



# CARE NAVIGATION GUIDE



BECAUSE WE CARE

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# Introduction: Understanding Care Options



## Welcome to the Westbrook Care Navigation Guide.

This guide is designed to help you and your family navigate the complex world of care services. It will empower you to make informed decisions about the care for your loved one.

Understanding the available care pathways and how they align with your loved one's needs is the first step toward ensuring they receive the best possible support.

# Section 1: Assessing Care Needs

An accurate assessment of care needs is the foundation upon which all subsequent care planning is built. It is a comprehensive evaluation that should consider the individual's physical, mental, emotional, and social requirements. This section guides you through the process of identifying and articulating these needs to ensure the care provided is appropriate and effective.

## Understanding the Assessment Process

**Initial Evaluation:** This may involve a discussion with a healthcare professional, a review of medical history, and an evaluation of current health status and daily living activities.

**Care Needs Assessment:** Often conducted by a social worker or care manager, this assessment will identify the level of assistance required in areas such as mobility, personal care, medication management, and household tasks.

**Mental Health Evaluation:** If there are concerns about mental health or cognitive function, a specialist such as a psychologist or psychiatrist may be involved to assess and make recommendations for mental and emotional well-being.

**Daily Living Skills Assessment:** Occupational therapists may assess the individual's ability to perform daily tasks and recommend adaptations or support to increase independence.

# Key Areas to Assess:

- **Physical Health:** Mobility, chronic conditions, medication needs, and the level of personal care required.
- **Cognitive Function:** Memory, decision-making ability, and risk of conditions such as dementia.
- **Emotional Well-being:** Mental health status, including signs of depression, anxiety, or other concerns.
- **Social Needs:** The need for companionship, activities, and engagement with the community.
- **Safety Concerns:** Risks within the home environment and the individual's ability to respond to emergencies.

## Questions to Guide the Assessment:

- ◆ What is the individual's current health conditions and how do they impact daily life?
- ◆ Are there any immediate safety concerns in the individual's living environment?
- ◆ What are the individual's personal preferences and routines?
- ◆ What level of social interaction does the individual desire and require?
- ◆ What are the goals for care, both short-term and long-term?

### Involving the Individual and Family

It's crucial that the person receiving care, and where appropriate, their family, are involved in the assessment process. They should feel heard, and their preferences and concerns should be central to the planning of care.

# Using Professional Assessment Tools

Professionals may use standardised tools to evaluate care needs. These tools help ensure that assessments are thorough and consistent.

## Functional Assessment:

Tools such as the Barthel Index measure the ability to perform activities of daily living.

## Cognitive Assessment:

Tools like the Mini-Mental State Examination (MMSE) can assess cognitive impairment.

## Risk Assessment:

Evaluations for fall risk, malnutrition risk, and other potential health issues.

## Documenting and Sharing Assessment Results:

The findings from the assessment should be clearly documented and shared with the individual, their family, and the care provider. This document will serve as the basis for developing a care plan.

## Reviewing and Updating the Assessment

Needs can change over time, so regular reviews of the care needs assessment are essential. These should be scheduled at regular intervals or triggered by significant changes in the individual's health or circumstances.

By following these steps, you can ensure that the care needs assessment is a comprehensive process that results in a clear understanding of the individual's needs, leading to better care planning and outcomes.

# Section 2: Types of Care Services

Selecting the right type of care service is critical to meeting the specific needs of your loved one. This section provides an overview of the various care services available, helping you to understand each option and determine which might be the best fit.

## *1. Home Care Services*

**Visiting Care:** This service involves caregivers visiting your loved one's home to provide assistance with daily activities, personal care, or medication management. Visits can range from a few hours a week to several times a day, depending on need.

**Live-in Care:** For those who need continuous support, live-in care offers a caregiver who lives in the home. This option provides round-the-clock assistance and companionship, ideal for individuals with more intensive care needs.

## *2. Supported Living*

Supported living services enable individuals with disabilities to live independently in their own home, with support tailored to their needs. This can include help with household tasks, personal care, and managing finances, as well as support in accessing education, employment, and community activities.

## *3. Specialist Care*

**Complex Care:** For those with more complex health needs, such as chronic medical conditions, acquired brain injuries, or serious physical disabilities, complex care provides specialised support and medical care.

**Dementia Care:** Tailored to meet the unique challenges of living with dementia, this care focuses on creating a safe, familiar and supportive environment to manage symptoms and maintain quality of life.

