Care Home Guide:
Friends and Family

Who we are

Age Scotland is the Scottish charity for older people. We work to improve the lives of everyone over the age of 50 and promote their rights and interests.

Our vision is a Scotland which is the best place in the world to grow older.

Our mission is to inspire, involve and empower older people in Scotland, and influence others, so that people enjoy better later lives.

We have three strategic aims:

We help older people to be as well as they can be

We promote a positive view of ageing and later life

We tackle loneliness and isolation

How we can help

We know that growing older doesn't come with a manual. Later life can bring changes and opportunities to your life and you may need to know about rights, organisations and services which are unfamiliar to you.

That's why we provide free information and advice to help you on a range of topics including benefits and entitlements, social care, legal issues such as Power of Attorney, housing and much more. All of our guides are available to download for free from our website, or you can contact our helpline team to have copies posted to you for free.

Our **helpline** is a free, confidential phone service for older people, their carers and families in Scotland looking for information and advice.

Later life can bring times when you just need someone to talk to. Our **friendship line** is part of our wider helpline and older people can call us for a chat. We're here to listen, provide friendship and offer support.

Call us free on: 0800 12 44 222
(Monday – Friday, 9am – 5pm)

Visit agescotland.org.uk to find out more.

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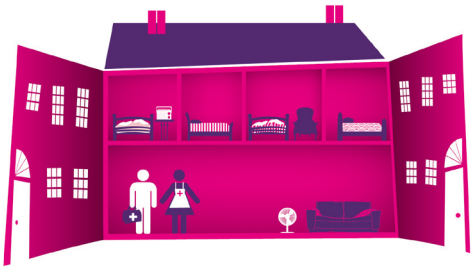

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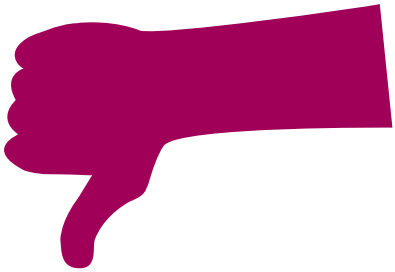

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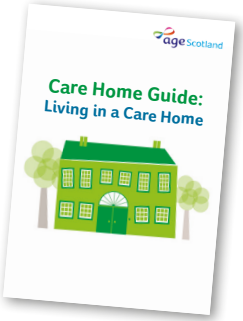
Introduction

If a friend or relative moves into a care home it may seem like a big step, but it is important to remember the move can be a positive choice. A care home can offer opportunities to develop new friendships and provide a safe and comfortable place for them to live. The move itself may be carefully planned out, or it could happen more quickly because of an accident or illness. However it happens, it is important you both know what to expect and have the information you need to play a full and active role in making decisions.

This guide provides information about care homes, the moving-in process, and how you may be able to provide support. Whether you are a friend, family member, or someone with a formal decision-making role such as Power of Attorney, there are many decisions and questions your friend or relative may appreciate your support with. These include which home to choose and how they will pay for their care.

In this guide we will refer to 'relatives' for ease of reading. However, the advice and information is relevant to anyone supporting a person moving into a care home.

If your relative is curious or concerned about what their life will be like after the move, **Age Scotland**'s **Care Home Guide: Living in a Care Home** may be useful. Contact our helpline on **0800 12 44 222** for a copy.



Types of care home

A care home is a place where people can live in a homely setting and have their needs met by trained staff. All care homes offer help with personal care such as washing, dressing and managing medication if needed. Some care homes also provide specialist equipment and trained nurses on duty 24 hours a day who provide skilled nursing care if this is required. Some care homes provide specialist care and support for a specific care need such as dementia.

Care home staff are trained to care for people in accordance with the **Health and Social Care Standards**. These standards are based on the human rights, expectations and needs of those using the service, with expected outcomes written from their perspective:

- I experience high-quality care and support that is right for me
- I am fully involved in all decisions about my care and support
- I have confidence in the people who support and care for me
- I have confidence in the organisation providing my care and support
- I experience a high-quality environment if the organisation provides the premises

The Health and Social Care Standards aim to ensure that everyone receives the same high standard of responsive care, is treated with dignity, respect and compassion, is included in decision making and has their wellbeing supported.

Care homes can be owned and run by local councils, private companies or voluntary organisations. In Scotland, all care homes must be registered with, and inspected by, the Care Inspectorate.

The Care Inspectorate

The Care Inspectorate is an independent body responsible for ensuring that people receive high-quality care and that services promote and protect their users' rights. It regulates and inspects care homes to make sure they meet the correct standards, and where necessary it can make and enforce recommendations for improvements.

The Care Inspectorate grades the quality of care homes during its inspections and produces reports that are available for the public to view. It also investigates any complaints it receives about care services. For more information about this see page 32.

Supporting decision-making

Everyone should be encouraged to make or be involved in making decisions about their lives where possible, with support if necessary. Providing information to your relative and discussing options with them may help them to continue making decisions for themselves.

Your relative may want you to have permission to make decisions on their behalf. They may be planning ahead, in case they become unable to make certain decisions even with help, or they may want assistance managing their affairs immediately. Your relative will need to grant you Power of Attorney to give you the legal right to make decisions for them; they must have the mental capacity to grant you Power of Attorney at the time it is set up.

