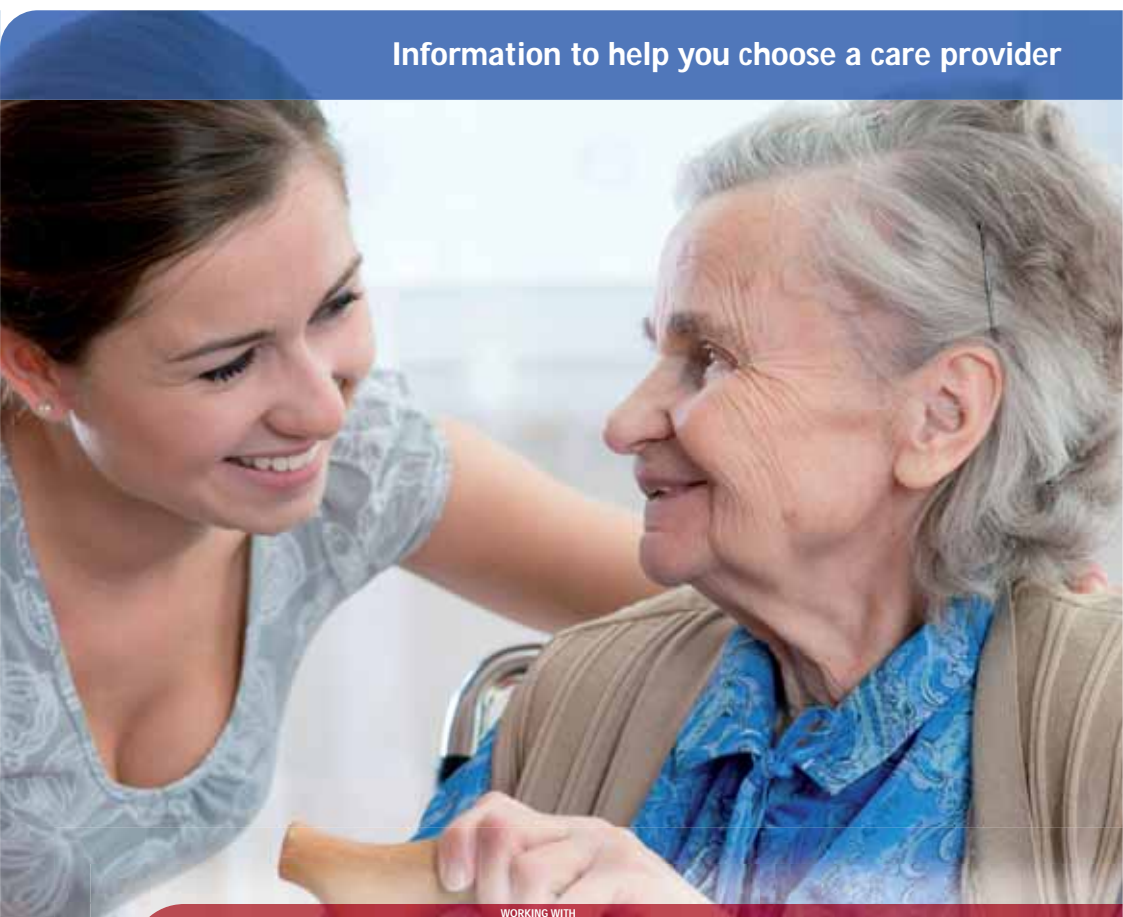


# What good looks like: care homes and domiciliary care

Information to help you choose a care provider



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**If someone is considering moving to a care home they may choose their own care home or they may need help from social services.**

**This may be funded by social services or be self-funded depending upon personal circumstances.**

Although all homes come under the category of 'care home', generally a residential home is expected to provide the level of personal care that you would expect from a close relative.



Staff are not required to be qualified nurses but a percentage of carers in each home should hold a qualification such as NVQ in Health and Social Care, plus regular training and instruction in a variety of health and safety disciplines.