**Palliative Care:** For individuals with life-limiting conditions, palliative care offers pain and symptom management, emotional support, and assistance with end of life planning and care.

#### *4. Respite Care*

Respite care offers short-term relief for primary caregivers. This can be arranged for just a few hours, overnight, or for longer periods, providing caregivers with a much-needed break and ensuring continuous care for the individual.

#### *5. Transitional Care*

This service is designed for individuals transitioning, for example, from hospital to home. It includes support in recuperation, rehabilitation, and re-adjustment to daily living in their own environment.

#### *6. Day Services*

Day services or day centres provide social opportunities, activities, and care in a community setting, usually during daytime hours. They are beneficial for social interaction, skill development, and giving caregivers respite during the day.

#### *7. Emergency Care*

For sudden or unexpected care needs, emergency care services can be arranged quickly to provide immediate support and assistance.

### **Choosing the Right Service:**

- **Level of Need:** What is the intensity and type of care required? Does your loved one need medical support, help with daily tasks, or companionship?
- **Preferences:** What are your loved one's preferences in terms of living arrangements and their daily routine?
- **Future Needs:** Consider not just current needs, but also how these might change in the future.
- **Costs and Funding:** Evaluate the costs associated with each type of care and how these align with your financial planning.

Understanding the different types of care services available is the first step in finding the right support for your loved one. Each option offers different levels of support and independence, and the best choice will depend on the individual's specific needs and circumstances.

## Section 3: Choosing the Right Care Provider

Selecting the right care provider is one of the most crucial decisions you will make. It's essential to find a service that meets your loved one's needs, shares your values, and provides high-quality, reliable care. Below is a guide to help you assess potential care providers.

### Key Factors to Consider:

**Accreditation and Certification:** Ensure the provider is registered with the appropriate regulatory body (CQC in England) and meets all legal requirements for care services.

**Experience and Reputation:** Look into how long the provider has been in operation and check their reputation through reviews and testimonials.

**Care and Support Plans:** Understand how the provider creates personalised care plans and how often they review and update these plans.

**Staff Qualifications and Training:** Inquire about the qualifications and ongoing training that staff members receive.

**Safety and Emergency Procedures:** Learn about the provider's protocols for emergencies, including staff training in first aid and other emergency responses.

**Compliance with Care Standards:** Confirm that the provider adheres to national care standards and best practices.

# Questions to Ask Potential Providers

When visiting or interviewing potential care providers, consider asking the following questions to gather necessary information:

## *About the Care Service*

- Can you provide an overview of the services you offer?
- How do you ensure that care is person-centred and respects the individual's preferences and dignity?

## *Assessing Needs and Creating Care Plans*

- How do you assess a new client's care needs?
- How often are care plans reviewed, and how is the family involved in this process?

## *Staffing*

- What are the qualifications and experience levels of the care staff?
- How do you match caregivers with clients, and what is your policy on changing caregivers?

## *Training and Professional Development*

- What kind of training do your staff undergo upon hiring, and what continuing education do you provide?
- Are staff trained to handle specific conditions, such as dementia, mobility issues, or end-of-life care?

## *Health and Safety*

- What measures are in place to ensure the safety of clients and staff?
- How do you handle medical emergencies or unexpected situations?

## *Quality Assurance*

- How do you monitor and maintain the quality of care provided?
- Can you provide examples of how client feedback has led to changes in care?

## *Costs and Contracts*

- What are the costs of your services, and what do they include?
- Are there additional charges for services on weekends, holidays, or outside of regular hours?

## *Communication and Reporting*

- How will our family be kept informed about our loved one's care and well-being?
- What is your complaint resolution process?

## *Client Rights and Privacy*

- How do you protect the privacy and confidentiality of your clients?
- Can clients see their records, and how do you handle requests for information?

By asking these questions, you can gain a comprehensive understanding of each provider's approach to care. It's important to visit the care setting, if possible, speak to other clients or families, and trust your instincts about the environment and the people who will be providing care. The right provider will welcome your questions and be transparent in their responses, indicating a partnership approach to care.

# Section 4: Financial Planning for Care

## **Understanding Your Funding Options**

When planning for care, understanding the financial aspect is crucial. Here we outline the primary funding options available to help cover the cost of care for your loved one.

### Government Funding:

#### *Local Authority Funding:*

Depending on your loved one's financial situation and care needs, they may be eligible for funding from the local council. This starts with a care needs assessment followed by a means test.