Understanding mental capacity

Mental capacity refers to our ability to make, understand, act on, communicate and remember decisions. Some people may have had limited capacity all their lives, for example if they have a significant learning disability. Others may have a diminishing capacity caused by a progressive illness such as Alzheimer's disease, or they may have a sudden decline in capacity after a stroke or an accident.

Mental capacity can be specific to different types of decisions. Often, someone can manage some decisions well, but will need help to make other types of decisions or do certain things. Mental capacity can change in the short and long term, varying from day to day, or throughout the day.

Power of Attorney

It is a common misconception that if someone becomes unable to make decisions for themselves then their next of kin or other family member can make decisions for them. This is not true. Nobody has an automatic right to make decisions for someone else.

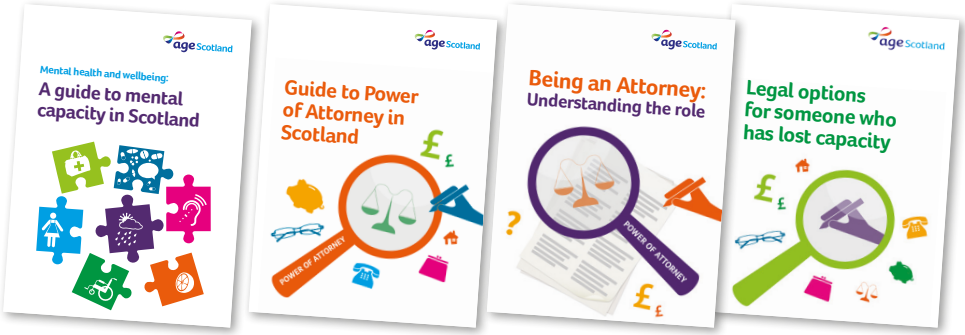
If someone moving into a care home has mental capacity to grant **Power of Attorney**, this can be a good time to discuss setting this up. A Power of Attorney is a legal document that grants someone the right to make certain decisions on behalf of another person. There are two types of powers that can be granted: Continuing (financial) and Welfare.

A Continuing Power of Attorney covers money and property matters. It can be set up to start straight away if the person would like help to manage their finances even while they still have capacity to do so. It can also be set up to only start if they lose capacity to do this for themselves.

A Welfare Power of Attorney covers health and care matters. It can only come into effect if the person loses capacity to make these types of decisions.

Without Power of Attorney in place, someone will need to apply to the sheriff court for a **Guardianship Order** before they can make decisions on another person's behalf. This can be a stressful and expensive process.

For more information on mental capacity and legal arrangements, see **Age Scotland**'s information guides **A Guide to Mental Capacity in Scotland**, **A guide to Power of Attorney in Scotland**, **Being and Attorney: Understanding the role** and **Legal options for someone who has lost capacity**.



Preparing for the move

Planning ahead

Ideally, you and your relative should think about a potential move to a care home well in advance. But don't be hard on yourself if that is not the way it happens - often a move has to happen quickly because of a sudden change in circumstances.

If you do get the opportunity, it is a good idea to talk to your relative about what they might like from a care home should they need one in the future. You can then make a list of priorities together. Although these conversations can be difficult, making plans in advance can help you and your relative feel more prepared and in control.

Help and advice from the council

If your relative thinks they would like to move into a care home, the first step is to contact their council's social work department who can:

- help you both decide if a care home is the best option, or whether a package of care could allow them to stay in their own home, if they would prefer that
- assess both their care needs and their eligibility for financial help towards care costs (this is important even if they intend to pay for their own care to begin with, in case they need financial help in the future)
- provide help finding a suitable care home – the local council has a responsibility to find a suitable place for anyone they have assessed as needing care in a care home

Visiting care homes

Once your relative has decided to move into a care home it is a good idea for them to visit any homes they are considering. This will allow them to look at the accommodation, meet the staff and residents, and generally get a feel for the place.

Your relative may find it useful for you to accompany them so you can talk things through and give your opinion. Some people may be unable to visit potential homes for themselves, or may find it too stressful or distressing. If your relative is in this situation they may want you to visit potential homes on their behalf.

Age Scotland's **Care Home Checklist** provides a range of questions your relative may like to know the answer to when choosing a care home, with space for comments. It may be useful to go through the checklist with your relative before any visits so you know what is most important to them.

You don't need to let a care home know you are coming to visit. However, you may prefer to make an appointment so staff can be available to answer your questions and show you round.

You may be able to arrange for your relative to stay at the home for a trial period. Many homes require this anyway, and trial periods can be very useful in helping you both make a decision.

Gathering information

Any care home should be able to provide an introductory pack with information about:

- the care home's charges and the services that are included
- extras such as hairdressing and trips out, and how much these cost
- the moving-in process
- the number of rooms in the care home
- what will happen if you are self-funding and become unable to afford your care home fees
- how the complaints procedure works
- the most recent inspection report from the Care Inspectorate
- the rights and responsibilities of residents
- procedures for managing, recording and reporting accidents and incidents

This information should be up-to-date and in a format you and your relative can easily understand.