A care home with nursing provides all personal care, with the addition of qualified nurses to carry out specific treatments and procedures. People suffering from a long-term condition or illness may require a nursing home to ensure they receive appropriate care.

Care homes can be owned and run by local authorities, most are private operators (either national chains or local independents) and the voluntary sector.

All care homes should offer attention to the residents throughout the day and night. Medical assistance is provided through your GP or 999 for emergency situations.

All homes must be registered with the appropriate local authority and with the Care Quality Commission (CQC). CQC is the national regulator and inspector of care homes and agencies which provide care in the home.

## **What to look for?**

It is important that you consider your individual preferences and there are a number of important aspects to consider when choosing a care home. It is important to gather inspection reports from CQC, brochures and any other independent information available, and visit a selection before finally deciding. If you want information from the council you can contact them. Useful contact numbers and websites are given at the end of this leaflet.

### **Location**

You may want to consider:

Is the home in an area where you would choose to live?

Are local amenities accessible?

Is it convenient for friends and family to visit, e.g. public transport, car parking etc?

What size care home do you want to live in?

A small home may appear more friendly and intimate but make sure the business is sound and can maintain the standards you expect. Likewise a large home may appear luxurious, but does the quality of care match up to its appearance?

Remember you are looking for a home not a two-week holiday.

You may wish to make an appointment to visit. You may visit unannounced in the hope of seeing 'the real picture', for example at a meal time, but it's also true that the staff/proprietor won't have the time to give you the attention you require.

You may wish to take someone with you who knows you well so you can discuss your impressions with them afterwards. You may want to compile a checklist of the questions you want to ask especially if you are visiting a number of homes in a short period.

Some questions appear overleaf that you may want to ask.



### First impressions

Are the building and grounds in good condition?

Is there a warm, and friendly atmosphere?

Do the residents appear to be happy and active?

Are the staff attentive and caring - are they 'available'?

Are the rooms comfortable, pleasantly decorated and inviting?

Is the home clean with no unpleasant odour?

### Facilities

Accessibility - for example the entrance, lifts, hand rails, bathroom equipment, wheelchairs etc.

Is there a private telephone for residents use?



Does each bedroom have a call bell for assistance during the day and night? (How quickly are calls attended to?)

### Accommodation

Make sure you are shown the bedroom allocated to you.

Will you have to share? - If yes, ask to meet your companion before deciding.

Consider whether you really need/want to have an en-suite room.

Check the privacy and security of the room/house.

Can you bring your own furniture and personal belongings?

Is there sufficient lounge and dining room space, with somewhere to receive visitors in private, other than in your bedroom?

### Catering

Do the menus provide a choice and a range of food you like?

Can the home cater for your personal requirements e.g. halal, vegan etc?

Can you choose where you wish to eat and at what time?

Are drinks and snacks available throughout the day?

### Leisure and activities

Will you be able to continue with your own hobbies/interests?

What arrangements are made for shopping, hairdressing, library, newspapers etc?

Are outings available? Where to? How frequent?

What other activities/exercise and entertainment is provided for well-being and enjoyment?

Can you maintain contact with your place of worship?

Is there a separate room available for worship if the need arises?

Are there any visiting restrictions and what welcome can visitors expect?

### Personal/nursing care

How involved are you in planning your care?

Does the level of care meet your individual needs?

### Do the staff change a lot?

Is the staffing consistent and do they provide a personal touch?

Are there carers that speak your language?

Can you retain your own doctor? How often does he/she visit the home?

What other health services are provided?

If your health deteriorates, can you still remain living in the home?

If you are reaching the end of your life is the home helping you plan for this and decide about treatment?

Ask to meet your 'key worker'

Does there appear to be enough staff on duty to care for all the residents?

What training and qualifications do the staff have?

### General

Who runs the home - ask for a contact number and to meet them?

What rules/regulations are there for residents?





