

Caring for Someone coming out of Hospital (P32)



Photo: English Riviera Tourist Board

Signposts for Carers

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Document Information

Date of Issue:	December 2010	Next Review Date:	December 2011
Version:	1	Last Review Date:	November 2009
Author:	Sheila Colbran, Signposts for Carers		
Directorate:	Operations		
Approval Route			
Approved By:		Date:	
Management of Information Group			
Links or overlaps with other strategies/policies:			

Amendment History

Issue	Status	Date	Reason for Change	Authorised

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About this information sheet

This is one of a series of regularly updated local information sheets that aim to meet the most common information needs of people with disabilities and carers in Torbay.

The information should be used as a guide only, as it may not cover all the organisations that can help with your needs. Torbay Disability Information Service (part of Torbay Care Trust) cannot guarantee the accuracy of the information or the quality of service provided by the organisations. No liability can be accepted for loss, damage, or injury arising out of any contract made by a private individual with any of the organisations listed.

Details change often, so please make sure you are using the current edition. Latest copies of the sheets are published on the following website pages:

Torbay Care Trust:
www.torbaycaretrust.nhs.uk/disinfosheets

Torcom:
<http://tinyurl.com/36oqua5>



If you do not have Internet access, you can ask for single copies from our office.

A full list of our other information sheet titles can be found at the end of this sheet.

Information can be made available in other formats and languages. Please let us know what your needs are.

All enquiries about this publication should be addressed to:

Signposts for Carers
Chadwell Annexe
Torquay Road
Paignton
TQ3 2DW

 (01803) 666620
 signposts@nhs.net

Introduction

Who is this information sheet for?

This information sheet is for unpaid carers who are caring for a friend or relative who lives in Torbay but who is currently in hospital. This could be a following a planned admission or as a result of an emergency admission after an accident or sudden illness.

Are you a carer?

You are a carer if you are looking after a relative, including a child, friend or neighbour who has a long-term health condition or disability and care without pay. You are not alone if you consider yourself to be a carer, as there are an estimated 14,000 carers in Torbay and over 7 million nationally.

Contents

This information sheet will be updated regularly and reviewed for content and relevance. Please be aware that information goes out of date very quickly, so do ensure you are using the latest edition of this title by checking the publication date on the front. We have tried to balance content with conciseness, so please contact us if there is something you cannot find or you find an omission or error.

☰ Where you see this symbol in the text, it indicates that further information, such as a leaflet, can be obtained directly from ***Signposts for Carers***.

We want to know what you think

We are keen to hear your views, positive or negative, about the contents. Please use the feedback form at the end of the sheet to send us your comments about the sheet.

Do you want to Care?

When a patient leaves hospital, they may need support for a couple of weeks which you are happy to provide. However, if the patient needs longer term help you may be faced with more important decisions and pressures.

You may be taking on a caring role for the first time and won't know what to expect. You may have already been caring, but your caring role may change following a stay in hospital. You may be unsure whether you are able to provide all of the help they need or whether you want to or feel it is appropriate. However, you may also be anxious to get the patient home as soon as possible or feel pressure from friends, family or the patient him/herself.

Whatever the pressures, it is important for you to consider how your new caring situation is likely to affect your life. Will it affect your relationship with the patient? How do other family members feel about you taking on this role? How will it affect your job? Will a caring role affect your health because of the stress or from the physical effort of caring for the patient etc?

It is very important to ask for a Carer's Assessment (see pages 6/7) to find out what support can be put in place to help you, this may help you decide if you want to take on the caring role. A Carer's Assessment is also useful if your caring responsibilities have changed following the patient's stay in hospital.

Do you have to care?

You do have the right to decide whether or not to take on the role of carer. It might seem that you have no choice because of your family situation and relationships and many people do feel guilty if they feel unable to take on the role.

Some people would prefer to maintain their personal relationship with their loved one, and arrange for others to do any practical caring that is required. There may be some tasks that you are not comfortable with, such as helping the person you care for wash or use the toilet.

Eventually, you might find it is easier or necessary for the person you are caring for to move into a nursing or residential home. This may be a way of ensuring that the person you look after receives the best care possible.

Before making any decision, talk through the options with everyone involved, including the person you are caring for.

Other ideas

- If you are offered help, take it.
- Be realistic, prioritise tasks and only focus on what you can achieve.

- Take some exercise – even a short walk in the fresh air can help clear your head.
- Be kind to yourself; listen to your body.

Your rights and choices

You do have a choice whether or not to look after another adult. Remember, just because you feel unable to care for someone, it does not mean that you do not care about them.

