

# Care Home Provider Checklist for new residents



Surrey County Council is working with local care providers to provide prospective clients and family members or representatives with clear and consistent information and advice about their long-term care and costs of care.

Both the local authority and the provider has a responsibility to ensure they are fully informed and understand the financial arrangements they are entering into.

This also meets the requirements of the Competition and Markets Authority (CMA) guidance to support care homes in complying with consumer law.

Additionally, all providers have duties under the Care Act 2014 to provide information and advice as part of a local information and advice 'service'.

Surrey County Council has also developed a [checklist for residents](#) who are looking for a care home, please share the short URL [www.surreycc.gov.uk/carehomechecklist](http://www.surreycc.gov.uk/carehomechecklist) with residents.

## Make sure prospective residents are fully informed before they make a decision

- Ensure any prospective residents and their representatives have all the information they need to make informed choices, including whether to shortlist, make further enquiries of or visit your home.
- Information such as key features of your service, room sizes and costs, staffing arrangements, staff: resident ratio, the type of care needs you cater for, fees and charges should be available in a clear, accurate, accessible and unambiguous manner, and a copy of your standard contract/terms and conditions provided.
- All information should be available in all the places prospective residents and their representatives are likely to look for it, including on your website, during telephone or online enquires about your home and in other written materials that you provide to people or send to them when they get in touch for the first time (e.g. a 'key facts' sheet in an information pack, or as an insert in a brochure).

## Be clear and transparent about your fees and charges

- Provide a representative indication of the total weekly fee rates that you typically charge for self-funders, for each type of care service offered - including how these might change during their stay. Give details of any upfront payments required, such as the amount of any deposit, the risk it protects you against, how it will be protected and how it will be refunded.
- Encourage prospective residents to seek independent financial advice such as the [Society of Later Life Advisors](#) can help with independent advice.
- Set out what services are included in your weekly fees and any optional, additional 'extras' which are not included and may need to be paid for separately, including any significant, additional costs that may be unavoidable for some residents because of their circumstances (e.g. where staff need to accompany them to medical appointments).
- Make sure you clarify the relationship between the indicative fees quoted and the NHS [Funded Nursing Care \(FNC\)](#) contribution that some residents may be eligible for. If you are no longer eligible for FNC, Surrey Council County cannot make up this cost.

## Clarify the funding arrangement for your home

- Be clear with residents about the funding arrangements in your care home by informing residents whether you accept self-funded and state-funded residents.
- Ensure that the content of any agreement that you ask a state-funded resident or their representatives to sign does not conflict with the terms of the placement contract you have with the relevant public funding body (e.g. in relation to top-up fee arrangements).
- Alert the resident and their representatives to the options available to them and their implications. For example, where there is a shortfall between your fees and the amount the local authority is willing to pay, you must make sure that the prospective

resident and their representatives are aware of the option of making up the difference by arranging to make top-up payments through their local authority.

## **Be clear with residents and their families on what happens when their money runs out**

- Make sure all self-funding clients provide evidence that they can pay for their own care for at least two years.
- In advance of any self-funded resident becoming eligible for local authority or Continuing Healthcare (CHC) funding during their stay in the home, provide them with detail of their options.
- If the local authority rate is not sufficient or a third-party top-up payment, how would you continue to meet their needs? Similarly, if a self-funded resident becomes eligible for CHC funding during their stay at your home, do you accept CHC funded residents in your home? Would you ask them to move to a less expensive room in the home or terminate their contract?
- Provide clarity to all residents on the expected consequences if the resident's third party is no longer able to top-up their fees

## **Have an effective procedure for dealing with complaints, which is easy to find, easy to use and fair**

- You should have a written complaints' handling procedure which is easy to find, understand and use to ensure complaints are dealt with fairly and effectively, minimising the upset and worry that they can cause. Make sure your staff are trained in, and have a good understanding of, your complaints' handling procedure and how it works.
- Make it possible for residents to make their complaints in a variety of ways with information on how to make a complaint offered, in so far as possible, in different languages and accessible formats. Residents should have the opportunity to be assisted by an advocate and highlight how they can obtain other third-party advice and support they may need to bring a complaint.
- Ensure you inform residents of any dispute resolution approach and that they can escalate their complaint to the appropriate local authority or the Social Care Ombudsman.
- Set out clearly the reasons for which you or the resident may terminate the contract and any conditions, including the notice period and the means by which the termination should be notified (e.g. by written notification and to whom).