

## Arranging help at home (domiciliary care)

At some stage, many carers are faced with the task of finding services to provide extra help at home. Taking on the role of employer in addition to caring responsibilities can be daunting. What sort of help is needed? Who can provide it? How much will it cost?

It is advisable to contact Adult Social Care Services before making arrangements. You and the person you are looking after may be entitled to an assessment. This is an opportunity to discuss the help you need and to find out if you are eligible for any financial support – this may be provided in the form of Direct Payments which enable you to arrange your own help. Carers' Resource can provide information about assessments and means of paying for care, including personal budgets and direct payments.

You may of course decide to arrange and pay for domiciliary care as a totally private arrangement between you and the care provider.

When arranging care at home you will need to ask the right questions to find a high quality service to meet your needs. Reputable firms should visit to discuss your needs and then provide a clear, detailed confirmation of the work to be done and the costs involved.

### What services are offered?

#### Nursing and Personal Care

N.B. All organisations offering nursing or personal care have to be registered with the Care Quality Commission (CQC).

**Nursing care** is given by qualified nurses and can include such tasks as changing dressings, giving injections etc. as well as general nursing care.

**Personal care** could include help with getting up, going to bed, dressing and undressing, washing and bathing, personal hygiene, using the toilet or managing incontinence. It also includes help with health related tasks such as dealing with pressure sores or stoma care that can be done under guidance from a doctor or community nurse. You should note that 'personal care' is not a category that has to be provided by qualified nurses, even though in some cases it may be a nurse giving the care.

**Domestic help** - tasks such as cleaning, washing-up, laundry, cooking/preparing meals, lighting fires.

**Shopping** - could also include collecting pensions, benefits or prescriptions.



**Companion/social** - could include spending time with someone to help write letters or make phone calls; helping to learn new skills; going out on social trips.

**Live-in help** – ranging from a few days to cover for an emergency, to permanent full-time care.

**Sitting services** provide someone who will spend a few hours looking after the 'cared for' person so that his/her carer can have some free time to spend as they like.

**Night care** - ranging from 'sleeping over' to provide reassurance to being available throughout the night to provide care. When arranging this type of care it's important to make clear what level of care is likely to be needed. If any personal or nursing care is involved, it must be provided by an organisation registered with CQC.

**Gardening** - regular visits for grass cutting and weeding or major tidying and replanting.

**Meals** - help with meal preparation, provision of ready-cooked or frozen meals (meals on wheels or private firms), help with eating.

## **Some questions to ask care providers**

### **Charges**

- How much do you charge? Are there any 'extras' such as mileage payments?
- Do you charge more for weekends, evenings and bank holidays?
- Will you provide written confirmation of charges before care starts?
- Will I be notified in advance of any changes in charges?
- How do I pay you? (Do you bill me weekly, for example?)
- How much notice do I need to give if I need to cancel help for any reason?
- How much notice is needed if I want to cancel services altogether?
- Is there a charge if I cancel at short notice?

### **Insurance**

- Do you, the service provider, have public and employer liability insurance?
- Can I see confirmation in writing of your insurance cover?
- What household insurance do I need (in case a worker is injured or items get broken, for example)?

### **Staff**

- Have all your staff been interviewed and their references checked?
- Have they had DBS (Disclosure Barring Service) checks? (formerly CRB checks)
- What training/qualifications will my helper have?
- Will you tell me in advance if a different carer is coming?
- Will you let me know if my carer cannot come at the usual time?
- How do you supervise the work your carers do?
- How do you check they are doing what has been agreed?



## **Complaints**

- What can I do if I don't get on with my carer?
- How do I make a complaint – do you have a formal complaints procedure?

## **Equipment**

- Do I have to provide any equipment?
- What equipment do your staff provide?

## **Emergencies**

- What help could you provide in an emergency?
- Who do I contact in an emergency?

## **Confidentiality**

- Who will have details about me and the care you provide?
- What personal information do I have to provide?
- What records do you ask your staff to keep – if they're handling money, shopping, collecting pensions, for example?

Carers' Resource has produced a range of fact sheets which you may find useful – topics include:

- Local agencies providing domestic help such as cleaning
- Local agencies providing registered domiciliary care services
- Carers' assessments
- Paying for care

If you need further information or would like to discuss any aspect of your caring role, please contact Carers' Resource:

### **Harrogate 01423 500555**

11 North Park Road, Harrogate, HG1 5PD

### **Bradford 01274 449660**

15 Park View Court, St Paul's Road, Shipley, BD18 3DZ

### **Ripon 01765 690222**

Community House, Sharow View, Allhallowgate, Ripon, HG4 1LE

### **Skipton 01756 700888**

Griffin House, Broughton Hall Business Park, Skipton, BD23 3AN

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We can provide this information in other formats (large print, Braille and audio) and in other languages.

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