

# Your Guide To Community Care



## **What is community care?**

Community care can be defined as care provided outside of a hospital setting.

Some people cannot manage on their own without help. Community care means helping people to live independently in the community. This could be in their own home, in sheltered housing or in a residential or nursing home.

## **Who do I contact?**

If you or someone you know can't manage on their own, you can contact:

your family doctor;  
your local Health and Social Services Trust; or  
your local Citizens Advice Bureau.

## **What rights have carers?**

You have a right to have your needs assessed separately if you are caring for someone at home. The results of this assessment will be taken into account when decisions about services are being made.

## **What happens next?**

Someone will visit you to see what kind of help you need and to plan your care. This may be a social worker, community nurse or occupational therapist. This will give your relatives and friends the chance to make their views known. All these views will

be taken into account before any decisions are made. Your care plan should be explained and agreed with everyone involved.

### **What help is available?**

Depending on the result of the assessment, the help and services could include the following:

- Aids and appliances.
- Meals on wheels.
- Home help.
- Day care.
- Respite care.
- Sheltered accommodation.
- Residential and nursing homes.
- Housing adaptations.

You will be given written details of the help you will get. These will include the name, address and phone number of the person who is responsible for making sure you get the care you are entitled to.

### **What are direct payments?**

Instead of having services provided directly you can apply for funding so that you can buy the services you need for yourself. Contact your local Trust for further details.

### **What happens if circumstances change?**

Your situation will be reviewed regularly and the level of help may be changed, if necessary. If your circumstances change, you should tell a member of staff involved with your care or the person who is responsible for the help you get.

### **If things go wrong**

If you are not satisfied with the help you get, you can:

discuss the matter with a member of staff involved; or  
contact the Complaints Officer.

You have a right to have your complaint investigated. For more information about how to complain, contact your Health and Social Services Council.

**You have a right to be treated politely  
with respect for your privacy and dignity.**