



# **A guide to organising NHS Continuing Healthcare in Surrey**

## **I am eligible for NHS Continuing Healthcare. What does that mean?**

As you are eligible for NHS Continuing Healthcare, the NHS continuing healthcare team will take responsibility for funding your healthcare. This is based on the assessment you will have had of your needs.

This means that we will work with you and/or your representative to identify a placement in a care home, or to arrange a package of care for you in your own home with one of Surrey Downs Clinical Commissioning Group's contracted providers. We will pay that provider directly for your care.

## **What do I have to do?**

If you decide you would like the NHS continuing healthcare team to fund your care, you will need to read through and sign an agreement form and return it to the NHS continuing healthcare team using the details at the end of this leaflet. We need you to do this as quickly as possible so that we can proceed with making arrangements for you. If you have any questions before you sign the document, please do not hesitate to contact us.

## **What happens next?**

A member of the NHS continuing healthcare team will telephone you or your representative to discuss the arrangements for your care.

## **Care in a care home with nursing: can I choose my own care home?**

We understand that choosing where you are going to live is a big decision and we will do our best to meet any preferences you may have. It is also important that we make sure that the care home can fully meet your assessed clinical healthcare needs.

In some cases your choices may be limited if your health needs are complex. We also have to make sure that public funds are being spent appropriately and fairly. This may mean that we will not always be able to offer you the home you would like, or one that is closest to you. Where possible we will offer you at least two choices.

You and/or your representative will be asked to visit the homes to see which one you would like. It is not possible to reserve beds, so you do need to do this as quickly as possible.

### **What if I don't like any of the homes I am offered?**

We will try to identify homes that meet your needs and are in a location closest to your family, if this is important to you. If you feel these are not suitable for you, we will look for other homes that can meet your needs, but it is possible that these will be further away.

If you choose to accept funding from the NHS and feel unable to make a decision, the NHS continuing healthcare team reserves the right to make a final decision on your behalf.

### **I am already in a care home that I like. Can I stay where I am?**

If the care home that you are living in can meet your recently assessed needs and is contracted by the NHS continuing healthcare team, we will try to make arrangements for you to stay there. There may be circumstances where this is not possible and the NHS continuing healthcare team would then identify an alternative and discuss this with you.

### **Can I pay a 'top up' fee myself?**

No. It is a central principle of the NHS that its services are free of charge. As such, NHS Continuing Healthcare must provide enough funding to meet your assessed healthcare needs, so there is no need for you to pay for anything that falls within your health needs.

However, the NHS must balance trying to meet your preferences with providing value for money and fair access to resources for all. NHS Continuing Healthcare does not pay for personal items such as toiletries, newspapers, hairdressing, chiropody or added extras not directly relating to your assessed needs.

If you would like to have a bigger room, a nicer view or your own personal television, you can purchase these but this would be a private agreement between yourself and the care home.

If you propose an alternative and more expensive placement, we can request the provider separate core healthcare costs from additional private costs/higher accommodation costs. If the provider agrees to this, two separate contracts with the provider would need to be created; one for the provision of core healthcare costs, payable by the NHS continuing healthcare team, and the other payable by you.

If the provider refuses to split their costs in this fashion (sometimes they are unwilling to do this), the NHS continuing healthcare team is unlikely to be able to purchase the care from this provider, and you will be asked to choose from the preferred provider list.

### **Do I have to arrange anything myself?**

No. Once we have agreed which care home you will be going to, all of the arrangements will be made by the NHS continuing healthcare team and we will also inform the care home. A member of the nursing home will come and meet you before a final agreement is made.

If you would like any added extras not directly related to your assessed healthcare needs, you will need to request and arrange these directly with the care home.

### **I would like to have care in my own home. Is this possible?**

We know that many people wish to be cared for in their own home. Where possible, the NHS continuing healthcare team will support this. However there may be circumstances where an identified risk(s) exceed(s) what can be safely provided for in a home setting with the available resources.

### **Potential risks**

It is important that you are aware that having a package of care at home can carry increased risks, as it is not possible to provide the same level of risk management at home as there is in a nursing home.

