

North Lincolnshire

Safeguarding Adults

Learning Briefing:

Supporting a person to choose a care home

January 2021



Thinking about moving into a care home

Are you supporting a person or their family to explore choosing and living in a residential care home?

This briefing aims to provide some points to think about when you are having those discussions.

It will cover:

- Supporting the conversation
- Looking at all the options
- Choosing the right care home
- Researching and visiting shortlisted homes
- Paying to live in a care home
- Moving in
- Reviewing the choice.



Supporting a conversation

The decision to move into a care home is never made lightly and often follows difficulties in relation to a person remaining in their own home. You can support someone to make this decision by talking through the different options.

When the person you are supporting, or their family, opens the conversation about wanting to move into a care home it is important that you:

- Listen to the concerns, wishes and expectations of the person being supported and their carers / family members
- Discuss how a [Care Assessment](#) could help them understand their needs and how they can best be supported
- Talk through what different options they may have.

Other options

There is a wide range of support to help people remain independent at home, for longer than they thought possible, for example:

- [Equipment to support independence](#) – equipment to help bathing, kitchen utensils, chairs and mobility aids, telecare equipment
- [Adaptations to their home](#) - grab rails, ramps, stair lifts, wet room
- [Care at home](#) –with a little extra help, people may be able to stay at home. Support with everyday tasks and personal care may help them to stay independent
- [Rehabilitation and reablement](#) – support to improve confidence and ability to do day to day tasks for themselves
- [Assisted living](#) or extra-care housing – an option where the person continues to live independently but there is support readily available if it is needed

It is also important to encourage them to consider mental capacity, lasting powers of attorney and what is in their best interest, making sure they are honest about the difficulties they are having.

Choosing the right care home

Support the person and their family carer to think about what is important to them.

A care home should be a happy, comfortable and safe place to live and may mean different things to different people.

There are many different types of care homes, including those providing specialist, nursing or dementia care.

Many people living in a care home have strong social and family connections in their local communities and will often stay in the same area to maintain these relationships. For others, moving into a care home can provide an opportunity to move closer to family or friends to make it easier for them to visit or provide additional support.

[AgeUK](#) provides some great advice and leaflets on choosing a care home.

Research at home

You can support by guiding a person, or their family carer, to the [CQC website](#), which provides information about what can be expected from a 'good' or 'outstanding' care home, contact details for homes in their area and latest inspection reports.

Suggest that the person or their family carer looks at a home's website and speaks to the manager. They should send information and answer some initial questions. Some care homes may offer a virtual tour.

Making a visit

Care homes differ considerably in character and atmosphere and it is important to find an environment which suits the individual. It is important that you encourage a visit to the home to enable people to get a feel about everything from the care home team, how they approach care. Support them to, or suggest they, look at the [Age UK](#) and [Alzheimer's Society](#) websites which provide videos, leaflets and checklists of key things explore which can support people to make a checklist of things to find out and ask about.

Paying to live in a care home

The cost of care is one of the biggest concerns for people and can vary depending on the level of support required, but there may be some options to help fund support. **It is important to establish the costs thoroughly**, including the weekly cost and how often the cost is reviewed, and **ensure that the person has not committed to something which they cannot afford to pay.**

A person may choose to pay the fees themselves. There may be some entitlement to financial support through the Department of Works and Pensions. They **will still be able to ask for advice and support** to help find a care home from the council if they need to. **Advise them to take independent financial advice to plan their financial commitment very carefully.**

If a person is eligible for funding support the council could pay some or most of the fees. The council will carry out a [care assessment](#) to see if care in a care home is the best way to meet the person's needs. This process will look at whether they can get help with fees.

If a person is eligible for funding the council will calculate the cost of care and how much the contributions may be. For further help and information go to NorthLincs.gov.uk or telephone 01724 297000

If a person's needs are health based the NHS may arrange and pay for care – [NHS continuing healthcare](#) .

Moving into a care home

Moving in can be a stressful time, but also a positive start to a new life. You should advise the person and their family carer about some things that can be done to make the move a little easier. Give advice and support them to:

- Complete a person-centred passport document, detailing preferences and routines, family background, making it easier for staff to know a person's likes and dislikes and a little more about them, examples are [‘This is me’](#), [My Life](#), both of which can be downloaded for free. This is particularly important when someone is living with dementia
- Consider a trial period or day visit before moving in
- Bring in home comforts – photo's, music or keepsakes
- Stay in touch with family – family and friends continue to be important. If visiting is not possible face to face, then technology may be used to stay in touch
- Take time to adjust – the care home manager will be able to offer support to people to settle in more easily

Reviewing choices

You should help someone to reflect and review their choice of moving into a care home.

- Once a person has moved in they will have regular reviews with the care home, adult social care and/or health professionals, as required. This identifies any health, care and support changes necessary
- If a person has minor concerns or worries you may support them to speak with the manager of the home and work with them to resolve any issues
- Most homes have resident and relative meetings – you can support or encourage the person or family carer to be involved in these meetings to raise general issues and share what is going well
- If there are still concerns, the situation is a safety risk, or there are poor standards of care you should raise this with North Lincolnshire Council Safeguarding Team on 01724 297000 or with the [Care Quality Commission](#)
- You may also support the person and the family carer to choose alternative care that may not have been an available choice when they first thought of residential care.