

Northumbria Healthcare NHS Foundation Trust

in partnership with Northumberland County Council

Better Care, Higher Standards

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## **Information sheet 9 – Living in a care home: your rights**

This sheet summarises the rights you have if Northumberland Care Trust makes arrangements for you to live in a care home. This includes residential homes and homes which also provide nursing care. You have the same rights whether you are placed in a private home, or one run by a voluntary organisation or the County Council.

The information in this sheet does **not** apply to people who make private arrangements with a care home, even if a care manager helped them to do so.

## **Other key documents about what you can expect**

When you move into the home, you should be given a **personal plan** written by your care manager and agreed with the home. This will say what special arrangements have been made about the support you should get.

You may also be asked to sign a document setting out **house rules** for the home. This will cover matters such as the home's policy on pets and on smoking. It cannot override any of the rights summarised in this sheet, which are part of our contract with the home.

## **Your right to choose where to live**

You have a right to leave the home at any time, either to go back to your own home or to move to another care home.

Ask your care manager to help you if you want to move.

You may have to give the home four weeks' notice before

moving.

During the first twelve weeks of your stay, we will not expect you to do anything that would prevent you moving back home, such as giving up a tenancy or selling your house.

Once you have moved into a home, you have a right to stay there for as long as you wish, unless you behave in a way which seriously harms the quality of life of other residents, or persistently disregard house rules. (In these situations, you may be asked to leave at four weeks' notice).

If your needs change a lot, you may need to move to somewhere more suitable. If you don't want to move, you can ask your care manager to look into the possibility of providing extra support so that you can stay there – but this can't always be achieved.

There is one other situation in which you might have to leave a home. If someone else has agreed to pay an additional weekly amount so you can live in a home which is

more expensive than our usual limit, you may have to leave if those payments stop.

## **Your right to your room**

When you move into the home, your Personal Plan will say which room you will be living in. You have a right to stay in this room for as long as you live in the home, unless your Personal Plan says something different.

If you are asked to move to a different room, you should make sure that your care manager knows about this. If you like the new room and want to stay there, your Personal Plan will be changed.

## **Your right to services**

The basic service which you have a right to without any extra payments includes, as well as your accommodation:

- All meals, and drinks and light refreshments available at any time of day
- Basics such as soap, towels and toilet paper
- Laundry
- Transport to medical appointments
- A reasonable choice of activities, including some outings (you should usually be offered at least one trip out of the home each month)
- Any special aids or equipment which it is agreed that you need (some equipment to meet unusual needs may be provided by the NHS rather than by the home)

The home may offer extra services (e.g. newspapers, hairdressing) which you have to pay for. You should not be pressured to take up any extra services.

## **If you have to leave the home for a while**

You may decide to leave the home for a few days or weeks,

either to stay with somebody else or to go into hospital. The home will let your care manager know if this happens.

Your place in the home will be kept for you for at least six weeks. You will have to pay your contribution during this period.

If you have not moved back within six weeks, your care manager will talk to you and staff at the home about what to do. If you are in hospital your care manager will try to make sure that you can go back to the home when you are better, unless your needs have changed too much for that to be possible.

## **Insurance**

The home will insure your personal property up to the value of £500. If you want insurance to a higher value, you will need to arrange this for yourself. If you live in a County Council home, no insurance is provided, and you will need to make your own arrangements.

## **Complaints**

If you have a complaint, you should usually start by taking it up with the manager of the home. If you do not wish to do this, or if you are not satisfied with the reply, you can complain to your care manager. You can also complain to the National Care Standards Commission (see below) – but it is a good idea to tell your care manager as well. See Information Sheet 4 for more information about making a complaint.

## **Inspections of the home**

Care homes are inspected regularly by the National Care Standards Commission. You can ask for copies of their reports by phoning their customer services unit on 0191 233 3556.