You may be reading this because you are finding it difficult to look after yourself at home. This can happen gradually, or because of a sudden illness or accident. Many people in this position are able to stay at home with help from family or friends, and support from Social Care Services and the NHS.

Sometimes people decide to move to a care home when they are in a crisis and cannot work out how to get the help they need to stay at home. Often people who are helped through the crisis can keep living at home with the right support. However, if you need a lot of support and have night-time care needs, you may be thinking about moving to a care home.

This information sheet is about:
- Types of care homes
- Your right to choose which care home you want to live in
- Some information about paying

**Types of care home**

**Residential care homes** provide personal care and activities of daily living, such as washing, dressing, bathing and assistance with toilet needs, if required. They do not offer nursing care. If you have a health problem that needs a qualified nurse, this care will be provided by the District Nursing Service on the same basis as for people living in their own homes.

**Specialised Residential Care homes** are residential homes that specialise for people with a high level of dementia but do not have nursing needs. An assessment of need will determine whether this type of home is suitable to meet your needs.

**Care homes with nursing** provide nursing care 24 hours a day. People living in these homes will have health care needs that can only be met by a registered nurse. Some offer general nursing care for older people, while others specialise in mental health or physical disability. Care homes with nursing are often dual registered to provide both ‘residential’ and ‘nursing’ care. If you choose one of these homes you won’t need to move if your condition changes. Also, this type of home helps couples who may have different needs to live together in the same home.

**Care homes that specialise** in supporting people who have severe physical disabilities, learning disabilities or autism. These care homes may or may not provide nursing care and will have a particular focus on the specialised needs of individual residents.

**How do I know which type of home is right for me?**

You may be entitled to an assessment which will help decide which type of home is right for you and this also involves talking to you about what you need, your wishes and those of family and friends who care for you. A Social Worker or Care Co-ordinator from Sirona Care & Health will carry out the assessment. Other professionals such as an Occupational Therapist, a District Nurse or your doctor may also be involved, with your permission.
The assessment will help us understand you and build up a picture of the things that you need help with and the things that you can do for yourself. This will be written into your care and support plan. For some people the care and support plan will recommend that the best way to meet your needs is to move into a care home, but often it will recommend things so that you can be helped to stay in your own home.

Who will pay for the care home?

You will be asked to pay some or all of the cost depending on how much you can afford. We will work out what you will have to pay using national rules. You should consider taking independent financial advice about moving to a care home. Your Social Worker can tell you about organisations that provide this. Our information sheet F1: Paying for residential care contains further in-depth information about this.

Choosing your care home

All care homes are registered and inspected by the Care Quality Commission (CQC). All homes must meet standards set by the government, and CQC use these standards when they inspect the homes. Every time the home is inspected CQC write a report. When you are deciding on the care home for you, you should ask the home for a copy of the most recent report. You can also see the report on the CQC website; http://www.cqc.org.uk/. Every home should produce a brochure or residents guide to tell people about the services it provides and the facilities offered to residents.

Choosing the right care home is important. If you are able to do so, visit more than one home before you make up your mind. You may be able to spend the day, have a drink or meal and talk to people who live in the home and meet some of the staff. This will help you to make up your mind. You may be able to have a trial stay before you finally decide.

You have the right to choose any home you like, as long as Social Services agrees that it meets six key requirements:

- The Home is registered with the Care Quality Commission
- Bath & North East Somerset Council will not fund a place in a home unless it meets our local standards of quality. Rarely, homes have difficulty meeting these standards and we may suspend placements until they are able to meet our requirements. If you have chosen a home outside of B&NES will make enquiries of the local authority and we may rely on information received to refuse to make a placement where we think there is a significant risk that the home is not able to provide care which properly meets your needs. Sometimes we will suspend placements to a home because a complaint is being investigated. This is done as a precaution – you should not assume this means anything is necessarily wrong with the home and very often placements are resumed after a short period. Social Workers and other staff are not able recommend particular homes although they can give advice on the type of home to look for and questions to ask.
- Sirona Care & Health staff are satisfied that the home can meet all your care needs as identified in your Assessment and Care plan
- The home owner is willing to sign the standard B&NES care home contract in force at the time.
- The home has a vacancy.
- The home does not cost more than the Council usually pays for the care you need or if it does someone else can pay the difference (this is called a third party contribution). If you are receiving funding on a temporary basis because you have a property, sometimes we will allow you to ‘self top-up’ in a more expensive home because the temporary funding will be recouped by the council when the property is sold. However you must be aware that this is not standard practice and not automatically agreed and it is strongly recommended that you read our
To assist you in making your choice your social worker will be able to provide you with a list of homes in the area of your choice. If you are unable to choose a home from this list (or there are no vacancies) then your social worker will be able to give you a wider selection although this will probably include homes from a much wider area. All homes should provide you with information/brochures about the services and facilities they offer and their policies which should cover such things as pets and smoking. We strongly advise that you check the latest report from the Care Quality Commission on any home you are considering. Reports are available from the website [www.cqc.org.uk](http://www.cqc.org.uk). If you have difficulty using the internet to find a report, ask your social worker to provide you with a printed copy.

