



St. Helens Council

Your Choice in Care

Residential and Nursing Care 2008/2009

1. **INTRODUCTION**

If you think you need help with your everyday living you can ask the Council to assess your care needs. You are entitled to an assessment regardless of how much money you may have and whether or not you can afford to pay for any services.

The purpose of the assessment is to look at your needs, what support you already have in place and what services can be provided in order to help you live as independent and full a life as possible.

St. Helens Council's Adult Social Care and Health Department is responsible for assessing your needs and for arranging packages of care that will best meet those needs.

If the Council decides that you need care in a care home and you agree with this, then the Council will make the arrangements for you. If you are unable to do so yourself and there is no-one willing to arrange it on your behalf, the Council will still make the arrangements for you, even if you have enough money to pay for care in the care home.

This information is designed to help you, by answering some of the questions that you may need to ask.

2. **YOUR CHOICE IN CARE**

What do we mean by a Care Home?

A care home is a home where you can live in comfortable surroundings and be looked after day and night by trained staff, who will provide 'personal care' including assistance with dressing, washing, bathing and toileting.

Care homes provide a greater degree of support for those people no longer able to remain in their own homes.

Care homes (nursing), in addition to residential accommodation, also have trained nurses on duty who will provide skilled nursing care when you need it. 'Nursing' care homes must have a qualified nurse on duty at all times. You will be entitled to have your nursing needs assessed by the Primary Care Trust (PCT). This assessment will identify whether you will be eligible for NHS funded nursing care www.haltonandsthelenspct.nhs.uk or contact 01744 620345 for more details)

Care homes can vary in size from homes for 10 people up to homes for 120 people. All homes have to be registered with the Commission for Social Care and Inspection (CSCI) and maintain specified national standards.

Your Care Manager will provide you with a copy of a list of local care homes the Council contracts with. It is called the Resource Directory.

[Care Homes Resource Directory](#)

Your choice in care - how it works

If you are not able to pay for the whole cost of the care home fees yourself, the Council will tell you the amount that they will normally pay for your assessed needs.

If your capital is above £22,250 you will be required to pay the full charge for your care. If your capital is below this figure the Council will assess your financial circumstances and advise you on the amount you will need to pay (for further information on financial assessments please access [Charges for Residential and Nursing Care](#) or alternatively contact the Customer Finance Manager on 01744 456355.

If you have been assessed by a Care Manager as needing long-term care or a short-term break in a care home you will be provided with details of all the local homes available to you.

Once it has been agreed that a care home is what you need, you have the right to choose which home you want to live in, provided that:

- the care and accommodation provided by the home meets your assessed needs
- there is a place available at the home you have chosen
- the cost to the Council is not more than the Council would normally expect to pay; and
- the Council is able to agree the terms with the home (ie a contract) regarding your admission

The conditions above are designed to ensure that:

- your welfare is protected
- you are placed in a home that is suitable to meet your assessed needs; and
- the Council is able to stay within its financial limits;

If there is no place available in the home you want, or the Council is unable to contract with the home on terms that are suitable to the Council you can ask us to arrange for you to go into another home until a place becomes available in the home of your choice. If a place subsequently becomes available in the home of your choice, you should be able to take this up PROVIDED all of the above conditions are satisfied.

It may be that the home you choose is more expensive than the Council will normally pay for your assessed needs. You can still go into the home of your choice if there is someone willing and able to make up the difference in cost such as a family member or a friend. This person is known as a 'Third Party'.

The Council will want to make sure that your third party can contribute for the foreseeable future. You should be aware that if there is a less expensive home available that meets your needs, the Council may ask you to move to that home if the third party can no longer afford their contribution payment.

What if I haven't made my mind up?

Your Care Manager can advise you in making your choice if:

- you do not already have a preference about where you wish to live;
- you do not feel able or wish to choose a home yourself;
- you do not have a relative or carer to help you.

Age Concern are also available to help you make your decision

What about going into a home outside St. Helens?

