

# Choosing a Care Home

## Introduction

Giving up your own home and moving into a care home is a very big step for anyone. Like any important decision, you should not rush into it.

Our staff will talk to you about the other options available to you. Depending upon a full assessment of your care needs and a discussion about the risks to your independence, you may be able to remain at home with support or you may consider moving to supported accommodation. You might decide that a residential or nursing home care setting is the best way to meet your care needs.

## To support you in making decisions about your future

We will need to ask you about your social and health care needs to make sure that the right level of support is provided by the right organisation. Sometimes, your care may be best provided by the NHS, and we can offer advice on this.

All social care services are subject to our eligibility criteria. For more information, please read our factsheet ***Eligibility Criteria: Getting the services you need.***

## Choosing a care home

This must be your own choice so it is important that you ask as many questions as you need to before making your decision. Some homes may be able to offer a short trial to help you decide.

This gives you the opportunity to see how you settle in a care home before you make a definite decision about your future. It also means that if you do not like your first choice care home, you can transfer to a different home.

It is important that you choose a care home that will meet your needs physically, emotionally and socially. It is important that you feel comfortable living there both now and in the future.

For more information the Welsh Government has published a useful guide ***Thinking about a care home? A guide to what you need to know.***

## Different types of homes

All residential care homes offer personal care for people who are no longer able to manage those needs at home, even with support.

Every individual is unique and will have needs that are personal to them; they may include getting in and out of bed, help with bathing, dressing or using the toilet and/or help with meals. A care home should also provide a feeling of security, companionship and a range of social activities. Moving into a care home should not restrict hobbies and interests you currently enjoy. Most care homes will have details of activities they run on a regular basis and trips/excursions that have taken place over the year.

Some care homes offer nursing care in addition to personal care; they must have qualified nursing staff on duty at all times.

Other homes do not have nurses but have qualified care assistants on duty at all times.

Your Care Manager's assessment will determine your current and future needs and will help you to work out what is right for you. It is important to consider your future needs at this point; if you go into a home which does not offer 24 hour nursing care, you would have to move again if your needs changed and nursing care was required.

Remember, there may be waiting lists for places at some care homes. If your move to a care home is urgent, or if you are a patient in hospital, you will need to consider other options such as moving into an alternative home for an interim period.

A list of registered care homes can be obtained from our social care and housing department.

### Paying for your care

Once it has been agreed that a care home placement is the best way of meeting your care needs, you will be asked to complete a **Statement of Financial Circumstances form**.

Your Care Manager will explain this to you more fully. Further information is also available in our factsheet ***Paying for residential care***.

### How the Council monitors care homes

Torfaen Council does not run its own care homes. However we have contracts with homes who wish to be included on our registered list of care home providers.

Our role is to:

- Accredite new providers through an approval process
- Respond to service user and care manager feedback about providers
- Ensure that the requirements of the contract are met
- Work with other agencies, such as Aneurin Bevan Health Board and the Care and Social Services Inspectorate Wales (CSSIW) to ensure that poor quality is identified and dealt with
- Deal with complaints

As well as monitoring the care they provide, we encourage care homes to continually improve their quality of service.

If you choose a care home outside Torfaen, we will work closely with CSSIW and other councils in Wales (and England, Scotland or Northern Ireland where required) so that Care Managers have enough information to support you in your choice and to make the necessary arrangements.

### Care and Social Services Inspectorate for Wales

The CSSIW ensures that care homes in Wales meet certain standards. Its duties include:

- Deciding who can provide services
- Inspecting services
- Ensuring that regulations and national minimum standards are met
- Dealing with complaints

Care homes must meet national minimum standards, as detailed in the Care Standards Act 2000. The standards set out what facilities must be offered at each care home, as well as the training required for staff to ensure that the necessary expertise is available. The regulations and national minimum standards describe what you should expect from your care home. These cover such matters as:

- Choice of service
- Planning for individual needs and preferences
- Quality of life
- Quality of care and treatment
- Staffing
- Management
- Concerns, complaints and protection
- The physical environment

### If you are unhappy with your care home

It may take you a while to adjust to new surroundings, people and routines. Your Care Manager will be happy to talk to you about any initial concerns and will do their best to resolve them.

All residential and nursing homes have a complaints procedure, however, it's best to discuss any on-going problems with the home's manager to see if they can be resolved informally. If your concerns cannot be resolved we will support you in choosing an alternative setting.

### How to complain

After a discussion with the home's manager, if you still feel dissatisfied you have the right to pursue your complaint through the Council. For more information, see our leaflet **Complaints: How to be heard**.

Alternatively, you may wish to contact our Complaints Officer on 01633 648511.

### Our contact details

If you need more help, please contact us.

**Telephone:** 01495 762200

**E-mail:**

[socialcareCallTorfaen@torfaen.gov.uk](mailto:socialcareCallTorfaen@torfaen.gov.uk)

**Our Address:**

Torfaen Social Care and Housing Services  
Civic Centre  
Pontypool  
Torfaen  
NP4 6YB

*This factsheet can be made available in other languages and formats upon request. Please contact us in order to arrange this.*