Depending on their situation and preference, your relative may ask the council to arrange their care home placement, or they may arrange it themselves.

Age Scotland's **Care Home Guide: Funding** provides more information about the different situations and options.

Easing the transition

Care homes are often portrayed in the media as negative places to live, and this might lead to concerns. However, it is important to remember that there are many excellent care homes. Care homes can be positive options, providing residents with compassionate care from trained staff as well as companionship, activities and relief from the worries of day-to-day life.

When your relative moves they should have a named member of staff called their 'key worker' who will help them make a personal plan (also called a care plan). They will be your first point of contact for any worries either of you may have.

Your relative's personal plan will include their care and health needs and details of how these will be met. It should also include what they like to be called, their dietary needs and preferences, and their social, cultural and spiritual interests. This plan should be reviewed and updated whenever your relative's health or care needs change, and at least once every six months. The home should give you a copy of the plan if you would like one and your relative agrees to this.

The staff should support your relative closely as they settle in and try and make you both feel as comfortable as possible. You should feel able to raise any issues or concerns in confidence. You should not be judged or treated any differently for doing so.

Moving home is a stressful event and it can take time to adjust to new surroundings. Moving to a care home brings with it a change in environment, different routines and unfamiliar faces, which can be unsettling even if the move has been much anticipated. There are some suggestions on the following page of things that may help your relative settle in. Ask your relative what they think would be most helpful.

Bring in home comforts: take photos and music they enjoy and help them pick out soft furnishings to make their room their own. They may be able to bring favourite pieces of furniture with them too.

Talk to the staff: tell them about your relative's routine and likes and dislikes. The care home should do their best to help them continue with the routines they are comfortable and familiar with.

Help them find their way around: visit shared living spaces together so you both become familiar with the layout.

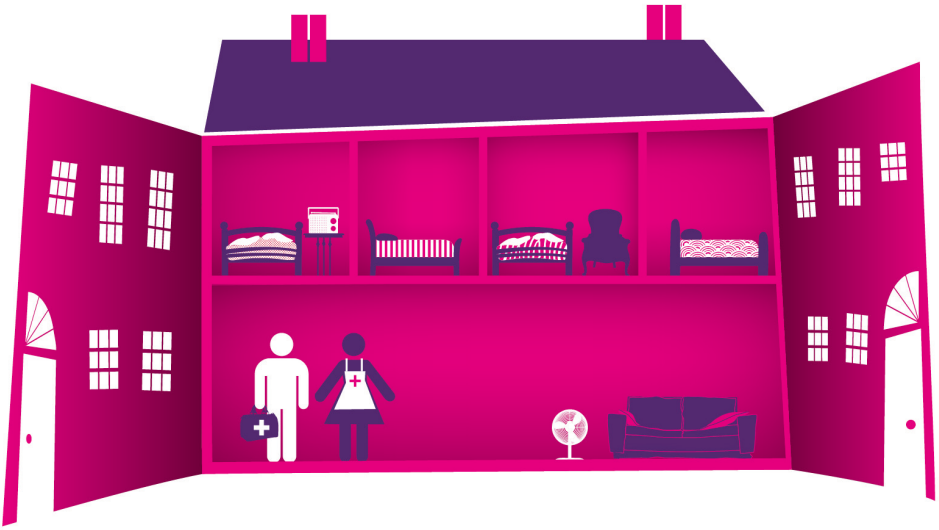
Attend relatives and residents meetings: many care homes offer these sessions to discuss any issues affecting residents.

Stay in touch: regular phone calls can help provide reassurance. All care homes must have a phone that the residents can use in private. You and your relative may find it helpful to have regular phone calls at first rather than visits. This can allow your relative time to integrate into their new community before welcoming you as a visitor.

Visit: although individual routines will vary it is likely your relative will appreciate your company on visits once they feel settled. Visitors, including children, should always be made welcome.

Take your relative out for day trips if possible: getting out of the care home even just for a cup of tea at a local café can be really beneficial in providing a change of scenery, a connection to the outside world and an event to look forward to.

Be patient: settling into a new home can be hard at any age and it can take time for people to adjust to their surroundings.



The care home environment

It is often forgotten that care homes are people's homes and not hospitals or hotels. Remember that the care home is now your relative's home and should be: a welcoming, safe and positive place to stay. Your relative should feel comfortable and free to exercise choice in their day-to-day life, just as they would in their own home. There should be a warm and welcoming atmosphere and your relative should feel safe and well-respected. There are rules and guidelines set by the **Health and Social Care Standards** and the **Care Inspectorate** that should ensure this is the case.

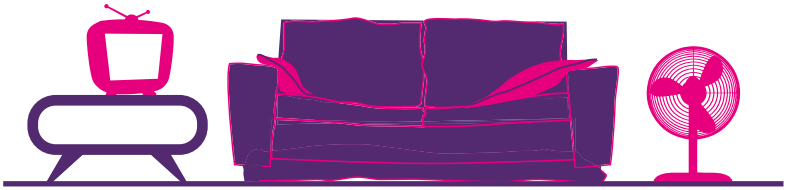
Rooms

The Health and Social Care Standards say that an adult living in a care home should have their own private bedroom, unless they choose to share a room with someone else.