There is no problem with you choosing a home outside the borough of St. Helens, providing it too meets all the above requirements. The Council will enter into an agreement with the individual home as long they are appropriately registered with CSCI.

CSCI can provide you with a list of care homes in the local area and also keep copies of their latest inspection reports which are available on the CSCI website www.csci.gov.uk or from the individual home itself. Alternatively you can contact the local (Adult) Social Care Department who will also be able to provide you with a list of care homes in the local area.

3. **CHOOSING A CARE HOME**

Moving into a care home is a big decision. You may wish to visit a number of suitable homes, to talk to the home's manager and to see for yourself facilities at the home. A checklist of things you may like to ask when deciding on a home is shown later in this booklet. This will help you think through the many different aspects of choosing a home. There are some general points that you may want to consider before visiting a home.

- what lifestyle do I want to maintain in the home of my choice?
- what size of home do I want to go into?
- Do I want to be close to relatives and community facilities such as shops?

Remember there may be many things you want to know, when you visit a home. It is in your interests to find out as much as you can about the standards of care you can expect to find there.

Do not be afraid to ask questions that you want answers to. Homes will provide you with leaflets, which may answer only some of your questions. What may seem insignificant or unimportant to others may be of great concern to you. If anything does concern you, talk it over with the management and staff. It is in their interests that all their residents are happy with the service provided.

To help you think through the various issues, here is a checklist of some of the things you may wish to ask.

Location	is the home conveniently situated for my needs?
Premises	is the building well maintained and cared for?
Access	is the home all on one level or are there appropriate lifts?
Accommodation	will I have a room of my own? what facilities will my room have? how often are rooms cleaned? is there an alarm call system in the bedroom?
Personal Choices	can I take my own personal possessions e.g. a chair or television when I move in? can I take my pet? are residents allowed to stay in bed when they feel like it?
Staffing	how many staff does the home employ? what care is there at night? what training have the management and staff had?
Security	does the home have a burglar alarm? will I have a key to my own room? what arrangements should I make for insurance? what arrangements are made to safeguard money and valuables?
Meals	what time are meals served? are these times flexible? is there a choice?

are individual tastes catered for?
can I eat my meals in my own room?

Activities

what recreational/social events are held at the home?
what activities took place last week? do I have to take part?
does the home have outings, e.g. theatre, shops, seaside?
can I make suggestions for activities?
are there any library facilities?
does the Council's Mobile Library call at the home?
if so, how often?
are religious services held at the home?
are newspapers delivered to the home?
can I order my own newspapers?
what arrangements are there for receiving letters?

Personal Care

can I keep my own doctor, dentist or optician?
does a hairdresser visit the home?
does the home have its own laundry?
can I do my own laundry?
can I have a bath whenever I want?
will staff be there if I need assistance?
does the home have any specialist bathing equipment?

Visitors

are visitors welcome at any time?
what facilities are provided for them?
is there facility for privacy?
what about refreshments for visitors?

Smoking

given the current law, what is the home's policy on smoking?

Personal Allowance

what control do I have over it?
how much can I accumulate?

Complaints

what if I am unhappy about something in the home?
who do I speak to?

Who will be eligible for funding in residential or nursing home care?

You will only be supported financially by the Council in a care home if a Care Manager has identified that it is essential your needs are met in this way.

A financial assessment will be carried out by the Council's Customer Finance Team, and you will be required to make a contribution to the fees payable for your care from the date of your admission to the care home. This is called the Resident's Assessed Contribution and is calculated in line with Government regulations. You will be visited by a Customer Finance Officer who will calculate your weekly contribution towards the cost of care and will also give you advice and guidance on your finances and entitlement to benefits.

For more information about paying for care you can visit the Council's website and access the leaflet 'Charges for Residential and Nursing Care' on www.sthelens.gov.uk or contact Customer Finance Section on 01744 456355.

