

The **Independent Complaints Advocacy Services (ICAS)** supports patients and their carers who want to pursue a complaint about their NHS treatment or care.

All health trusts have a **Patient Advice and Liaison Service (PALS)**, which can help explain complaints procedures.

All care homes are registered and inspected by the **Care Quality Commission (CQC)** who also has a helpline: 03000 616161.

If you are considering moving to a care home, think about:

- Asking for an assessment of your needs
- Anticipating your future needs
- Getting independent financial advice
- Safeguarding your capital
- Maximising your income
- The affordability of the care home
- Getting clear information about what is included in the fees.

Note: If you move to a care home with fees above the standard rate payable by the local authority, you need to be aware that if your savings reduce and you need social care funding in the future, the standard local authority rate applies. We would ask the care home to accept the standard fees, or ask if a relative or friend can make up the shortfall. If neither of these is possible, we would usually offer funding at a suitable alternative care home at the standard rate.

Additional funding can sometimes be available from various charities and the Welfare Rights Service can offer advice regarding applications.

Social Care and Health local offices

Newcastle Access Team
The Holborn, Castle Hill Rd
Newcastle-u-Lyme, ST5 2SX

Duty Officer Tel: 01782 296005
Mobile No. (txt): 07773792324
Minicom: 01782 297415
Fax No. 01782 296024
e-mail: accessteamnewcastle@staffordshire.gov.uk

Moorlands Access Team
County Services Building,
Fountain Street
Leek, ST13 6JR

Duty Officer Tel: 01538 483112
Minicom: 01538 483898
Fax: 01538 483145
e-mail: accessteammoorlands@staffordshire.gov.uk

Stafford Access Team
Duty Officer Tel: 01785 276969
Text phone: 07773 792323
Minicom: 01785 276918
Fax: 01785 276928
e-mail: staffordadults.socialservices@staffordshire.gov.uk

East Staffordshire Access Team
Unit 4, Anglesey House, Anglesey Road,
Burton, DE14 3NP

Duty Officer Tel: 01283 239888
Minicom: 01283 233471
Fax: 01283 233461
e-mail: accessteameaststaffs@staffordshire.gov.uk

South Staffordshire Access Team
Histons Hill
Codsall WV8 1AA

Duty Officer Tel: 01902 434000
Minicom: 01543 512366
Text phone: 07773 792326
Fax: 01902 434034
e-mail: accessteamsouthstaffordshire@staffordshire.gov.uk

Cannock Access Team
Cannock ASO, Ivy House,
202 Wolverhampton Road, Cannock
WS11 1AT,

Duty Officer Tel: 01543 510300,
Fax: 01543 510350
e-mail: accessteammcannock@staffordshire.gov.uk

Lichfield Access Team
Lombard Court, Lombard Street
Lichfield, Staffordshire, WS13 6DP

Duty Officer Tel: 01543 510800
Fax: 01543 510827
Minicom: 01543 510849
e-mail: accessteamlichfield@staffordshire.gov.uk

Tamworth Access Team
Marmion House, Lichfield Street
Tamworth, Staffs. B79 6BZ

Duty Officer Tel: 01827 475506
Minicom: 01827 475510
Text phone: 07976 191448
Fax: 01827 475515
e-mail: accessteamtamworth@staffordshire.gov.uk



Are you paying for your own care in a residential or nursing care home?



A quick guide to some of the things you may need to know.

This leaflet can be provided in larger print, in Braille, on audio tape, or in different languages. Contact us on Stafford 01785 276900 for this service

You have a right to an assessment

If you are considering a move to a residential care home, you are entitled to an assessment of your needs from your local Social Care Services. They will help you to choose the support that is right for you and help to decide the type and location of the home that would best meet your needs.

Part of the assessment will look at what you can afford to pay for your care and how much public funding you are entitled to. Even if you are not eligible for social care funding, you can still have the benefit of an assessment. Information and professional advice, including Welfare Benefits advice, will help you make your own choices and stay as independent and active as you can.

For information about an assessment, and other services that Social Care and Health can provide, contact your local office listed at the back of this leaflet.

Getting help from Social Care Services with the cost of your care

Staffordshire County Council may give you some financial help if:

- You live in Staffordshire;
- We have assessed your needs and agree they can only be met in a residential or nursing home; and,
- Your savings and income are below a certain level. This level is set every year by the government, and in 2009 – 2010 this level was £23,000.

If you know that your savings will fall below this level, you should contact your local Social Care and Health office three months in advance to ask if you can qualify for financial help.

Help to access Welfare Benefits

Even if your income and savings are above the level for help from Social Care and Health, you may be able to apply for extra welfare benefits or continue to receive State Retirement Pension; Incapacity Benefit; Severe Disablement Allowance, Disability Living Allowance or Attendance Allowance.

You **may also be** able to keep entitlement to Pension Credit.

Independent Welfare Benefits advice is available from a Welfare Rights Advisor at your local Social Care & Health office. They can also help with completing claim forms, sorting out disputes with the Department of Work and Pensions and help with reviews and appeals.

If you are not already receiving Attendance Allowance or Disability Living Allowance, you should make a claim without delay by contacting the Welfare Rights Advisor at your local Social Care and Health office.

Help from the NHS

If you need nursing care, the NHS pays a fixed rate (currently £106.30 per week) for the nursing element of your care in a care home. This amount may be different if you moved into a nursing care home before October 2007. This payment does not affect your eligibility for Attendance Allowance or Disability Living Allowance or other benefits.

In some circumstances, if your health care needs are high and complex, you may be eligible for 100% NHS Continuing Health Care Funding. Your local Social Care and Health office can advise you about this – but this does have an effect on Attendance or Disability Living Allowance.



Lack of assets

If you give away money or other capital to avoid paying the full fees, the local authority will still take into account the value of these assets. The local authority can, also in some circumstances, ask the person who was given the money, to pay some of the costs.

Reporting Concerns

If you have any concerns about the quality of your care, you should approach the manager first to see if the problem can be resolved at an early stage. If this is not an option, for example, because the complaint is about the manager or because you are uncomfortable about this, it may be more appropriate to approach the local authority or regulatory body instead.

If the problem cannot be resolved informally, or you are not satisfied with the outcome of the complaint, you can ask for a copy of the home's complaints procedure. The complaints procedure should give you information on who to contact if you are not satisfied. You can get support to do this from a relative or friend, from your local Social Care and Health office, or you can talk to one of the other useful contacts listed below.

Help with complaining

The charity, **Counsel and Care**, have produced a factsheet that offers a comprehensive guide to complaining about health and social services. It is called: Complaining about community care and NHS services in England. To receive a copy, telephone 020 7241 8522 or you can visit their website, www.counselandcare.org.uk/helping-you/guides.

If you find the process complicated or daunting some organisations may be able to help:

Help the Aged have a free advice line: SeniorLine 0808 800 6565

Age Concern national information line: 0800 009966

Age Concern South Staffordshire helpline: 01785 788499