

Choosing a Residential or Nursing Home

Social Services will do their best to help you stay in your own home as long as possible. However, one of the biggest decisions you might have to make in your life is to move into a Residential or Nursing Home. It is worth spending time over this as different homes will suit different people.

The **Commission for Social Care Inspection (CSCI)** makes sure that homes meet the standards expected of them. They have lists of residential and nursing homes. Their local address is at the end of this booklet.

It's your choice

It is up to you to choose the home, which is right for you. You might wish to involve a carer, family member or friend. Social Services can provide a list of homes in your chosen area and may be able to help with payment, following an assessment of your needs and your financial situation.

If you are leaving hospital, you may be asked to move temporarily into a home which is not your first choice, until a place is available in your preferred home.

Residential Homes are for people who have social, emotional, mental health and/or personal care needs and who are unable to manage in their own home. Staff are on duty 24-hours a day.

Nursing Homes are for people who have these needs, but who also need nursing care and are unable to manage in their own home. Qualified nursing staff are on duty 24-hours a day. Registered nursing care is free at all times. Costs are met by the NHS. Deciding what registered nursing care is needed for each patient is based on an assessment carried out by a nurse specialist. The assessment uses a nationally agreed framework and is subject to regular and ongoing review.

Dual Registered Homes offer both types of care.

Some homes also offer short breaks or respite care.

All these homes are registered and are regularly inspected to ensure that they meet current legal requirements.

Choosing the right home for you

We recommend that you visit at least three homes before making your choice. You might find it useful to take someone with you. If you do not have a relative or friend who can go with you, your social worker will be able to help. All homes will allow you to look round and will answer your questions about the care offered. They should also give you a brochure, which explains what services and facilities are available and the aims, objectives and philosophy of the home and a copy of the latest CSCI inspection report.

It is useful to compare a few homes. Even if the home you like best does not have a vacancy, you can put your name on its waiting list.

There is always a trial period (of at least four weeks) during which you can choose to move to another home at any time. After this you may still move after giving notice. At some homes you can also visit for a day or half day before you decide.

Social Services will assess your needs, with help from your health team, and help you to reach a decision about the kind of care you need. You might wish to seek advice, but the final choice rests with you.

The home you choose will ask you to sign an agreement outlining the terms and conditions of your residence. You should read this carefully and make sure you understand what you are agreeing to.

Do I Pay?

Your social worker will help you to complete a financial assessment. This will indicate whether or not Social Services should help with the cost of your care. If the home charges more than the maximum amount payable by Social Services, a relative, or some other third party can choose to pay the extra.

Please ask for our leaflet '**Care Home Fees**' if you have not already been given this. We also have a series of short leaflets about paying for residential care, covering third party top ups; liable relatives; state benefits and deferred payments.

If you need further information, please ask your social worker.

Care Home checklist

All homes should be helpful and willing to show you around, even if you choose to arrive unannounced – although you may have to make a separate appointment to allow time for all your questions to be answered. The following points are worth bearing in mind when you are choosing a Residential or Nursing Home. However, you should ask about absolutely anything that may help you decide whether a home is suitable.

The look and feel of the home

- ◆ How many residents are there?
- ◆ Are the staff friendly, welcoming and interested?
- ◆ Talk to the residents. Are they relaxed, content and occupied?
- ◆ Does the home look well cared for and smell clean?
- ◆ Would it be a reassuring place for you/your relative to be?
- ◆ Are residents encouraged to bring in their own furniture, pictures and other personal items?
- ◆ Are residents able to bring their pets with them?

The Daily Routine

- ◆ Do residents have control over their lives? eg. can they get up and go to bed when they want to?
- ◆ Is there a choice of menu, catering for special requirements?
- ◆ Are visitors welcome at all times? Can they stay for a meal or overnight?
- ◆ Are there facilities to make a drink and a snack?
- ◆ What activities and outings are available for residents?
- ◆ Can residents continue any interests or regular activities that they already have, eg. attending church or clubs?

Facilities

- ◆ Is there easy access to gardens?
- ◆ What arrangements are made for the cultural and spiritual needs of residents?
- ◆ Are there separate smoking and non-smoking areas?
- ◆ Do residents have a choice of single or shared rooms?
- ◆ Is the home convenient for friends and relatives to visit?

Fees

- ◆ Prices do vary between homes. Find out what is included in the weekly charge and what costs extra, such as hairdressing or chiropody.

How to contact Social Services:

A social worker is part of the Primary Care Team at every GP surgery in Herefordshire. Ask the surgery to put you in touch.

Or phone one of our central contact numbers:

- ◆ Older and Disabled People's Services in Leominster, Kington and the Golden Valley.
Tel: 01432 383349
- ◆ Older and Disabled People's Services in Ross, Ledbury and Bromyard.
Tel: 01432 383251
- ◆ Older and Disabled People's Services in Hereford City.
01432 261627
- ◆ Mental Health Services
01432 262850
- ◆ Learning Disability Services.
01432 373200

Other useful contacts:

- ◆ **Commission for Social Care Inspection**

178 Widemarsh Street, Hereford HR4 9HN.

Tel: 01432 845700. Fax: 01432 845726

www.csci.org.uk

- ◆ **Age Concern**

Hereford (City & Rural): Berrows Business Centre, Bath Street, Hereford HR1 2HG.

Tel: 01432 350483

Ross on Wye: 18 Gloucester Road, Ross-on-Wye HR9 5BU.

Tel: 01989 763887

Leominster & Kington: 30 West Street, Leominster HR6 8ES.

Tel: 01568 611054

Bromyard: 5 Broad Street, Bromyard HR7 4BS.

Tel: 01885 483483 or 483564

Ledbury: 38 Bye Street, Ledbury HR8 2AA.

Tel: 01531 631280

Age Concern have a factsheet entitled “**Finding Residential and Nursing Home Accommodation**” which they will send on request.

◆ **Herefordshire People’s Advocacy Network**

Advocacy House, 103-104 East Street, Hereford HR1 2LW.

Tel: 01432 263757

Provides a free service to residents of care homes and anyone contemplating a move to a residential setting. Arranges for trained advocates to support older people to make informed choices and state their point of view to others.

◆ **Alzheimers Society**

49 Breinton Road, Hereford HR4 0JY.

Tel: 01432 371137

◆ **Herefordshire Carers’ Support**

Mortimer House, Holmer Road, Hereford HR4 9TA.

Tel: 01432 356068

HCS is a local charity, part funded by Herefordshire Council, which gives free information and support to carers in Herefordshire.

You will find details of other contacts in “**Better Care Higher Standards**”. If you have not been given a copy, please ask.

This information can be made available in other languages and formats, such as audio tape, large print or Braille. Please ask your social worker or at any Social Services or Info in Herefordshire office.