Is there a written agreement, contract, terms and conditions - including a fees policy?

What do fees include/exclude?

If you have sufficient assets/funds you would be expected to meet the costs. This is called self-funding. You can ask the council for a financial assessment if you think the council should help towards your costs. This involves looking at your income, including most benefits and pensions, and your capital. This includes your savings, investments and the value of any property you own.

Age UK have useful factsheets to assist people e.g. Choice of Accommodation - Care Homes and Paying for Permanent Residential Care are available on the Age UK website.



Are residents involved in key decisions in the home such as job descriptions for staff, recruitment of staff, décor and furniture in the home?

Can you keep your room if you go on holiday, or into hospital?

Does the home have a satisfactory complaints procedure?

What is the home's policy concerning smoking, pets etc.

Do you like the home, manager, staff and other residents?

Finally, and most importantly, would you like to live there?

This list is comprehensive and isn't meant to scare you. They are just suggestions of questions you might want to consider. Perhaps you can pick out just the most relevant questions that are important to you and add them to your own list, to help you with your decision.

### **What good looks like: care in your own home**

Again providers of care in the home, often called domiciliary care, are registered with your local authority and with CQC.

In Slough we have a website called the "CM200 Quality Web portal" which rates providers on things that people have told us are important.

These are:

- Care worker punctuality
- Length of stay
- Care worker continuity
- Care workers who speak your language
- Missed calls

This is available to the public.

### **Choosing care in your own home**

Before you begin to look for a provider spend a bit of time considering what you want. You need to be sure that you will get a high quality service with trained staff who can definitely provide the exact care that you need. Be very specific about your requirements and make some notes so that you are clear about what you are asking for.

The kind of support you need will of course vary from person to person and you will find many provider agencies have their own particular strengths and weaknesses. Try to think ahead and consider how your care needs may develop over time and whether the provider in question will be able to cope with your needs long term.

### **How do you want to be supported?**

Do you want a support/care worker or a personal assistant (PA)? Will you employ them through an agency or directly? There are important differences between how these work so make sure you think about what's best for you.

### **What was your first impression?**

Did they listen to you? Did they do what they said? Did they get back to you and how easy was it to get hold of them? Did you get the opportunity to talk to other people they support or other family members about their experiences?



### How will they develop your support package?

The provider should spend time getting to know you, to find out about your needs and wishes. How will they do this? They should develop a person centred plan with you and give you a contract that sets out your support and includes how decisions about your care will be made.

### How will your support be monitored and changed?

The provider would review your support with you (at least annually) and this should be led by you. Find out how people important to you will be involved in the review and how easy it is to contact the provider to make changes you need before your planned review.



### Confirm the prices and what does this include?

A price should be confirmed that will not change after you have both signed the contract, unless by mutual agreement. Ask how the price is calculated. What does it include? Are there additional costs? What happens if you need more support, how will this be charged and who will pay? What happens if you go into hospital?

### Who will support you?

The support provider should arrange good quality, trained staff (e.g. NVQ/QCF qualification) to support you based on your individual needs. All staff should have up to date criminal record checks paid for by the provider agency. Ask what relevant training staff have had on your specific condition e.g. dementia, stroke, etc as this is important to ensure you receive the right care. Ask how you can be involved in the recruitment process to ensure you get the right person for you.

How will you be protected and kept safe from harm? Check that the provider is registered with the appropriate regulator e.g. CQC and its important you gather any inspection reports, brochures and any other independent information.

You can also check if the provider is an accredited provider for Slough Borough Council (see quality monitoring section).

### How can you make a complaint?

Who do you contact if things go wrong and what will happen? Is there a complaints procedure?

### How can you end your agreement?

Find out how much notice you have to give and any 'exit fees' such as salaries or other costs. Check the procedure you need to follow to end your agreement.

If you are not entirely happy with the answers or were unable to get all of the information that you wanted, do go back to the provider and try again. Most agencies provide a high quality professional service. If someone seems unwilling to provide the answers that you want, you may wish to consider why.

