

YOUROPTIONS

Choosing a Carer



Home Care



Information and advice you need when choosing a carer for you or your loved ones

Making the right **CHOICES**

It's a frightening time for anyone who finds they need the service of a homecare provider. Having to deal with all sorts of officials to find out what help is available and how you can access this help. Often times, when a need is identified, an official from Social Services will visit and rather than advise on what help you can get, you end up being told what you need and how you are going cope in the circumstances!

What this **guide** is about

If you need help around the home, a good option is to have a care worker come in to your home to help you.

Homecare can be very flexible, in order to meet your needs, and the same person or agency may be able to provide some or all of these options for the duration of your care.

Direct Carers have put this guide together to help you make the right choices when choosing the right care for you and your loved ones.

CHOICE - is a word rarely used in these circumstances by anybody who needs the service of a homecare provider, however, with the government initiative on Direct Payments you can **CHOOSE** who you wish to help with care for you or your loved ones and not be forced to use a service that you have no control over, but still have to pay for!

Direct Carers are a local agency that care about people not profits, should you require any further information, or you would like to talk to us about your circumstances and the care services we can offer you please don't hesitate to contact us.



Some aspects of The Care Act came into force in April 2015 and other parts are still waiting to be implemented. It changes the way the social care system will work in the future.

The first parts of the Act came into effect in April 2015. Although the remaining changes were due to come into force in April 2016, the government has announced that they are to be delayed until April 2020.

If you need care, or look after someone who does, you'll need to know how care is changing in the future and how it could affect you. You can find an overview below, or contact us for more information.

Ways it may affect you from April 2015:

1. You will have a right to a free needs assessment from your council, even if it thinks your finances are too high or your needs are too low to qualify for help.
2. All councils will use new national eligibility criteria to decide whether someone can get help from them.
3. If you get social care support, you will now have a right to request a personal budget if you're not offered one. This is a summary of how much the council thinks your care should cost. This might be useful if you want to pay for your own care.
4. If your needs assessment shows you don't qualify for help from the council, they must advise you how the care system works and how to pay for your own care. So if you just need a hand with housework, for example, the council should assist you in finding this.
5. You can defer selling your home to pay your care fees until after your death.
6. If you're paying for your own care, you can ask the council to arrange your services for you. It can only charge you as much as someone whose care they are funding.
7. If you're a carer, you have a legal right to a care assessment from the local council. You can also get support services if you qualify for them.

8. If you find it difficult to communicate or to understand the issues being discussed, the council must provide an advocate to help you when discussing your care. They will represent your interests if you don't have a friend or relative who can help.
9. The council must provide preventative services that could reduce or delay your need for care. For example, intermediate care at home after a hospital stay could help keep you independent for longer.

Ways it may affect you from April 2020:

1. There will be a cap on how much you have to spend on your care needs. Anything you or the council spend on your eligible needs will be added up in your care account. Once it reaches £72,000, the council will pay for all your eligible needs. This will exclude your daily living costs, which covers things like your food and accommodation in a care home. The proposed figure of £72,000 for the cap could change by 2020 due to inflation.
2. The council can reassess your care needs, even if you pay for your own care. This is because the council works out how much your care should cost to meet your eligible needs, and adds this up. It needs to check every so often that the amount it thinks you should be spending is still right.
3. New rules about top-up fees in care homes mean you may be able to pay them yourself. Top-up fees may apply if you move into a care home that costs more than the council can pay.
4. If you're not happy about a decision, you have a new right to complain and appeal it, and for this to be independently investigated.

USEFUL CONTACTS

Age UK

They are able to provide relevant information for people in the later stage of life.

Age UK Advice line

Tel: 0800 169 65 65

Care Quality commission (CQC)

Are the national independent regulator of all health and social care services in England. They can provide a list of home care providers.

Tel: 03000 61 61 61

Local Government Ombudsman

In England, you are able to contact them when you have a complaint, about the council and are not satisfied with how the council have dealt with it. They also look at complaints about other organisations, including care homes.

Tel: 03000 61 06 14

Turn 2 Us

Help people access the money available to them- through welfare benefits, grants and any other help available. They can also help you access charities that can offer top-up fees.

Tel: 0808 802 2000