

## HELP SHEET FOR PROSPECTIVE SERVICE USERS

If you're new to sourcing a care package, it can be a daunting and confusing process. We've put together this help sheet to help you understand the processes and what you can expect.

First you need to have an understanding of whether you, or the person requiring care, will be funding their own care, or whether you are entitled to help from the local authority or another source.

The funding groups we work with are:-

- **Those funding their care privately** – either by choice or determined by your savings and personal funds. There is a threshold for funding from the local authority. If your finances are above this threshold then you'd be expected to fund your own, or some of your own, care.
- **Those whose care is funded from the local authority** (council) – usually because your personal funds or savings fall below the threshold determined by the local authority. You may have to make a contribution to your care, or you may have it fully funded, depending on your circumstances.
- **Those whose care is funded by CHC** (Continuing Health Care) – an NHS-based fund which is separate from the local authority. This is usually reserved for those who fall under the palliative or end-of-life sector, and you will need to meet certain criteria for this type of funding.
- **Those who receive Direct Payments** – This will give you more choice in selecting the products and services that meet your specific needs. You need to be confident with money and paperwork, or have people to support you with this, and be happy to keep receipts and invoices to submit to Social Services as required.

If you are unsure about the thresholds for funding, you can access the local authority's website at [www.somerset.gov.uk](http://www.somerset.gov.uk) or call them on 0300 123 2224.

Another useful source of information is the CQC (Care Quality Commission) website, [www.cqc.org.uk](http://www.cqc.org.uk). The CQC regulates and inspects providers of care in many forms (hospitals, dentists, residential homes and community care.)

### SOURCING A CARE PROVIDER

If you are unsure how to choose a provider of care, help and information can be obtained from your local council who have an approved list of care providers in your area. Report of the most recent inspections can also be found at the CQC website.

If you are going to privately fund some care, it will normally be down to you or your representative to find an agency. Your chosen agency should arrange to visit the prospective service user. This visit is about introducing the agency as well as sourcing specific and relevant information about the proposed service user. At Taunton Homecare Services, this is called our **Care Needs Assessment**.

It's a very detailed assessment and it helps ensure we can meet your care requirements. We also undertake a general Risk Assessment and (if required) a Moving and Handling Risk Assessment.

Taunton Homecare Services offer a free, no obligation home visit service from a senior member of the office or management.

This visit also enables the proposed service user and family to ask questions and determine if this is the agency they would like to use.

If, at this point, you decide to go forward, Taunton Homecare Services will provide a Service User Care Plan from the assessments at the home visit. This outlines all the information gained, the care required and how we would deliver it. Additionally, we send a contract to private service users. This outlines the care we are to provide, a start date, the cost of this package of care and which carers will be assigned.

Both the Service User Care Plan and the Contract should be signed and dated by either the service user or their representative. We send two copies of each document out, one copy to be retained by the service user and the other copy to be returned to us for holding on file. This is confirmation of your agreement with Taunton Homecare Services to provide your care and is very important.

If your care is to be funded/partially funded by the local authority (council) they will source and approach care providers on your behalf. They will give agencies details of the care package required (how many calls per day, length of call times etc.) You have the right to request a particular care agency of your choice if you wish. It is very important that you inform the local authority if this is the case.

If Taunton Homecare Services receive a care package via the local authority, we follow the same process; visiting the service user, undertaking the Care Needs and Risk Assessments and creating a Service User Care Plan. This is sent to the service user or representative, along with a welcome letter which outlines the care we are to provide a start date and which carers will be assigned.

Again, the Service User Care Plan should be signed and dated by either the service user or their representative. We send two copies of this document out, one copy to be retained by the service user and the other copy to be returned to us for holding on file. This is confirmation of your agreement with Taunton Homecare Services to provide your care and is very important.

#### **IF YOU ARE SOURCING CARE TO BE PRIVATELY FUNDED**

It's helpful if you have a rough idea of the sort of help or care that you require. For example: what days and times are needed (morning, lunch, teatime, evening etc)? What sort of help or care is required at the calls (washing, dressing, medication assistance, meal and drink preparation, companionship etc)?

If you use Taunton Homecare Services, we will take your details and requirements down along with contact details and numbers. We then look at your requirements and check our availability and come back to you as soon as possible (normally that same day). We can advise care costs over the phone but additionally we have an information pack that we can send out if required.

#### **IMPORTANCE OF INVOLVING FAMILY/FRIENDS/NOK**

Taunton Homecare Services openly encourage the involvement of family, friends or next-of-kin in arranging a care package, attending home visits and assessments.

Communication is a vital important part of providing care. Sometimes family do not live close enough to be able to visit on a regular daily or weekly basis and so they need to rely on a care agency to feedback, communicate and keep them in the loop.

Part of our Care Needs Assessment involves collecting contact information for next of kin.