### What might my care provider need to know about me?

Based on the Alzheimer's Society leaflet 'This is Me' ([www.alzheimers.org.uk](http://www.alzheimers.org.uk)), where further guidance is available:

- The name I wish to be known by
- The person who knows me best
- The things that are important to me

- My life so far
- My hobbies and interests
- Things which may worry or upset me
- I like to relax by
- My hearing and eyesight
- My communication
- My mobility
- My sleep
- My personal care
- Allergies e.g. nuts - how does the kitchen cater for this
- Faith needs - e.g. wash prior to eating
- Diet - how food is presented, e.g. halal next to non-halal
- What medication I am on
- When I like to eat
- Preferred visiting arrangements



- Choices about the room
- As I near the end of my life how do I want this to be managed
- Do I recognise my loved ones

### Monitoring quality

The council routinely monitors care homes and home care services every year on a rolling programme but if we have concerns or if it is a new service or home we would visit more frequently.

The council maintains a quality improvement list which logs providers about which there are quality concerns. The council works with the provider on improvement plans.

If you are interested in using a particular service you can ask the council about it to make sure it is of good quality.



### Information, advice and advocacy

The council commissions Gateway to provide information and advice about care and support for all care groups in Slough. You can contact Gateway if you would like additional support.

### Safeguarding vulnerable adults

Disability, illness or frailty means many adults have to rely on others to help them in their day-to-day living. Sadly, this can make them vulnerable and at risk of abuse, very often from people they know.

If you see or know something of concern please do not ignore it. Those being abused often don't seek help. Vulnerable adults have a right to live their life in an environment which is free from prejudice and safe from abuse. An approach of zero tolerance is taken by the council to make sure vulnerable adults are protected.

All people using services are entitled to:

- To privacy
- To be treated with dignity
- To lead an independent life and be allowed to do so
- To be able to choose how they lead their lives
- To the protection of the law
- To have their rights upheld regardless of ethnic origin, gender, sexuality, impairment or disability, age, religious or cultural background

If you have any concerns about how you or someone else is being treated contact Slough Adult Social Care Services for advice and support:

- Monday to Friday, 9am to 5pm, call 01753 475111 (option 1) or;
- email [safeguarding.adults@slough.gov.uk](mailto:safeguarding.adults@slough.gov.uk)

If you want to discuss your concerns out of normal hours you could call our out of hours team on 01344 786543 or call the police on 999 if it's an emergency.

### Contact information

**Slough Adult Social Care Services**  
01753 475111

**Slough Emergency Duty Team (out of hours)**  
01344 786543

**Care Quality Commission**  
03000 616161  
[www.cqc.org.uk](http://www.cqc.org.uk)

**Age Concern Slough and Berkshire East**  
01753 822 890

**Age UK**  
[www.ageuk.org.uk](http://www.ageuk.org.uk)

**Gateway Information Advice and Advocacy Service**  
0844 815 9385  
[info@gatewaypartnership.org](mailto:info@gatewaypartnership.org)

This document can be made available on audio tape, braille or in large print, and is also available on the website where it can easily be viewed in large print.

## What good care looks like: care homes and domiciliary care

If you would like assistance with the translation of the information in this document, please ask an English speaking person to request this by calling 01753 475111 (option 1).

यदि आप इस दस्तावेज़ में दी गई जानकारी के अनुवाद किए जाने की सहायता चाहते हैं तो कृपया किसी अंग्रेजी भाषी व्यक्ति से यह अनुरोध करने के लिए 01753 475111 (option 1) पर बात करके कहें।

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Aby uzyskać pomoc odnośnie tłumaczenia instrukcji zawartych w niniejszym dokumencie, należy zwrócić się do osoby mówiącej po angielsku, aby zadzwoniła w tej sprawie pod numer 01753 475111 (option 1).

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