Each room should have enough space to meet the resident's needs, including space to sit comfortably with a visitor.

Communal spaces

The design and layout of the care home is important, particularly for people with sight loss or dementia. The home and all its furnishings should be well-maintained and in good decorative order, with clear signs for toilets and other facilities. Your relative should be able to move around easily in the home, and in any grounds or outside space it may have. The home should be well-lit and free from any tripping hazards. There should be places in addition to your relative's own room where they can relax and look out of the window. If there is a TV in the communal lounge there should also be a space away from it where residents can sit in peace.



Staff

Care homes must at all times have the right number of trained staff on duty, who have the necessary skills to meet the needs of the people who live there. Staff should always treat residents with dignity and respect and should always communicate with them in ways they can clearly understand. They should always explain any personal or medical care they are providing before starting it. If you were previously providing care for your relative it can be a good idea to discuss with staff any routines you had which worked for you both.

The care home staff should take the time to get to know your relative and build up a picture of their life. As someone who knows them well you can really help staff see them as an individual rather than focusing on their illness, or on the abilities they have lost.

Before they know your relative well, staff may offer them help with tasks they are normally comfortable doing independently. Although this is well-meaning, your relative should be encouraged to do anything they are happy and safe to do on their own.

The atmosphere of a care home should be one of support and enablement. The longer your relative is supported to keep their independence the better.

Privacy and dignity

Your relative's privacy and dignity must be respected at all times. All their personal and medical care should be carried out respectfully, privately and in a dignified manner. Staff should never discuss any confidential information in public places, and your relative's personal records should be kept safe and away from public view. Personal information should only be shared with people who need to know.

Independence, personal routine and identity

Everyone in a care home should be treated as an individual. They should be given choice and control over how they live their lives, and about the care they receive.

Maintaining routines is important to help your relative feel like themselves. Your relative should have freedom to make decisions about day-to-day aspects of their life and how they spend their time. They should feel free to choose whether or not to participate in any events, social activities and entertainment offered by the care home. They should be supported by staff to join in with anything they wish to. This should include assistance if, for example, they have difficulty getting out from their room, or if they feel worried about socialising.

Some care homes may ask that your relative wears clothes that are easy to take on and off, to reduce their need for assistance. This often means jogging bottoms and t-shirts. Clothing is an important part of someone's identity and wearing casual items may make some people feel out of sorts. If this is the case for your relative, the care home should respect their preferences and do their best to help them maintain an appearance they feel comfortable with.

You might want to help your relative buy clothes so they can maintain their style. You could plan an outing to the shops or spend some time during a visit picking out items together from catalogues or online. Keep in mind that laundry facilities may be limited at the care home so it's best to choose items that are easy to wash. It is a good idea to label all your relative's clothing to help prevent losses or mix-ups in the laundry.

Social, cultural and religious beliefs and ways of life

It is against the law to discriminate against someone due to age, gender, gender reassignment, race, religion, disability or sexual orientation. Your relative should be able to live the way they want to, without the fear of being treated differently. They should be supported to practise any beliefs they have and to keep in touch with their community. This includes enabling them to attend places of worship or religious events outside the care home where possible. Staff should respect and recognise any religious or personal holidays and support your relative to continue observing them.

Food and diet

Your relative's meals in the care home should be varied, nutritious and appetising. The staff must take into account any dietary needs your relative has and should get to know their likes and dislikes – not just in terms of food but also when and where they like to eat. Any special diet (such as vegetarian or coeliac) should be recorded in your relative's personal plan. The care home menu should vary regularly and your relative should be given a choice of what they would like to eat. Meals should always include fresh fruit and vegetables, and snacks and drinks should always be available.

If care homes state they can cater for special diets such as kosher, halal and vegetarian they must observe all the requirements associated with these diets. This includes the purchase, storage, preparation and cooking of the food. Although all care homes in Scotland should be flexible enough to cater for most dietary requirements, **Vegetarian for Life** has a directory of organisations and care homes that make a special effort to cater for vegans and vegetarians. You can search the list by visiting **www.vegetarianforlife.org.uk/uk-list**.

Balancing risk and choice

The challenges of providing good care for older people with complex needs mean care homes have to prioritise vital tasks, such as providing food and medication. However, it is important that the care home staff encourage and enable your relative to do things that bring them purpose and enjoyment.

Some activities may involve an element of risk. Safety should be assessed on an individual basis, balancing the risk of the activity against the mental and physical benefits to the individual. For example, if your relative has always gone for a daily walk it may be important to their wellbeing to continue doing this, even if there is an element of risk. Day-to-day life is full of risks and your relative should have the freedom to choose to take some risks if they want to.

There will be some limits on what care home staff are able to facilitate. It is important to remember that it can be challenging to balance the wishes of one individual with the rights and wishes of other residents, the capacity of staff and the concerns of family and friends. But within reason, your relative should feel able to choose how and where they spend their time, just as they would in their own home, and be supported to do so.

