Mark** is available for all types of housing for older people, from age exclusive housing to sheltered/retirement housing

to **Extra Care Housing and retirement villages**.

The *Mark* allows you to describe your scheme in whatever way you prefer – as sheltered, retirement, assisted living, very sheltered, housing with care, close care, etc. However EAC would like to reserve the term **Extra Care Housing** to a specific type of scheme meeting criteria used by the Dept of Health and the Housing Corporation (see *back page*).

PROTOCOL

At the launch date, an EAC Quality of Information Mark ('QI Mark') will be awarded to those schemes for which we have already received an appropriate questionnaire during 2007. These awards will run for 12 months.

From the launch (December 2007), the QI Mark will be awarded to housing schemes on receipt of our new *QI Mark Questionnaire*, fully completed.

The QI Mark has to be renewed annually.

Schemes under development can also receive the QI Mark.

Schemes awarded a QI Mark will be highlighted on EAC's websites and on the printed materials it delivers through its Advice Line.

Housing providers are encouraged to incorporate the QI Mark into their own scheme publicity materials.



Retirement housing with non-resident scheme manager, Sutton Coldfield, West Midlands



For any enquiries regarding the EAC Quality of Information Mark, please contact:

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3rd Floor,
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ELDERLY ACCOMMODATION COUNSEL

A national charity providing information and advice on all
forms of accommodation and services for older people

Registered Charity No. 292552



Can we classify types of retirement housing?

Sheltered housing with non-resident scheme manager, Sowerby Bridge, West Yorkshire

Nowadays, it is impossible to pigeonhole retirement housing into traditional categories such as Cat 1, Cat 2, Cat 2 - or amenity, sheltered and very sheltered. And newer terminology like independent living and assisted living is not precisely enough defined to provide a basis for classification. Hence the *EAC Quality of Information Mark's* main focus on better descriptions of schemes, rather than trying to classify them.

The *QI Mark* Questionnaire does ask how you brand or classify your schemes, and generally, whatever you reply will be part of the scheme description we present to the public. The one exception to this is the term extra care housing. There is a fairly strong consensus now on what extra care is (see box), and so we intend to reserve the term for schemes that conform to this.

Beyond this, we are acutely aware that some broader framework for classifying or segmenting retirement housing would be helpful to consumers, and we hope that an analysis of the information you provide on our *QI Mark* questionnaires will provide pointers as to how best to approach this.

Extra care characteristics

TENURE	● secure tenure and own front door
BUILDINGS	● designed for frailer older people communal and catering facilities ● full wheelchair accessibility to all private and communal areas ● bathroom with provision for assisted bathing
SERVICES	● emergency alarm service, or similar ● regular meals available ● support and personal care services available 24/7 to residents in their own home



The merger of Alliance Unichem and Boots has created Europe's largest pharmacy-led health and beauty company.

Both companies have a long history of providing pharmacist led health services to their customers, both in store and in the community. Together we are able to fulfil all the pharmacy needs of your residents.

Boots Medisure & Assisted Living Services

The FREE Boots Medisure & Assisted Living service provide a simple, yet helpful, medication administration system designed to help residents living in extra care facilities maintain their

independence. They help residents who choose to look after their own medication take the right medicine at the right time so that they can get the best from their treatment.

Prescription Collection and Delivery Service

Help your residents save time with our FREE Prescription Collection and Delivery Service. With agreement, we can arrange for post boxes to be fitted into your communal areas, where residents can post their prescriptions. We will collect these and then deliver the patients medication direct to their door.

Think of the benefits:

- No more running out of medicines
- Not having to visit the GP to order repeat prescriptions
- No need to wait in the pharmacy for prescriptions to be prepared

What's more, our flexible approach means we can tailor our service to suit your particular needs.

For more details on either of these services or to discuss other ways we can help your residents please call 020 8751 8274 or email: omar.farooq@alliancepharmacy.co.uk quoting ref. EAC.



Introduction to Seated Exercise

(NOCN accredited course)

Vitalyz motivational training outlines how to deliver appropriate, Therapeutic Seated Exercises.

www.vitalyz.com 02392 358 285

Vitalyz



Sheltered housing with resident scheme manager, York

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