We recommend that you or your representative visit the home and speak to the manager before making a final choice. Your social worker can also give you some guidance on the kind of questions to ask when you visit.

**What standards can I expect from a care home?**

If Social Services are contributing to your fees then there will a contract between the home and the Council. The contract sets out quality standards which the home is expected to meet:

- Residents are assisted to make decisions and exercise choices in all aspects of daily living.
- Residents are encouraged to maintain their independence.
- Residents’ health and wellbeing is properly supported.
- The home is a good place to live - it is a safe environment and feels like home.
- Residents are protected from neglect, abuse or exploitation and are safe at all times.
- The individual resident is valued and their race, religion and/or culture is respected.
- Personal care and support is provided in a way that supports the resident and maintains their dignity.
- The privacy of residents is respected at all times (all rooms should have a lock) and confidentiality strictly observed.
- Residents are encouraged to maintain social relationships, and pursue interests and recreational activities (both within the home and the wider community).
- Wherever possible continuity of support services and health services will be maintained.
- Staff are appropriately trained and managed to meet resident’s needs.
- All services will be regularly monitored to ensure that high quality care is provided at all times.

As a resident you have obligations, these are:

- To pay your contribution promptly.
- To give the due period of notice to the home if you wish to leave (1 week during a trial period and 1 month for a permanent resident).
- To show consideration to other residents and follow the policies of the home

**Rights**

Your rights while living in a care home remain unaltered from those you already hold. These include the right to vote, to maintain or develop relationships with whoever you choose and to maintain religious observance.
Do I have to remain in the home if I am not happy there?

When you have chosen a home, your first four weeks (or longer if necessary) will be a trial period. You do not have to remain in any home if you are not happy. If you choose to leave once you have become a permanent resident then you must let us know; the home will be entitled to one month’s notice. Please note that you will be financially assessed to make a contribution from the date you move to the home, please see information sheet; F1: Paying for residential and nursing care

What if the home I like costs more than B&NES usually pay?

There are lots of homes in Bath and North East Somerset that will accept what we usually pay, but if there are no homes that accept what we usually pay for the type of care you need, you can choose a more expensive care home as long as someone is willing and able to pay the difference between what the care home charges and what we pay. This is called a ‘third party contribution’ and the person who pays it is called a “third party”. The third party could be a relative or another person close to you.

The person paying your top-up fee will be entering into a financial commitment for as long as you stay in the home. It is important that they understand this, and are able to pay the fee on a long-term basis. If they stop paying the fee you are likely to be asked to move to a less expensive room within the home or another home. For further information, please see information sheet F4: Guide for Third Party contributions

Can I pay my own third party contribution?

You can only pay your own third party contribution yourself if you have a home to sell. For further information, please see information leaflets F3: Guide for people moving into a care home who have a property and F4: Guide to third party contributions

How will my medical needs be met?

If you will be living in the area covered by your GP then he or she will continue to visit you, otherwise arrangements will be made for you to register with a local GP practice. Some homes have a special arrangement with a local GP practice which means that doctors visit on a regular basis. This can be very advantageous to residents and if such an arrangement exists we suggest you consider joining the local practice. In a residential home you will receive any nursing attention you require from a district nurse or specialist nurse. You will be entitled to all NHS services whether you are in a nursing home or residential home. Some homes can arrange private health services for residents but these will be charged for. The home should arrange transport for any hospital appointments but they are not responsible for paying for this if there is a charge nor are they contractually obliged to provide escorts.

What happens if my care needs change?

Your Care/Service Plan will be reviewed with you and staff at the home by a reviewing officer on a regular basis and at least once a year. However, your needs can be reviewed at any time, you should contact us if you want to discuss your situation. Similarly, the home may request a review if they feel your needs have changed. If you have to go into hospital then your room will be paid for by Social Services for the first 6 weeks. After this time it may be necessary to give up the room but this is always dependent on your circumstances. If your health deteriorates permanently then it may be necessary for you to move somewhere else where your needs can be met. In some cases a resident may find that they become more independent and may wish to consider returning to live in the community. We can re-assess needs and arrange appropriate help and support.
What should I do if I am not satisfied with the care I am receiving?

