

A guide to

Care at Home



Aberdeenshire
COUNCIL



Introduction

Aberdeenshire Council provides a range of care at home services for people who require support to live independently. We have a workforce of around 700 trained home carers employed by Aberdeenshire Council and we also arrange for other care organisations to provide care at home on our behalf.

Care at home services can include personal care such as assistance with bathing, dressing or eating; help to maintain your home; a community meals service; community alarms and other assistive technology to keep people safe at home.

If you think you, a relative or a friend, needs help to manage at home, this booklet will help you to arrange this.



What is care at home?

Home carers work in partnership with relatives, friends and other agencies like the NHS to help people maintain their independence as much as possible by assisting them in their own home. Some care at home services are provided by Aberdeenshire Council staff and sometimes we arrange for other care agencies to deliver these services.

Care at home services can help you to manage:

- Personal care:
 - Personal hygiene (e.g. washing/dressing and assistance with toileting)
 - Getting in/out of bed
 - Assistance with medication
 - Eating/drinking
 - Preparing special diets
- Home support:
 - Advice and guidance
 - Support with budget management
 - Assistance with home security and maintenance
 - Help to use domestic appliances
 - Help to manage bills and official correspondence
- * Practical support:
 - Essential shopping
 - Lighting your fire
 - Collecting your pension
 - Laundry/essential hygiene cleaning

** Practical support services are provided only as part of a combined care package with personal care, to meet essential daily living needs.*

Care at home services are available from early morning to late evening, every day of the year, providing essential care and support to people in their own homes. In exceptional circumstances, or where people experience a crisis, we can arrange for home carers to respond during the night.

Care at home services also include access to community meals and a community alarm service. Details about both these services are available in our leaflets entitled [Community Alarms and Telecare](#) and [Community Meals](#).

Is care at home the same as free personal care?

No, but free personal care is one element of care at home services. Free personal care is available to people aged 65 and over. We will undertake an assessment with you to identify your needs and whether you require personal care. If you are aged 65 or over, you will receive help with personal care free of charge.

Personal care is provided by home carers of Aberdeenshire Council or by other care agencies with whom the council has a contract. If you want to arrange your own personal care using direct payments, you can use an agency that has an agreement with Aberdeenshire Council. This provides an assurance that the quality of service you receive is monitored and checked by the council.



Who is entitled to care at home services?

People of all ages receive care at home. You may be eligible if you need help with personal care and practical support to live independently at home and you have increasing frailty or dementia, if you are ill and living at home, or if you have a disability or sensory impairment, mental health problems or substance misuse problems.

You, your family or carer(s) can ask a social work or health professional to meet with you and discuss your circumstances. This will be part of your assessment.

We allocate community care services to people in greatest need first. If you have a high priority for services because of your needs or circumstances, we will aim to deliver a care at home service to you within three days. If we assess that your needs are not substantial or urgent, you may have to wait before a service can be put in place for you.

Our staff use several criteria to judge your priority for services. These are called eligibility criteria and they are available on the council's website. You can also ask for a copy. Our contact details are listed at the end of this booklet.



How do I arrange a care at home service for myself, a relative or friend?

If you or a relative, neighbour or friend needs help at home because of illness, frailty or disability, you can make a referral to us. You can do this by telephone or in person at your local social work office. You can also email us. Our contact details are listed at the end of this booklet.

Alternatively, you can speak to health staff in your local GP practice.

After we receive your referral, a home care supervisor, or other social work or health professional, will visit you as soon as possible and carry out an assessment of your needs to find out how much support and what type of services might help you at home.

Once agreement has been reached with you about the outcome of your assessment, we will draw up a plan with you of the care you need and when you should receive it.

Before the service starts we will advise you of the names of the home carers who will be helping you and what times they will arrive.

We will review your service regularly, to make sure you are happy with the help you receive and that it continues to meet your needs.



How do I ensure care at home services are safe and reliable?

All home carers must carry out their work safely and in accordance with health and safety regulations. We will carry out a risk assessment for all the tasks a home carer might require to help you in your home. We might assess that a mechanical hoist or other equipment or adaptation is needed to ensure staff can help you safely. We may ask you to replace any faulty gas or electrical equipment.

If we cannot deliver the service you need to your satisfaction we will inform you of the reasons for this.

The Care Commission is a national organisation that regulates and inspects care at home services throughout Scotland.

The Care Commission puts the safety and well-being of people who use care services at its heart, and has developed national care at home standards.

Aberdeenshire Council's services are measured against these standards to ensure that people have all the information they need to help them decide about using our care at home services, that services are provided by staff who have the skills and competence to care for your needs, and that you or your carer can express your views on the care service you receive at any time. You can contact the Care Commission directly. Their address is shown at the end of this booklet.

Will I have to pay for care at home services?

The council operates a charging policy for care at home services which is based on a person's ability to pay. We will offer to carry out an assessment of your financial circumstances and, depending on your income and your ability to pay, you may be required to make a contribution to the cost of your care at home service. Full details of our charging policy are available on the council's website and in a separate booklet entitled [Contributing Towards the Cost of Your Care](#).

How is my income assessed?

When we undertake an assessment of your financial circumstances we will take into account your income (e.g. pension, benefits) and your weekly outgoings (e.g. rent, mortgage, council tax). We will take account of any other finances that you have reasonable access to, such as your spouse's pension. The value of your home is not taken into account in the assessment.

After we have completed a financial assessment, we will advise you in writing of:

- The amount you have to pay for your services
- The frequency of bills you will receive
- Your payment arrangements



Can I manage my own budget for care at home?

Yes. If you are assessed as needing care at home and you want funding to manage your own care services, you can apply to Aberdeenshire Council for a direct payment. This will allow you to arrange your own care at home service with a provider of your choice. You can find out more on our website and in our leaflet entitled [Direct Payments](#).

What about social security benefits?

We will offer you a benefits entitlement check to make sure you are receiving all the welfare benefits to which you are entitled.

Any welfare or social security benefits you receive will be included in your income for assessment purposes, except:

- Disability living allowance (mobility component)
- War widows pension (Ministry of Defence component)
- War disablement pension



Informing and deciding

It is our aim to ensure you have all the information you need to help you decide about care at home services. If you want to find out more about the information contained in this booklet please contact us.

- Email us at social.work@aberdeenshire.gov.uk
- Phone us on 0845 60 81 206

Aberdeenshire Council's care at home service is registered and inspected by:

The Care Commission

Johnstone House

Rose Street

Aberdeen


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793870

Lo-call: 0845
60 30 890







If you would like this information in large print, braille, audio tape or a language other than English please contact Housing and Social Work on 0845 608 1206 or social.work@aberdeenshire.gov.uk.