#### *NHS Continuing Healthcare:*

For those with a complex medical condition, the NHS may cover the full cost of care, whether in a care home or at home, through NHS Continuing Healthcare.

#### *NHS-Funded Nursing Care:*

If your loved one is in a nursing home and needs nursing care, they might be eligible for NHS-funded nursing care contribution towards the cost.

#### *Attendance Allowance:*

For those over the age of 65 who need help with personal care due to illness or disability.

#### *Personal Independence Payment (PIP):*

For individuals under the age of 65 who need help with some of the extra costs caused by long-term ill-health or a disability.

## Self-Funding

If your loved one's assets and income exceed the thresholds for local authority support, they may need to pay for their care. This can include income from pensions, savings, investments, and property.

### *Care Annuities:*

A care annuity is a type of insurance policy that provides a regular income in exchange for a lump-sum payment, specifically to fund care costs for the rest of the individual's life.

### *Equity Release Schemes:*

If your loved one owns their home, equity release schemes such as a 'lifetime mortgage' or 'home reversion' can provide funds while allowing them to continue living in their home.

### *Third-Party Contributions:*

Sometimes, family members or other third parties may contribute to the cost of care, which can be coordinated alongside other forms of funding.

### *Charities and Grants:*

Various charities offer grants that can help pay for care. These are typically need-based and may cover specific conditions or disabilities.

## Navigating the Benefits System

Navigating the benefits system can be complex. Here's how to start:

### *Benefits Check:*

Perform full benefits check to ensure your loved one is receiving all the financial support they are entitled to.

Expert Advice: Consider consulting with a financial advisor specialising in care funding who can provide personalised advice and help plan for long-term care costs.

### *Budgeting for Care:*

Budgeting for care involves not just looking at immediate costs but also forecasting potential changes in needs and associated costs. When planning:

### *Anticipate Increases:*

Care costs can rise over time due to inflation or changes in care needs.

Plan for the Long-Term: Consider the potential duration of care and look at sustainable funding strategies.

### *Emergency Fund:*

It's wise to set aside funds for unexpected care-related expenses or emergencies.

*Understanding and navigating the financial aspects of care is a critical component of ensuring your loved one receives the care they need without undue financial strain. With careful planning and the right information, you can create a solid plan to finance care now and in the future.*

## Section 5: Legal Considerations

Navigating the legal aspects of arranging care is a critical component of ensuring the rights and best interests of your loved one are protected. This section provides an overview of the key legal considerations to keep in mind during the care planning process.

### 1. Power of Attorney

**Healthcare Power of Attorney:** Designates a person to make healthcare decisions on behalf of your loved one if they become unable to do so themselves.

**Financial Power of Attorney:** Allows a designated individual to manage financial affairs, including paying bills, managing investments, and handling other financial matters.

**Importance of Early Arrangement:** It's advisable to arrange Power of Attorney while your loved one is still capable of making informed decisions, to ensure their wishes are respected in the future.

## 2. Mental Capacity and Consent

**Assessing Mental Capacity:** Legal decisions around care often hinge on whether an individual has the mental capacity to make their own decisions.

**Consent for Care:** Understanding the importance of obtaining consent for care and medical treatments, and the processes to follow if an individual is unable to give consent.

## 3. Guardianship or Conservatorship

In situations where an individual is deemed unable to make their own decisions and there is no Power of Attorney in place, a court may appoint a guardian or conservator to make decisions on their behalf.

## 4. Legal Rights of Those in Care

Familiarise yourself with the legal rights of individuals receiving care, including rights to privacy, dignity, and freedom from abuse and neglect.

**Advocacy Services:** Information on how to access advocacy services to support the rights and welfare of your loved one.

## 5. Advance Directives and Living Wills

Documents that outline an individual's preferences regarding end-of-life care and medical treatments.

The importance of discussing and documenting these preferences in advance.

## 6. Managing Legal and Financial Affairs

Guidance on managing the day-to-day legal and financial affairs of someone in care, such as handling their bills, property, and investments.

## 7. Understanding Care Contracts

Key elements of care contracts with service providers, including terms, conditions, and provisions for changing or terminating the contract.

## 8. Safeguarding Vulnerable Adults

Legal provisions and measures in place to protect vulnerable adults from abuse, neglect, and exploitation.

Reporting procedures and protective actions in cases of suspected abuse.