Every home must have a complaints procedure which sets out what you should do if you have any problems with the home or a member of staff; you should be told about this when you go to live in the home. If it is not possible to resolve a problem directly with the home then you should contact Sirona Care & Health in the first instance who will be able to assist you and refer your complaint on to the Council if necessary.

You can also raise the matter with the Care Quality Commission (http://www.cqc.org.uk/public), however the CQC generally does not investigate individual complaints. Every home should have a phone which residents can use in privacy to contact relatives or Sirona.

What if the fees of the home go up?

We will have to agree to any increase in fees. If a third party fee is being paid, the person making the third party payments may be asked to pay all or some of the increase.

What if I don’t qualify for financial help?

If you have savings or investments, (which may include your home, depending on who else is living in it), worth more than £23,250 you won’t be able to get financial help from us. We may ask Sirona to carry out an assessment of your needs to help you to know which type of home can provide the help you need, but you can choose whichever home you like best.

You may be eligible for Attendance Allowance or a contribution from the NHS towards the cost of any nursing care you need.

You should be careful about how much you pay. If your savings fall below £23,250 and you ask us for financial help, you may have to ask someone to pay a third party payment or move to a less expensive home if the cost of your home is more than we would normally pay.

For further information please ask to see leaflet F2: Guide for people who pay for their own care home placement.

Continuing Health Care

You may be entitled to Continuing Health Care which means the NHS will pay your care home fees. To find out more, please contact the Continuing Healthcare & Funded Nursing Care Team, Sirona Care & Health, St Martins Hospital, Clara Cross Lane, Bath BA2 5RP

Phone: 01225 831534
Email: chc-fnc@sirona-cic.org.uk

Care Guide

Bath & North East Somerset Council produces a Care Guide which provides information about Care Homes in the area. It is aimed at people who fund their own care and support because they are not eligible for assistance from the Council, as well as those who may qualify for a formal care needs assessment and/or financial support. See www.bathnes.gov.uk/careguide2017
Other organisations that provide information:
You can get independent advice about moving to a care home from:

**Age UK Bath & North East Somerset** – independent information and advocacy for older people and their carers:

Phone: 01225 466135  
Email: reception@ageukbanes.co.uk  
Website: [http://www.ageuk.org.uk/bathandnortheastsomerset](http://www.ageuk.org.uk/bathandnortheastsomerset)

**Carers’ Centre Bath & North East Somerset** - Expert help is available for carers who are struggling emotionally with their caring role, feeling isolated and in need of a friend or needing support when dealing with health and care planning:

Phone: 01761 431388  
Email: info@banescarerscentre.org.uk  
Website: [www.banescarerscentre.org.uk](http://www.banescarerscentre.org.uk)

**Useful Websites**
Please note the Council cannot accept responsibility for information on external websites:

- Care Quality Commission - [www.cqc.org.uk](http://www.cqc.org.uk)
- Bath & North East Somerset Carers’ Centre - [www.banescarerscentre.org.uk/](http://www.banescarerscentre.org.uk/)
- Caring Connections - [www.caringinfo.org](http://www.caringinfo.org)
- NHS Find a Care Home - [http://www.nhs.uk/CarersDirect/guide/practicalsupport/Pages/Carehomes.aspx](http://www.nhs.uk/CarersDirect/guide/practicalsupport/Pages/Carehomes.aspx)
- Alzheimer’s Society - [www.alzheimers.org.uk](http://www.alzheimers.org.uk)
- Independent Age – advice and support for older age - [www.independentage.org/](http://www.independentage.org/)
- Sirona Care & Health - [www.sirona-cic.org.uk/](http://www.sirona-cic.org.uk/)
- Age UK Bath & North East Somerset - [www.ageuk.org.uk/bathandnortheastsomerset/](http://www.ageuk.org.uk/bathandnortheastsomerset/)

You may also find the following sheets useful:

- C1: Access to care services  
- F1: Paying for residential and nursing care  
- F2: Guide for people who pay for their own care home placement  
- F3: Guide for people moving into a care home who have a property  
- F4: Guide for Third Party contributions

This information can be made available in other languages or formats (including large print, Braille, on CD) on request. Contact the Information Officer on 01225 477983 or email information_officer@bathnes.gov.uk

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