Contracts

If the Council is contributing towards your care home fees, they will arrange for a written contract between the care home and the Council that identifies the services and facilities that will be provided for you.

The contract will include:

- Care and services covered by the fee
- how often the fees might rise and the basis of any rises
- what fees are payable if you are absent from the home eg in hospital
- your rights and obligations
- the rights and obligations of the care home and the Council (and what happens if these are not followed)
- the Complaints procedure

Additional Charges

The contract with a home does include a range of services including things like food, drinks, basic toiletries etc

You or your family will not be expected to pay for any extra facilities provided by a home unless you are happy to do so and are given the option in the first instance.

As a guide - the items listed below are examples of chargeable optional extras that the Council has agreed homes may offer:

- hairdressing facilities
- transport to outside entertainment (e.g. payment for transport for trips to the theatre, day excursions etc.)
- leisure activities

If you are unhappy with any charges being made to you for extra facilities please contact the, Contracts Manager, at the Adult Social Care and Health Department on (01744) 456226 as soon as possible.

The assessment of your financial circumstances will identify how much money you have left for yourself if you wish to purchase additional things

What if my needs change or there is a change in my financial circumstances?

If we know of any changes in your assessed charge we will inform you as soon as possible. If your finances change in any way which will affect your charge, please let the Customer Finance Team know on (01744) 456355. Otherwise, we will review your contribution to the cost of your care every April.

4. YOUR RIGHTS

Having made your decision and entered the home of your choice you have the right to receive a standard and quality of service that meets your needs, choices and aspirations and that the service provided is responsive to your needs and wishes.

Your rights include:

- ♦ that you will not be expected to pay for extra facilities unless you have first been given the option to do so. It is the Council's view that the contract agreed with homes covers all the required care needs of our residents.

- ◆ that you have the right to choose to handle your own financial affairs, including control of your personal allowance.
- ◆ that you are treated with dignity and respect and live in an environment that provides comfort, physical security and freedom from worry.
- ◆ that you will be afforded freedom of choice.
- ◆ that you will be given choice of quality, appetising and nourishing food.
- ◆ that you will be able to receive visitors at all reasonable hours.
- ◆ that you are made aware of the complaints procedure of the home and that of the Council's Adult Social Care and Health Department
- ◆ that you have your care reviewed on a regular basis thereby ensuring that your needs are being met fully.
- ◆ that you have access to a telephone (including privacy to use one).
- ◆ that you are given the opportunity to comment freely or complain about any aspect of the service provided by the home.

Additionally you can expect to:

- ◆ be cared for by persons who are sufficiently skilled and trustworthy.
- ◆ be involved in all decision making processes that affect you.
- ◆ retain your own G.P. if desired and appropriate.
- ◆ live as independently as possible and be encouraged to determine your own lifestyle.
- ◆ be encouraged to pursue existing interests, acquire new ones and to make use of community facilities.
- ◆ be kept informed of any staffing changes.
- ◆ have your privacy respected.
- ◆ be addressed in the manner of your choosing.
- ◆ be given the choice to handle your own medicines (where appropriate to do so).
- ◆ wash, bath and use toilet facilities in private or with assistance if required.

Your care needs will be regularly reviewed by the Adult Social Care and Health Department.

Choice is at the heart of community care and the Council will continue to monitor and develop its services to promote maximum choice for all service users.

If you change your mind

Your first six weeks in a care home will be on a trial basis. Your care manager will discuss how things are going with you, your family and staff at the home to help you decide whether the home is right for you.

If you wish to move you can contact your care manager to help you.

If you are unhappy about any aspect of the care you receive, discuss the situation with your Care Manager or with his/her Manager.

If you do not resolve the problem you can refer the matter to:

Contracts Manager
Adult Social Care and Health,
2nd Floor, The Gamble Building,
Victoria Square,
ST. HELENS,
Merseyside.
WA10 1DY

Telephone (01744) 456226
Fax: (01744) 456553
Email: aschcontracts@sthelens.gov.uk