## 9. Navigating Local and National Laws

Understanding how local and national laws impact care decisions and rights.

Resources for legal advice and support, including solicitors specialising in elder law and care.

## Preparing for Legal Challenges

Strategies for anticipating and addressing potential legal challenges that may arise in the care of your loved one.

By understanding and addressing these legal considerations, you can ensure that the care and support provided to your loved one align with their wishes and legal rights. It's often beneficial to consult with legal professionals specialising in elder law to navigate these complexities effectively.

# Section 6: Transitioning to Care

Transitioning to a new care arrangement can be a significant change for both the individual requiring care and their family. This section provides guidance on making this transition as smooth and positive as possible.

## *1. Preparing for the Transition*

**Understanding the Change:** Discuss the upcoming changes with your loved one to help them understand and feel involved in the decision-making process.

**Visiting the New Environment:** If moving to a new location, arrange visits beforehand to familiarise your loved one with the new setting.

**Personalising the Space:** Encourage personalisation of the living space with familiar items to make it feel more like home.

## *2. Emotional Support*

Recognise and address the emotional impact of transitioning to care, both for the individual and family members.

Seek support from counsellors or support groups if needed.

## *3. Coordinating with Care Providers*

Work closely with the care provider to ensure they understand your loved one's needs, preferences, and routines.

Establish clear communication channels for ongoing updates and feedback.

## *4. Monitoring the Transition*

Regularly check in with your loved one and the care staff to assess how the transition is going.

Be prepared to make adjustments to the care plan based on these observations.

## *5. Involving Family and Friends*

Encourage visits and involvement from family and friends to maintain social connections and support.

# Section 7: Working with Care Providers

Effective collaboration with care providers is essential to ensure the best possible care for your loved one. This section outlines how to establish and maintain a productive working relationship with care providers.

## 1. Establishing a Care Plan

Work with care providers to develop a comprehensive care plan that addresses all aspects of your loved one's needs.

Ensure the care plan is reviewed and updated regularly.

## 2. Communication is Key

Set up regular meetings or check-ins with care providers to stay informed about your loved one's care and progress.

Establish a preferred method of communication for updates and concerns.

## 3. Providing Feedback

Don't hesitate to provide feedback on the care being provided, both positive and constructive.

Discuss any concerns promptly and work together to find solutions.

## 4. Understanding Roles and Responsibilities

Clarify the roles and responsibilities of all parties involved in the care process to avoid confusion.

## 5. Building a Trusting Relationship

Develop a relationship based on trust and mutual respect with the care provider.

# Section 8: Support for Caregivers

*Providing care for a loved one is a significant responsibility that can affect various aspects of a carer's life. This section focuses on offering support and resources to carers to help them maintain their well-being and effectively manage their caregiving duties.*

## 1. Prioritising Self-Care

Understanding the importance of self-care to prevent caregiver burnout.

Practical tips for maintaining physical health, such as regular exercise, proper nutrition, and adequate sleep.

Emphasising the need for mental and emotional self-care, including stress management techniques and pursuing personal interests and hobbies.



## 2. Utilising Respite Care

Information on how to access respite care services to take necessary breaks.

Exploring different forms of respite care, from in-home assistance to short-term care facilities.

## 3. Engaging with Support Groups

Benefits of joining caregiver support groups for emotional support, sharing experiences, and learning from others in similar situations.

Resources for finding local and online support groups.

## 4. Educational and Training Resources

Access to training sessions and workshops on caregiving topics, such as managing specific health conditions, communication skills, and emergency response.

Online resources and webinars for carers who cannot attend in-person sessions.

## 5. Emotional and Mental Health Support

Guidance on recognising the signs of carer stress and depression.

Resources for professional counselling and therapy specifically tailored for caregivers.

## 6. Balancing Caregiving with Other Responsibilities

Strategies for managing time effectively between caring role, work, and personal life.  
Tips for setting boundaries and learning to delegate tasks both in caregiving and other areas of life.

## 7. Financial and Legal Advice for Carers

Information on any financial support or entitlements available for caregivers, including tax credits and benefits.

Legal advice related to caregiving, such as power of attorney and guardianship.

## 8. Community Resources and Assistance

Details about community services and programs that can aid caregivers, like meal delivery services, transportation assistance, and home modification programs.

Information on how to connect with local health and social services agencies for additional support.

## 9. Networking and Building a Support System

Encouraging caregivers to build a network of support with family, friends, and community members.