Health and care

Your relative has the right to be involved in discussions and decisions about their health and care, including their end-of-life care, and to be given information to enable them to do this.

Care home staff should inform anyone your relative chooses (such as their next of kin or Power of Attorney) about changes to your relative's health, and any medical appointments. This will allow them the opportunity to be involved in any relevant decisions, and to decide if a visit or other support might be helpful.

Physical health

The majority of older people living in care homes have some degree of physical ill health. Once your relative moves into a care home they should receive a full assessment of all their healthcare needs. This assessment should be reviewed at least once every 6 months to ensure it is accurate, up-to-date and has taken account of any changes in their health.

Staff should be trained to monitor health conditions and notice new or changed symptoms, so they can contact a doctor or other healthcare professional if necessary. You may pick up on changes in your relative's health first, as you know them best. Talk to care home staff if you do notice any changes or new symptoms. Good management of existing health conditions and prompt diagnosis and treatment of new health problems are vital for wellbeing.

Healthcare in a care home should not only focus on treatment, but also on preventing ill health. Your relative should be offered regular check-ups, advice on healthcare and have the opportunity to discuss any health concerns with their GP when they want to.

Mental health and wellbeing

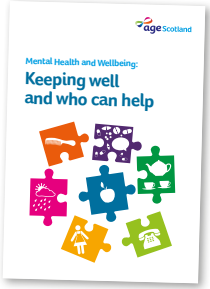
Moving into a care home is a major life event and people often feel down when they first move. They may mourn the loss of their previous home or miss the people they lived with. They may also feel they have lost their independence and want to 'go home'. This is a normal reaction and usually improves within a couple of weeks as they settle in. However, everyone is different; your relative may feel at home immediately, or may take longer to feel comfortable and secure.

Friends and family are often the first to notice changes in their relative's mental health. If your relative seems down, encourage them to talk about how they are feeling, and to tell you if there is anything they feel might help. Ask staff whether your relative's mood is constant, or if there are particular times or activities that seem to trigger a change in their mood. Let the staff know if there is anything that usually improves your relative's mood.

If your relative continues to feel down or anxious, it is a good idea for them to see their GP. A decline in mental wellbeing is not an inevitable part of ageing and should always be addressed and treated. Early recognition, diagnosis and treatment can help prevent the development of more serious and long-term mental health problems.

Dementia can cause a number of psychological and behavioural symptoms. Care home staff should know how to recognise these, understand them and monitor their progression. They should be trained to support residents living with dementia to have the best possible quality of life.

For more information about maintaining good mental health, see **Age Scotland**'s guide **Keeping well and who can help**.

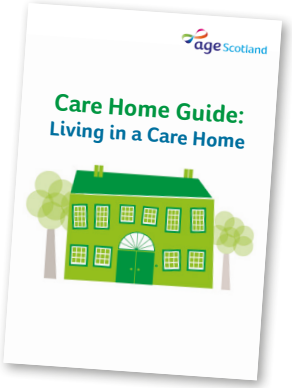


NHS services in care homes

The NHS is responsible for providing health services to care home residents, just the same as for people living in their own homes. This is regardless of whether a resident is self-funding or if the local authority is funding their care. If your relative has been receiving community healthcare services in their own home and still requires them, they should continue to receive these in the care home. Care homes should do all they can to ensure residents have equal access to the health services they need. These include:

- GP services
- immunisation programmes for flu, pneumonia and coronavirus
- screening programmes including for breast cancer, cervical cancer and bowel cancer
- NHS eye tests
- hearing tests
- NHS Dental Care
- podiatry
- continence aids and advice
- physiotherapy
- speech and language therapy

For more information, see **Age Scotland**'s **Care Home Guide: Living in a Care Home**.



If you or your relative are unhappy with an NHS service, or with lack of access to an NHS service, the **Patient Advice and Support Service** offers free and confidential information and advice about NHS healthcare, to patients, their carers and families.

You can call them on **0800 917 2127** or visit **www.pass-scotland.org.uk**.

Palliative and end-of-life care

End-of-life care can be a difficult topic to think about. However, it is an important aspect of the care provided by a care home.

Care home residents should feel able to talk about what they want at the end of their lives in terms of their physical, personal and spiritual care. This includes where they would like to be and who they would like to have with them when they die. This information should be recorded in their personal plan, along with any wishes they have expressed about funeral arrangements.

When people reach the end of their life they may experience new symptoms, or existing symptoms may become worse. These changes should not be ignored. Staff should ensure that efforts to relieve symptoms continue, and the person is made as comfortable as possible.

There should be somewhere for family and friends to stay if they want to be with their relative during their last days and hours. Staff should allow bereaved family, friends and carers to spend as much time as they need with their relative after their death.

Staff should treat every death with dignity, sensitivity and discretion. It is important that staff, family and other residents receive continuing support following a death. Opportunities to discuss feelings and to say goodbye should be available, and attendance at funerals, memorial services or remembrance events should be supported.

Your feelings

It is natural to experience a range of emotions when someone you are close to moves into a care home. The next few pages explore just a few of these emotions.

