

Long term care

choosing a care home, charges, support

VOCAL - Voice of Carers Across Lothian ● April 2017

Introduction

Thinking about long term care for the person you care for can be very bewildering and confusing. It can also be a very lonely task, difficult to share with others. This factsheet looks at some of the practical and emotional aspects of planning for long term care.

Choosing a care home

There are a number of directories that you can access online to search for care homes in Midlothian and other areas. The Care Inspectorate is a good starting point as you can also view the most up to date inspection report for the care home you are interested in. Visit their website www.scswis.com or call **0345 600 9527**.

You can arrange a visit to a care home or ask for someone from the home to visit you. Write down the things you and the person you care for want to ask and bring the list with you on visits.

A care home should be homely, safe and secure to enable people to carry on leading as full a life as possible. Don't be embarrassed to ask lots of questions, and have a good look around. Here is a list of some things you may wish to think about:

- **Location:** Is it close to local amenities and your home?
- **Atmosphere:** What is your first impression?
- **Staff:** Are there enough staff? How do they behave?
- **Accommodation:** Do you get your own room?
- **Facilities:** Are there visiting hairdressers, chiropodists etc?

● Emotional support

Thinking about long term care in a care home can be an emotional time for people, and as a carer you may need to deal with a number of different feelings.

- **VOCAL** can offer group and individual support to help with these feelings, and has produced a self help booklet for carers - call VOCAL Midlothian on **0131 663 6869** or email midlothian@vocal.org.uk for a copy.

- **Freedom:** Are safeguards in place for vulnerable adults?
- **Meals:** Is there a choice of good quality, nutritious meals?
- **Pets:** Are pets allowed in the care home?
- **Activities:** What activities are provided by the care home?
- **Keeping in contact:** Is there access to telephone or internet?
- **Having a say:** How does the home handle problems?

Paying for care

If someone is assessed as needing to live in a care home, then their finances have to be assessed - taking into account the capital and income of the person moving into the care home.

Capital includes property, investments and savings in that person's name. Half of any capital in joint names will be taken into account. The value of property is not treated as capital if the person's spouse or partner, relative over 60 or a relative under 60 with incapacity continues to live there. If a carer (who is not a spouse or partner) has been living in the house this may mean the value is disregarded.

There are upper and lower limits which define how much someone needs to pay. These figures change in line with inflation and are included in the revised versions of Charging for Residential Accommodation Guidance (see 'useful resources' on the right). If someone has over the upper limit they will be asked to pay the full cost of care.

Some types of income are disregarded or partially disregarded however pensions and state benefits are assumed capital from income. Care home residents can get 50% of their private pension paid to a spouse who continues to live at home.

If the person you care for is assessed as needing personal and/or nursing care, then they will get the costs for both deducted from the care home fees. The amount is less for people under 65. Charging procedures can be complicated so it is worth seeking advice. Call VOCAL Midlothian on **0131 663 6869**.

Care Inspectorate

Care services in Scotland are not allowed to operate unless they are registered with the Care Inspectorate. As well as registering care services, the Care Inspectorate inspect and grade them, to ensure they follow the National Care Standards. They also deal with complaints and can take action to force services to improve. Call **0845 600 9527** or visit **www.scswis.com**.

Useful resources

Charging for Residential Accommodation Guidance:
www.scotland.gov.uk/Topics/Health/Support-Social-Care/Financial-Help/Charging-Residential-Care

Local authority charging procedures for care homes:
www.ageuk.org.uk/scotland