The importance of communication and how to effectively express needs and seek assistance from others.

## 10. Maintaining Emotional Connections

The importance of maintaining emotional connections with the care recipient and the rest of the family.

Strategies for fostering meaningful interactions and preserving personal relationships.

By addressing these areas, this section aims to provide caregivers with the tools and support they need to take care of their loved ones without neglecting their own health and well-being. It underscores the importance of a balanced approach to caregiving, recognising the multifaceted challenges caregivers face.



*Conclusion:*

# Navigating the Journey Together

We understand that the journey of caregiving is not always easy, but you are not alone. This guide is part of our commitment to support you every step of the way, with flexibility and a readiness to adapt to your changing needs.

## Appendices

The appendices include a glossary of care-related terms, a directory of services and resources, and a checklist for choosing a care provider to help you keep track of the process.

### Glossary of Terms:

#### *Assisted Living:*

Residential settings that provide personal care services, meals, and health care designed to respond to individuals who need assistance with everyday activities.

#### *Care Needs Assessment:*

A comprehensive evaluation performed by a qualified professional to determine an individual's requirements for personal and health care support.

#### *Care Plan:*

A detailed strategy tailored to an individual's health care needs, including specific care tasks, goals, and responsibilities of care providers.

#### *Dementia:*

A term that describes a wide range of cognitive disorders characterised by memory impairment, altered judgment, and other symptoms that affect a person's ability to perform everyday activities.

#### *Incontinence Care:*

Assistance provided to individuals who have difficulty controlling their bladder or bowels.

#### *Occupational Therapy:*

Therapeutic services focused on improving an individual's ability to perform daily activities through the use of targeted exercises and adaptive equipment.

#### *Palliative Care:*

Specialised medical care aimed at providing relief from the symptoms and stress of a serious illness, with a focus on improving quality of life for both the patient and the family.

#### *Respite Care:*

Temporary relief care provided to those who are caring for family members, which could be due to illness or disability, to provide the primary caregiver a short-term break.

#### *Supported Living:*

Services designed to support the independence of individuals with various disabilities by providing assistance as needed, while they live in their own home.

# Directory of Services and Resources in Surrey County

## Support Groups:

### Crossroads Care Surrey:

Offers a directory of more than 5,000 services for unpaid carers in Surrey, with access to respite breaks, training, and events.

Contact: Download the free app from the App Store or Google Play.

### Surrey Carers Card:

Provides emergency care planning, identification as a carer in emergencies, and access to discounts and offers across Surrey.

Contact: 01372 869970 or [enquiries@crossroadscaresurrey.org.uk](mailto:enquiries@crossroadscaresurrey.org.uk).

## Legal and Advocacy Services

For legal advice, including elder law and advocacy services, it is recommended to contact local law firms that specialise in elder care and disability rights. Additionally, organisations such as Age UK Surrey and Surrey Independent Living Council can provide guidance and support.

## Training Resources

Carers looking for training can explore options provided by local healthcare trusts, adult learning centres in Surrey, or through organisations like Crossroads Care Surrey, which offers training and events for carers.

# Financial Assistance Programs

## *Government Benefits*

- Includes Jobseekers Allowance, Universal Credit, Employment Support Allowance, and Child Benefit.
- Contact: Surrey County Council for detailed information.

## *Surrey Crisis Fund*

- Provides support for immediate needs after a disaster or emergency when no other options are available.
- Contact: Surrey County Council for access to the fund.

## *Household Support Fund*

- Helps families struggling financially with food, fuel, water, and other essentials.
- Allocated by the Department of Work and Pensions.

## *Housing Benefit and Council Tax Support*

- Assistance is available through local District and Borough Councils.
- Contact: Your local council for more information.

## *Energy Bill Support*

- Advice on saving money on energy bills using council and external resources.
- Contact: Surrey County Council for tips and resources.

## *Carer's Benefits*

- Carers may be entitled to specific benefits, as may the person they care for.
- Contact: Surrey County Council for eligibility details.



*About us:*

# Westbrook Care

Westbrook Care is a leading provider of personalised care services in Surrey County. We are committed to delivering quality and compassionate care to our clients, ensuring they can live fulfilling lives with dignity and independence. We invite you to reach out for a personalised consultation to discuss how our services can be tailored to meet the unique needs of you and your loved ones. Join the Westbrook Care family and experience a partnership built on trust, professionalism, and heartfelt care. Contact us today to begin your care journey with us.

## Contact us

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