Guilt

Guilt is a common feeling when a relative moves into a care home. The move often comes at a crisis point – a sudden accident, illness or deterioration in health – which affects someone's ability to manage at home. You may ask yourself if you could have done more to help them stay in their own home, or should have continued to care for them even though you were both struggling to manage. Perhaps your relative didn't want to move into a care home, but it was no longer possible to meet their care needs in their own home.

These feelings are common, and you should remember that if you were not coping with caring, or your relative was not managing, moving into a care home is the best decision for everyone.

Remember it is not selfish to act in the best interests of both the person you care for and yourself. The move will mean your relative will receive full-time support and care as well as companionship and monitoring, in an environment that is designed to meet their needs.

If you have been caring for your relative, the time you spend together can now be more focused on leisure rather than practicalities.

Relief

Your relative moving to a care home may lift a lot of worry or concern you had for them, so while guilt is a common emotion, instead you may feel a sense of relief. You may then even feel guilty for feeling relieved! This is also very normal.

Perhaps your relative was struggling to live independently and you were worried something might happen to them when they were on their own. Or perhaps all of your free time was spent caring for them, and now you can focus on aspects of life and self care that may have been neglected. Either way, knowing that the person you care for is being looked after by trained professionals 24 hours a day can bring great peace of mind.

If you have been involved in caring for your relative, the move can help re-establish the relationship you had before your caring role began, making you both feel positive about the change. You may want to take some time away from providing help as you may be feeling exhausted and burn out. The care home should support you with this and welcome you back if a time comes when you want to become more involved again.

Loss

Another common emotion is a sense of loss. This can be particularly true if you have been closely involved with your relative's care or have been living with them in the lead up to the move. You might miss day-to-day routines and sharing experiences with them. This can be particularly true if it is your partner moving into a care home.

Handing over the responsibility for someone's care can be very hard, even if you know that you are no longer able to care for them yourself. You may feel sad that you are no longer able to play an active part in your relative's care. However, it is important to remember that just because you no longer do the day-to-day tasks for your relative, it does not mean your caring role has stopped. If you still want to be involved in helping with everyday tasks for your relative, speak to the care home staff and discuss how you can work together.

Getting support

Remember that everyone is different and there is no right or wrong way to feel.

If you need support, some care homes have support groups or meetings for relatives, so you can talk through your experiences with others in similar situations. **Carers Scotland** and **Carers Trust Scotland** also offer services, information and support to carers at every stage of their journey. You can find their contact details on page 36.

After being a carer

Caring does not necessarily end when someone moves into a care home; many people remain very involved in the life of their relative and still play a caring role, although perhaps a slightly different one.

The change in your caring role may take some time to adjust to. Hopefully, having more time will give you the opportunity for a much needed rest and a chance to look after yourself and get into new routines, or back to old ones. While some practical matters might need to be dealt with fairly quickly, try not to rush important decisions about what comes next. You will need time to readjust and reflect on what will be best for you in the longer term.

Work and skills

Caring may have had an impact on many aspects of your life, including employment. You may have stopped working or reduced your hours to make time to care for your relative. If you are finding it daunting getting back into paid employment after a period of caring, there are organisations that can offer help and support.

Carers UK offers advice for carers thinking of returning to work and can help you find a carer's centre in your area. See **www.carersuk.org/scotland** or call **0808 808 7777**. Their **Learning for Living** course can help you identify skills you have gained from your experience of caring and consider how you might put them to use. Visit **www.learning4living.org**.

Remember that caring for someone helps you develop a lot of skills that employers will really value, such as problem solving, negotiating, patience and decision making.

If you are interested in training courses to develop or refresh other skills, local colleges or adult education centres may have reduced fees for carers.

Social Security benefits

If you have been receiving a carer benefit, and you are no longer providing care for 35 or more hours a week, or the person you care for is no longer receiving a qualifying benefit, you will need to contact the agency that pays your carer benefit to let them know.

If you receive Carer Support Payment, contact **Social Security Scotland** on **0800 182 2222**.

If you receive Carer's Allowance, contact the **DWP Carer's Allowance Unit** on **0800 731 0297**.

For advice about your benefit entitlements call the **Age Scotland helpline** on **0800 12 44 222**.

Complaints and concerns

Although many care homes provide high-quality, person-centred care, you may sometimes come across problems. If you are concerned about the care that your relative is receiving, or how they are being treated, it is important to address this.

In the first instance it is best to raise your concerns with the care home manager or a member of staff, as there may be a simple solution. You should not worry that raising your concerns will affect your relative's care – you should never be treated differently for voicing your worries. It may be that the care home staff were simply unaware of the issue that is troubling you and are happy to solve it.

You can go on to make a formal complaint if speaking to the care home staff does not resolve the issue. All registered care services must have a clear complaints procedure that you can follow. This should be on their website or available from staff. You may also wish to complain to the relevant regulatory body (see the following section). You can do this instead of, or as well as, using the care home's complaints procedure.

Keep an incident log

When making a complaint, it is important to provide as much information as possible, for example times, dates, names of those involved and any witnesses. You should also include details of any concerning behaviour, unexplained injuries or signs of neglect such as poor cleanliness. Include photographs if it feels appropriate to take them.

