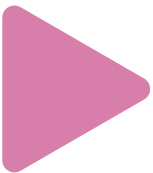




Bath and North East Somerset,  
Swindon and Wiltshire Together



# Caring Steps



# Together

Preparing you for intensive  
support in a care home



**You've been given this leaflet because your care team has agreed that your care and support needs can most safely and effectively be met in a care home or nursing home setting**

This information is for you and your family, friends and carers who make up your support network, to help you understand what will happen when you're ready to leave hospital.



## Why is it safer for me to be discharged from hospital when my hospital care ends?

When you no longer need acute care, leaving hospital is the best and safest thing to do. It means you're at less risk of infection or complications, and it helps to maintain flow by allowing those who need acute care access to a bed.

Leaving hospital also helps you to avoid losing muscle strength and mobility from lack of movement, and to avoid losing confidence in your ability to manage independently.

Sometimes people worry that they're leaving hospital too soon, but we know from experience that patients recover better once they've left hospital. That's why we don't want you to stay in for any longer than is medically necessary.



## What happens next?

Your care team will talk to you and your support network to undertake a Care Act Assessment. They'll look at how you're managing everyday tasks, and they might ask you how well you think you can do things like making a hot drink or getting out of a chair. Giving as much information as possible in your answers will really help make sure that the assessment truly reflects your abilities and needs. If you're not confident explaining your situation,

you can have a friend or relative with you. They can also take notes so you don't have to. If you don't have someone to help and you have difficulty communicating, understanding or remembering information, you can receive support from an advocate. This is someone who can be with you during conversations, speak up on your behalf and help with filling in forms. Please ask a member of the ward team if you'd like to consider an advocate.



After your assessment, your care team will give you advice on the type of support you need and how it could be given. This is aimed at ensuring you can stay as independent as possible, while bearing in mind your health condition and needs. It also helps the people in your support network understand how they can help you.

### **What happens after these assessments?**

If you're eligible for financial support, a team of people at the local council will identify a care home setting which can provide you with a safe and comfortable environment. The care team will liaise with you and your support network to discuss plans for you to move to the care home.

If you're paying for your own care, you'll still be offered help to find a care home that can meet your needs. Once a care home has been identified and agreed, your move may happen fairly quickly.





## After hospital

### Can I choose where I go?

If you're receiving financial support, there may not be a choice as to which care home you will move to, as location will be based on what's available and what's best suited to your needs.

The team will work with you to discuss and communicate this as closely as possible.







## Getting support

### Can my friends and family help?

We would always encourage you to see how your family and friends can help. Remember that the voluntary agencies in your area may be able to help you with visiting, activities and support in your community or getting to see a new care home.

You should discuss your plan for leaving hospital with your support network before you go, to make sure you have everything you need in place, including transport arrangements and everything is ready for where you are going next.

## What if I need help to understand and make decisions?

If you or people around you are concerned about your ability to make discharge decisions for yourself, a Mental Capacity Assessment will be undertaken to establish what decisions you're able to make.

If this assessment concludes that you would find it a challenge to handle decisions about your discharge plan, then ward staff will determine whether anyone

close to you holds a Lasting Power of Attorney (a legal power allowing them to make decisions on your behalf). If no-one holds this kind of authority to make decisions for you, then a Best Interest Decision about discharge destinations for you will need to be made in partnership with your support network.

Sometimes there are more complex issues to make a decision about, or you or your loved ones may not agree with the decision that's been made. If this happens, you may be referred to Adult Social Care for a social worker to support you and everyone involved in your care to make an appropriate decision.







## Cost of services

### Who pays for my care?

A referral will be made for you to the local council. They will carry out a needs assessment to determine how much support you need. This needs assessment is free, and anybody can ask for one.

The council will also undertake a financial assessment to work out whether, and how much, you will have to pay towards the cost of your care. If your longer-term support will be funded by Social Care, your care providers will

change so that you can be supported according to your needs assessment.

**If you have any worries about your care, please talk directly to the care agency as they will be able to help you.**



If you're eligible for financial support and you or someone in your support network with legal responsibility is interested in receiving a direct payment so you can arrange your own care, you can apply for this and the council will consider your application at: [gov.uk/apply-direct-payments](https://www.gov.uk/apply-direct-payments)

If you have needs arising from disability, accident or illness that cannot be met by existing universal or specialist services alone, you may be eligible to receive fully funded 'NHS Continuing Healthcare' (CHC). When you leave hospital, your support team may suggest an assessment for CHC.

The process involved in NHS continuing healthcare assessments can be complex. An organisation called Beacon gives free independent advice on NHS continuing healthcare.

Visit the Beacon website: **beaconchc.co.uk** or call the free helpline on: **0345 548 0300**.



You might be eligible for the council to pay towards these costs if you have less than £23,250 in savings (called the upper capital limit, or UCL). From October 2025 this will rise to £100,000 in savings.



The next two pages are your space to keep notes.

- ▶ How can I stay as fit and mobile as possible whilst in hospital?
- ▶ What is keeping me in hospital?
- ▶ What do I need to do to be able to leave hospital?
- ▶ What's my plan for leaving hospital?
- ▶ When will I be discharged?
- ▶ What do I need to arrange for when I leave hospital?
- ▶ How can my family/friends/carers help after I leave hospital?
- ▶ Who do I contact if I need support or have concerns after I leave?





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You can find more information, videos and helpful links at:  
**[www.bswtogether.org.uk/discharge](http://www.bswtogether.org.uk/discharge)**  
This information may also be available in other languages.