

Table S1. Structured framework for the interview guide.

QUESTION	OBJECTIVE	DEFINITION	JUSTIFICATION
1. In our daily lives, we interact with many people, especially those who care for us. The way we are treated is very important to our wellbeing. Sometimes, because we need help, the way we are treated can be different. I would like to know the following: how do you feel about the treatment you receive in the care home? Do you feel comfortable?	To introduce the interview by providing the participant with a preliminary context of the study.	This question guides the participant into reflecting on specific aspects of care within a defined setting.	This opening question allows for the establishment of initial rapport and a climate of trust and understanding. It also contextualises the importance of the treatment received and how it is perceived. Furthermore, it enables us to assess how the participant perceives their situation of dependency, which helps us interpret subsequent answers.
2. How do you generally feel about living in the care home, taking into account everything around you? Do you enjoy living here?	To encourage residents to express themselves freely and to explore their overall perception of life in the care home.	This question aims to elicit the first impressions and general feelings of residents.	Based on previous research [33], this “ice-breaker” question helps to capture the lived experiences of residents.
3. Do you think that needing help with certain tasks—such as bathing, dressing, grooming, or moving around—affects how you are treated by others in the care home?	To address the core aim of the research, which is to explore how residents perceive their dependency influencing the treatment they receive.	This draws on the idea that dependency may be associated with changes in the perception of care.	Previous studies have corroborated the relationship between dependency and care preferences [33].
4. Have you ever felt that you were not treated with the respect you deserve in the care home? If yes, would you like to tell me what happened?	To invite participants to share specific events that may reveal problems, provide insights into their experiences, and generate concrete information.	Through this question, we assess residents’ experiences of respect and dignity and identify potential situations of disrespect that might otherwise remain unnoticed.	Asking this question respectfully allows us to identify problems and suggest improvements while raising awareness of the seriousness of such situations where relevant.

5. Do you feel that you are treated well in the care home? Could you explain why you think that?	To build on the information obtained in Question 3, exploring how residents justify or accept the treatment they receive.	This question aims to investigate perceptions of fairness and acceptance of care and whether residents agree with the way they are treated.	Previous studies have examined residents' satisfaction with perceived and received care, such as in [33], which explores older adults' experiences in care homes.
6. Do you feel that the staff pay attention to your needs and care about what you require or would like? Why do you think that?	To evaluate residents' perceptions of how their individual needs are addressed, closely aligned with the main aim of the study.	By this point in the interview, trust is expected to have been established, allowing for deeper exploration of personalised communication and attention.	Quality of life is closely linked to perceived quality of care, the treatment received, and the processes involved [35].
7. Do you think that needing help with certain things affects how you get along with other residents? Do you think it affects your relationship with the staff?	To explore possible differences in social interactions among residents whose dependency may influence how they are treated.	This question may reveal whether dissatisfaction originates in interactions with staff or with other residents.	Dependency can influence not only perceived treatment by staff but also social dynamics among residents, as shown in previous studies [36].
8. Have you noticed any change in the way you are treated since you arrived at the care home? What has changed?	To explore how perceptions of treatment evolve over time and to identify factors that may have influenced these changes.	Residents' dependency levels often change over time, with greater needs for support or reduced autonomy.	Previous studies have shown that experiences and care preferences evolve with time and changing circumstances [34].
9. Have you noticed differences in the way other women in the care home are treated? (Female participants.) Have you noticed differences in the way other men in the care home are treated? (Male participants.)	To provide a broader perspective on gender dynamics within care homes and to help design strategies that ensure equal and respectful treatment.	This question is important because it explores not only individual experiences but also participants' perceptions of how others of the same gender are treated.	The scientific literature supports the notion that social practices are influenced by gender, shaping interactions within care homes, including how residents are treated [37].

10. Have you ever felt treated differently depending on whether the professional was a man or a woman?	To address the influence of gender in professional–resident interactions and to identify possible gender biases in care.	This question explores whether residents perceive differences in treatment depending on the caregiver’s gender, which may reflect inequalities or biases.	Prior research [37,38] indicates that gender affects both resident–resident interactions and the organisation and management of care work.
11. What would you like to see changed or improved in the care home to make you feel more comfortable, happier, and more at ease?	To identify possible improvements in care from the residents’ perspective.	This question provides valuable insights from residents themselves that can inform recommendations for better care and management practices.	Residents’ suggestions can be compared with findings from existing studies [36] that seek to improve quality of life in care homes.
12. What do you think could be done in the care home to make you feel more valued and respected?	To identify specific actions that could enhance feelings of respect and recognition among staff and residents alike.	Residents are the best positioned to suggest improvements in care. Their contributions can inform practical recommendations.	The information obtained from this question can be aligned with studies that emphasise dignity in care and quality of life in residential settings [39].