To help you record the relevant information, you can find a template incident log on our website at **www.age.scot/incident-record**. To request a paper copy, call the **Age Scotland helpline** on **0800 12 44 222**.

The Care Inspectorate

The Care Inspectorate will consider complaints about the standard of care being provided. They take all complaints seriously and will discuss with you the best way to resolve your problem. If a complaint involves an 'adult at risk of harm' who is vulnerable and cannot look after themselves, the Care Inspectorate work closely with Police Scotland and social services to ensure they are safe.

Anyone can complain to the Care Inspectorate about a registered care service. You should make a complaint as soon as you have a concern or are aware of an issue. A time limit of six months applies from the time of the problem, unless there are exceptional circumstances. The Care Inspectorate should acknowledge your initial complaint within five working days. If you ask them to investigate formally, they should acknowledge your request within three working days and aim to inform you of their findings within 20 working days.

To raise a concern with the Care Inspectorate you can:

- call the national enquiries line on **0345 600 9527**
- fill in a complaints form online at **www.careinspectorate.scot**
- visit any Care Inspectorate office (full list available at **careinspectorate.scot/contact-us/our-offices**)
- write to any Care Inspectorate office or to their headquarters:

  Care Inspectorate
  Compass House, 11 Riverside Drive, Dundee DD1 4NY

The full **Care Inspectorate** complaints policy is on their website under the 'complaints' section. There is also a guide called 'What you can do if you are unhappy about a care service' which takes you through the complaints process. To get paper copies of these publications call the Care Inspectorate enquiry line.

There are some matters that the Care Inspectorate does not have the authority to investigate, including the cause of an accident or death, care home fees, and complaints about doctors and nurses. If they are not able to deal with your complaint, they will give you details of organisations that may be able to help.

Concerns about social care workers

For concerns about the way care is being provided, you should speak to the care home or the Care Inspectorate. However, for concerns about an individual care worker's conduct or behaviour, you should alert the Scottish Social Services Council (SSSC), either directly or by asking the care home manager to do so. The SSSC are the regulatory body for social care workers in Scotland. They are there to raise the standards of care in various care settings, as well as protecting those who use care services. If there are concerns about social care workers, the SSSC can investigate and take action if necessary. Your complaint can be anonymous if you prefer.

To raise a concern with the SSSC you can:

- write to: Scottish Social Services Council
  Compass House, 11 Riverside Drive, Dundee DD1 4NY
- go to the SSSC website – **www.sssc.uk.com**
- phone **0345 60 30 891**

  If you are not sure who to call, contact the Care Inspectorate for advice.

Concerns about healthcare workers

If you have a concern or complaint about an NHS healthcare worker, visit the **Patient Advice and Support Service** website **www.pass-scotland.org.uk** or call the **Citizens Advice Scotland** advice line on **0800 917 2127**.

Concerns about harmful behaviour or abuse

It is very important to tell someone as soon as possible if you are worried about the way someone is treating your relative. There are laws in Scotland which protect adults who are vulnerable. Contact the **Age Scotland helpline**, **Care Inspectorate** or **Hourglass** for information and advice.

Useful contacts

Age Scotland helpline 0800 12 44 222

The Age Scotland helpline provides information, friendship and advice to older people, their relatives and carers.

If you need an interpreter call **0800 12 44 222** and simply state the language you need e.g. Polish or Urdu. Stay on the line for a few minutes and the Age Scotland helpline will do the rest.

You can call us on **0800 12 44 222** for a copy of our publications list or download copies from our website at **www.agescotland.org.uk**.

Hourglass

Hourglass provides information and support to older people who may be experiencing abuse, and to anyone concerned about the abuse of an older person. If you call them, their number will not appear on your telephone bill.

Helpline: **0808 808 8141**

The helpline operates 24 hours a day, 7 days a week and is confidential and free to phone.

www.wearehourglass.org

Alzheimer Scotland

Alzheimer Scotland is the leading dementia organisation in Scotland. It campaigns for the rights of people with dementia and their families and provides an extensive range of innovative and personalised support services.

Freephone 24-Hour Dementia Helpline: **0808 808 3000**
Email: **info@alzscot.org**

www.alzscot.org

Care Information Scotland

Care Information Scotland is a helpline and website that provides information about specific local services and support groups and how to access them.

Advice line: **0800 011 3200** (8am-10pm seven days per week)

www.careinfoscotland.scot

Carers Scotland

Carers Scotland offers general help and advice for all carers through its free Carers Line helpline. It is part of Carers UK.

Carers Line: **0808 808 7777**
Email: **adviceline@carersuk.org**

www.carersuk.org/scotland

Carers Trust Scotland

Carers Trust Scotland (formerly The Princess Royal Trust for Carers) has been operating in Scotland since 1991. It is the largest provider of comprehensive carer support services in Scotland.

Tel: **0300 772 9600**

www.carers.org/scotland

Citizens Advice Bureau (CAB)

Advice and information on employment, housing, debt, benefits and consumer issues like energy bills.

Tel: **0800 028 1456**

www.citizensadvice.org.uk/scotland for information and advice or visit **www.cas.org.uk** to find your local branch.