This should have been discussed with you at the time of your assessment and it is possible that if the risks become unacceptable you may have to move to a care home.

In an emergency, the NHS continuing healthcare team reserves the right to make arrangements for your admission to a hospital or directly to a nursing home should this be required.

### **Do I have to find a home care agency that can help me?**

No, a member of the NHS continuing healthcare team will make arrangements with one of its contracted home care agencies that can provide carers who are able to meet your assessed healthcare needs. This may include help with bathing, dressing or therapy services at agreed times and days.

The NHS continuing healthcare team will not be able to fund general domestic tasks unless these are identified as relating directly to your individual needs, and are identified as part of your healthcare package. If your family or carers need support in this area, social services may be able to help, although you should be aware that this may be subject to financial assessment.

### **I already have care at home and I like the carers who look after me. Can I stay with that agency?**

If the agency you already have are able to meet your recently assessed needs and is contracted by Surrey Downs Clinical Commissioning Group, we will try to make arrangements for them to remain with you.

There may be circumstances where this is not possible and the NHS continuing healthcare team would identify an alternative and discuss this with you.

### **Do I have to pay anything?**

No. A contract will be made between the NHS continuing healthcare team and the agency. Payment will be made directly to them.

### **Who do I talk to about my care at home if I have any concerns?**

The homecare agency will be asked to provide a package of care that meets the recommendation of Surrey Downs Clinical Commissioning Group's NHS continuing healthcare case co-ordinators, the discharging hospital or hospice and/or the district nursing team.

If you feel that this package of care is not meeting your needs or if you wish to make any changes to it, you should contact the NHS continuing healthcare team to discuss any changes you think might be needed.

Funding is organised by Surrey Downs Clinical Commissioning Group so any decisions to change your package of care will need to be agreed with us.

All agencies used by Surrey Downs Clinical Commissioning Group are registered, monitored and regulated by the Care Quality Commission but if you have any concerns about the quality of the care you are receiving please contact the NHS continuing healthcare team. Details are at the end of this leaflet.

### **Can I have a personal health budget?**

If, after your three-month NHS Continuing Healthcare review, you are still eligible to receive funding and you think that you would like more flexibility over the way your care is organised and managed, please talk to us about whether a personal health budget might be able to help you.

A personal health budget is a different way of receiving your NHS Continuing Healthcare, which gives you more choice over who provides your care, when and how it is delivered and what your budget is spent on. If you would like more information please ask for a copy of our personal health budget leaflet.

### **Will my benefits be affected?**

You should contact the Department for Work and Pensions to notify them that NHS Continuing Healthcare funding is currently being received and they will be able to provide further advice.

Pensions Agency Helpline: 0845 6060265  
Benefits Agency – contact your local office

### **Do I have to accept NHS Continuing Healthcare?**

No. It is entirely your choice whether or not to accept NHS Continuing Healthcare and there is no obligation to accept funding.

If you do decide to decline NHS Continuing Healthcare and make your own private arrangements for care, you should be aware that the Local Authority will not be able to take responsibility for funding your care.

## **Will I always receive NHS Continuing Care?**

NHS Continuing Care is not permanent and you will be reviewed three months after you have settled into your care home or returned home with care support, and then on a yearly basis.

If your condition improves, your health needs change, or there is a change in policy, it is possible that you may no longer be eligible for NHS Continuing Healthcare.

If this is the case you will be fully involved in the discussions and will be informed in writing about future funding. This may involve an assessment by the Local Authority to determine how much you may need to contribute to your care.

## Contact the team

If you want to know more, or have any questions about NHS Continuing Healthcare, you can:

- call and speak to a member of the team on 01372 201645
- write to: Surrey Downs Clinical Commissioning Group, NHS Continuing Healthcare Service, Cedar Court, Guildford Road, Leatherhead, Surrey KT22 9AE
- or email: [SDCCG.referrals@nhs.net](mailto:SDCCG.referrals@nhs.net)

If you, or anyone you know, would like a copy of this leaflet in another format such as large print, Braille, easy read or another language please contact us on:

tel: 01372 201500

email: [contactus.surreydownsccg@nhs.net](mailto:contactus.surreydownsccg@nhs.net)