

For Carers, By Carers

Moving into a care home

You may face a time when the person you care for needs more support than can be offered at home. They may need to go into a care home temporarily or permanently for specialist or more intensive care.

What carers would like to share with you

- Plan for the future. Your GP, Social Worker and Post Diagnostic Support Link Worker should be able to help with this.
- Make a list of criteria that you and the person you care for require and visit as many care homes as you need until you find the right one. Don't feel rushed into the wrong decision.
- Care Inspectorate reports may be helpful, but also trust your gut feeling e.g. do you get a positive and welcoming feel from the staff?
- If the staff have been there for a reasonable length of time, it's a good indication that the care home is a good place to work and live.
- Find out how long the waiting list is for the care home(s) you prefer. This may become vital if a crisis happens so that they need to go into the home quickly (e.g. after a discharge from hospital).
- Think of how long you would feel comfortable travelling when you visit regularly.
- Make sure you have a clear understanding of the true cost of care and the process of paying for care.
- Try introducing the person to a care home through day services and respite stays. It can help if they are familiar with their surroundings and the staff already know them before they move in full time.
- As the needs of the person with dementia change, they might not fit the criteria for admission to some care homes.
- There can be positive outcomes from a move into a care home. Your relative should get good quality professional care that you may not be able to provide. When you're not caring 24/7 you may have improved wellbeing and a better relationship with the person you care for.



Did you know?

Many care homes provide services such as:

- Activity co-ordinators and activities that you may be able to join in with.
- Adapted transport for trips out.
- Hairdressers.
- Ability for residents to help in their garden.
- Allowing visits from pets.
- Carer support groups.

Alzheimer Scotland's National Dementia Advisor Service can provide information, advice and advocacy, including on matters such as paying for care and care home visiting. Find out more at www.alzscot.org/ndas

"I valued being able to join my mum in her care home for dinner and watching TV in her room. I even did some exercise classes with her. It made my visits feel more relaxed and normal."

"Mum's move into a care home improved the quality of her life, as well as mine, and it meant I became her daughter again. I treasure many of the memories we made there, supported by staff."

Top Tips for Carers

- Put in place as soon as possible a Power of Attorney and Advance Statement that truly reflects the wishes of the person with dementia – it's key for future proofing.
- As a carer you have rights protected by legislation.
- If you provide regular care you are entitled to a Carer's Assessment which will enable Social Services to offer you advice and support.
- Don't become isolated. Engage with family, friends and neighbours. Explain the situation to help them understand your feelings.
- Keep handy a list of important phone numbers such as for the GP, Social Work and, of course, Alzheimer Scotland.
- Keep a diary of appointments where you record all the support and advice available, and any action taken.
- Technology and apps can help people with dementia to live well and safely and can provide peace of mind for carers.
- Remember that before you were a carer you were the person's family, friend, partner or neighbour – that will never change, even as your caring responsibilities increase.
- Your own health and wellbeing are VITAL. Try to make time for yourself. Continue with your hobbies and sports. Accept help.

Contact Alzheimer Scotland for more help and information

Further information

This is one of a series of 'For Carers, By Carers' leaflets:

- Going for a diagnosis
- Helping someone with dementia to live well
- Working with professionals and services
- Going into hospital
- Moving into a care home
- Looking after yourself
- When problems arise
- Grief and loss

Email activevoice@alzscot.org or

Visit www.alzscot.org/ndcan for copies.

Useful contacts

Alzheimer Scotland's
Dementia Advisor
Service

0300 373 5774

Alzheimer Scotland's
24 hour Freephone
Dementia Helpline

0808 808 3000

www.alzscot.org



About NDCAN

We are a national, member led campaigning and awareness raising group of current and former dementia carers in Scotland. Formed in 2011, we exist to make the voices of dementia carers heard and to raise awareness of the issues impacting on carers. Find out more about NDCAN and how to join us at **www.alzscot.org/ndcan**