Elderly Accommodation Counsel

The Elderly Accommodation Counsel **HousingCare** website provides lists of care homes in different areas of the country.

www.housingcare.org

Patient Advice and Support Service

The Patient Advice and Support Service provides information, advice and support to anyone wishing to give feedback, raise concerns or make complaints about care delivered by the NHS in Scotland.

Tel: **0800 917 2127**

www.pass-scotland.org.uk

Other publications in the series

Age Scotland produces a range of publications on care homes, including:

Care Home Guide: Funding
which explains how care in a care home is paid for.

Care Home Guide: Before You Move
which lists things to consider before you move into a care home.

Care Home Checklist
which provides a range of questions to think about when you are choosing a care home.

Care Home Guide: Living in a Care Home
which is aimed at individuals thinking of moving to a care home.

To request a copy of any of these publications call the **Age Scotland helpline** on **0800 12 44 222**.

Thanks and Acknowledgements

Age Scotland Helpline Advisors
Age Scotland Allied Health Professionals
Age Scotland Community Development Officers
Age Scotland Network Meeting Groups
Carers Scotland
Care Inspectorate
Cascade4Change
Clackmannanshire Older Adults Forum
Highland Senior Citizen's Network
Hourglass
Justine Robertson
Lesley Anne Thorpe
PASS
Scottish Government

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Please note that the inclusion of named agencies, websites, companies, products, services or publications in this information guide does not constitute a recommendation or endorsement by Age Scotland or any of its subsidiary companies or charities.

How you can help

Our vision is a Scotland which is the best place in the world to grow older.

All the information we provide is free and impartial. It helps older people access their rights and entitlements and can be life changing.

We are also a lifeline for older people who are feeling lonely and isolated. You can help us to support older people who need us most.

Together, we can make a difference.

Make a donation

No matter how small or large, donations make a massive difference and help us continue our important work.

- Call **03330 15 14 60**
- Visit **age.scot/donate**
- Complete the **donation form** and return by Freepost

Fundraise

Whether it's having a bake sale or running a marathon, there are so many ways to raise vital funds to support our work. To find out more, call **0333 323 2400** or visit **age.scot/fundraise**.

Leave us a gift in your Will

By choosing to leave us a gift in your Will, your legacy will help us to continue being there for older people for generations to come. To find out more, call **0333 323 2400** or visit **age.scot/legacy**.

Please donate today

Complete the form and return by Freepost to RSBS-KEHC-GBBC, Age Scotland, Edinburgh, EH9 1PR

Your details

Title: | Forename: | Surname:

Address:

City:

Postcode: | Date of birth:

By providing us with your telephone number and email address you are consenting to us contacting you via phone, text and email.

Email:

Home tel: | Mobile tel:

I WOULD LIKE TO DONATE

£75 ☐ £50 ☐ £25 ☐ Other (£)

I wish to pay by (please tick):

MasterCard ☐ Visa ☐ CAF ☐

CharityCard ☐ Cheque ☐ (payable to Age Scotland)

Name on Card

Card No.

Expiry date | Security code

Signature | Date

I prefer not to receive a thank you acknowledgement for this donation ☐

I would like information about leaving a gift in my Will ☐

I WOULD LIKE TO MAKE MY DONATION WORTH 25% MORE

giftaid it

I want Age Scotland** and its partner charities to treat all donations I have made for the four years prior to this year, and all donations I make from the date of this declaration until I notify you otherwise, as Gift Aid donations.

I am a UK tax payer and understand that if I pay less income tax and/or capital gains tax than the amount of Gift Aid claimed on all my donations in that tax year it is my responsibility to pay any difference.

Yes, I want Age Scotland to claim Gift Aid on my donations** ☐

I do not wish you to claim Gift Aid on my donations ☐ **Date**

Keeping in touch

We will stay in contact by post unless you ask us not to. We will never sell your data and we promise to keep your details safe and secure. You can change your mind at any time by emailing us on contact@agescotland.org.uk or calling us on 0333 323 2400.

You can read Age Scotland's privacy policy at **age.scot/privacypolicy**.

**Age Scotland, part of the Age Network, is an independent charity dedicated to improving the later lives of everyone on the ageing journey, within a charitable company limited by guarantee and registered in Scotland. Registration Number: SC153343. Charity Number: SC010100. Registered Office: Causewayside House, 160 Causewayside, Edinburgh, EH9 1PR

Age Scotland is the Scottish charity for older people. We work to improve the lives of everyone over the age of 50 so that they can love later life.

Our vision is a Scotland which is the best place in the world to grow older.

Let's keep in touch

Contact us:

Head office
0333 323 2400

Age Scotland helpline
0800 12 44 222

Email
info@agescotland.org.uk

Visit our website
www.agescotland.org.uk

Sign up to our newsletter

Our regular newsletters by email contain details of our campaigns, services and how you can support our work.

Sign up today at **age.scot/roundup**

Follow us on social media

Our social media channels are a great way to keep up to date with our work and issues that affect older people.

We are grateful to the Scottish Government for part-funding this publication

The Scottish Government

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