

Paying for residential and nursing care

Newham Council wants to help residents live in their own home as independently as possible and we have a range of help and support available to enable this to happen. For some people this is not always possible and 24 hour support is required. In these cases a move to a residential or nursing care home may be arranged.

Will I have to pay for my care?

If you are unable to meet the full cost of the residential or nursing care home you can contact the council for financial support. Most people moving into a care home will have to contribute towards the cost of their care. However, you will not be asked to pay towards your care if your placement falls under one of the following three categories:

- The NHS is paying for your care home in full. This is called Continuing NHS Health Care.
- Your care is part of a package of Intermediate Care where you are having short term therapy or treatment, either following a hospital stay or to avoid having to go into hospital for a period of up to six weeks.
- You are receiving care under section 117 of the Mental Health Act 1983.

If you do have to pay towards the cost of your care, how much you contribute will depend on the amount of savings, income and assets that you have.

How much will it cost?

You will be asked to complete a financial assessment form and provide evidence of your income or benefits, capital and assets. This will enable us to calculate how much you may need to contribute towards the cost of your care. You will have to pay the full cost of your care home if:

- your saving and assets, including the value of any property owned, are more than £23,250
- your weekly income is more than the cost of your care home. We will ignore the value of your home if the property is occupied by
 - your husband, wife or partner
 - a relative who is over 60 and is incapacitated
 - a dependent child
 - someone who gave up their home to come and live and care for you.

For all other customers, the amount you contribute will depend on how much money you receive every week in benefits and how much you have in savings and other assets. This will usually be all of your income less a personal allowance which is currently £24.90.

Case Study

Mrs Smith has been offered a place in a care home that costs £520 per week. She receives a retirement pension of £115.95 a week and Pension Credit (the guaranteed part not the savings part) of £51.30.

Mrs Smith's income £167.25

Minus personal allowance £24.90

Mrs Smith's total weekly contribution £142.35

Mrs Smith will pay £142.35 a week towards the cost of the care home.

The balance of £377.65 a week will be paid by the council.

Will my state benefits be affected when I go into a care home?

Your benefits may be affected when you go into a care home. You should contact the Department for Works and Pensions (DWP) (Call: 0800 99 1234, Textphone: 0800 169 0133) for advice as soon as you go into the care home to avoid being overpaid.

Will I have to sell my home?

We ignore the value of your property for the first 12 weeks of your stay in the care home. This is to give you time to plan for your future needs. If during this time you decide you either do not wish to sell the property at the present time or you are arranging to sell, we can enter into a deferred payment agreement with you, this will depend on if you meet the criteria set out in the Deferred Payment Agreement Policy. This is like a loan which enables you to meet the cost of your care home and any money paid by the council is paid back once you sell the property or leave the care home. You will be contacted by a Member of the Financial Assessment & Charging Team to discuss this in more detail.

If I am married or living with a partner, will you include their income when you work out how much I have to pay?

If you are married or living with a partner and you go into a care home on your own, we will only assess your financial resources. Even if both you and your partner are going into care together, we will assess your finances individually to work out how much you will each have to contribute towards the cost of your own care.

What if I am only going into the home for a short period of time?

This may be for a short break for either you or your carer for up to eight weeks or in an emergency situation. If the short stay is for a break for your carer whilst they take a break then there will be no charge. For other stays, we will work out how much you have to pay in the same way as if your stay was permanent. However, we will not take the value of your home into account and you may have a number of on-going expenses incurred in relation to your home such as mortgage payments or utility bills, which may be taken into account.

When will the charges start?

The charges start from the day you move into the care home. If we are unable to complete a financial assessment form with you before you move in, we will charge you at a provisional rate depending on your age as follows:

- Over 60 £142.35 a week
- 25 – 59 £80.45 a week

Once we have received the financial assessment form, we will assess your finances back to the date that you went into the care home. If you do not complete the financial assessment form, we will charge you the full cost of the care home backdated to the date you went in.

How do I pay for my care?

You will usually pay your contribution to the care home. In some circumstances we will issue you with 4 weekly invoices directly from the council. There may be a slight delay from the time you go into the care home up to the point that we tell you what your contribution should be. During this

time you should make sure that you keep sufficient funds to be able to meet your contribution towards the cost of the care home once invoices are issued.

What happens if I don't pay?

If you don't pay your contribution we may take recovery action, which may involve legal proceedings, the costs of which you may be liable to pay.

Where can I get further information?

The information given in this booklet is for guidance only and does not replace the Care Act 2014. For more detailed information, especially around what happens if you own a property or the types of income that are taken into account and top-up arrangements, you can:

- visit <http://adultsocialcare.newham.gov.uk/Pages/Paying-for-residential--nursing-home-care.aspx>
- email the Financial Assessment & Charging team at FACT@newham.gov.uk or call them on 0203 373 1184.

We recommend that you should take independent financial and legal advice to help you decide which course of action will be financially better for you.