You will need to think very carefully about how much care you are able to provide and what help you might need. You have a legal right to have your needs addressed by asking for a Carer's Assessment.

Carer's Assessment


The Carers (Equal Opportunities) Act 2004 places a legal duty on local authorities to inform carers of their right to an assessment of their needs for caring role. When they carry out that assessment, they will also have a legal duty to consider any work, study and leisure interests that a carer may have.


You have a right to a carer's assessment if you are over 16 and providing regular and substantial care to someone over 18. The carer's assessment should look at whether you wish to continue caring and **your needs**. This is not an assessment of how good you are at caring, but is about the support that may be available to help you in your role as a carer.


You can ask for an assessment from Torbay Care Trust regardless of whether the person you care for receives services from Torbay Care Trust.

Under the Act, carers are also entitled to services in their own right. These services are defined as anything that promotes the health and wellbeing of the carers. The help can range from driving lessons, counselling and information and advice. The Care Trust is able to charge carers for some of the services they receive.

Ask Torbay Care Trust for a Carer's Assessment if you are caring for an adult. If you are caring for a child, an assessment is done as part of care planning for the family.

 *Getting Help and Support – What is a Carer's Assessments*


 Torbay Care Trust, Union House, Union Street, Torquay, TQ1 3YA


 (01803) 219700

Torbay Care Trust will send you a *Carer's Questionnaire and Action Plan* in advance of the assessment, which you may find helpful in preparation for the meeting. It aims to make caring easier for you by supporting you and the person you look after. The meeting should take place somewhere convenient, such as your home. However, if you do not wish the person you care for to be present, you can ask for the assessment to be carried out elsewhere. Tell the worker what would help you, and be honest about the amount of caring you would like to do. The assessment must also take your interests, work and other responsibilities into consideration.

You might also want to plan what would happen to the person that you care for in an emergency, for example, if you were taken ill. You will probably need to know about moving and handling the person you care for, what they can eat, any possible side effects of medication and how to recognise new symptoms. You may also want information about the illness itself.

 *Information for Parent Carers*

 Torbay Children's Disability Team, Parkfield House, 38 Esplanade Road,
Paignton, TQ3 2NH

 (01803) 402781

The Carer's role in the hospital discharge process

The planning for a patient's discharge from hospital should start to take place at the earliest opportunity. You and the patient should be involved at all stages of planning for discharge. Hospital and Torbay Care Trust staff should work together to manage all parts of the discharge process. In this way the patient will be cared for appropriately after they have left hospital and you, as their carer, will feel able to cope with the arrangements that have been put into place.

- You and the patient should be given both verbal and written information, with contact details and any relevant information about future treatments and care. The information should be available in a language suitable for you, large print or Braille.
- A Discharge Co-ordinator or Ward Co-ordinator should be available to co-ordinate the planning process and act as a key person for you to contact to find out what the discharge plans are.
- If the patient already has a Care Manager or Keyworker, they will be responsible for arranging their discharge from hospital.
- If the patient does not want you to be involved or have information about their care, you should be advised of this decision and informed about your rights to your own assessment.
- If the patient lacks mental capacity you may be able to make certain decisions about their health and welfare matters if you have a Lasting Power of Attorney (LPA). If there is no LPA the law requires professionals to act in the patient's '*best interests*' and you should be involved in the decision making process. For further information about Lasting Power of Attorneys, see page 26.

The discharge procedure

In many cases, patients do not need any support from Torbay Care Trust or the NHS after discharge from hospital. However, if it is felt that either the patient or the carer will need further help when they are home, the procedure is as follows:

- An assessment for NHS Continuing Care (see page 9) should be carried out where it appears there may be a need for this type of care.
- The patient and their carer should be consulted about whether or not to involve Torbay Care Trust.
- The ward will then notify the Hospital Assessment & Discharge Team to arrange for an assessment of your needs.
- Both the patient and carer's assessments are carried out.
- A visit may be made to the patient's home by an Occupational Therapist, with the patient, to assess what adaptations or pieces of equipment would be needed to enable the patient to return home safely.
- A care plan is drawn up setting out what services will be provided.
- A financial assessment is carried out to determine any charges for these services.
- An assessment for NHS Continuing Care (see below) should be carried out where it appears there may be a need for this type of care.
- The care plan is put in place and you should both be given copies of your care plans
- Arrangements for all follow-up appointments will generally be sent to you after leaving the ward. It may be necessary for the patient to have further rehabilitation sessions or to access ongoing support from groups like Stroke Association Peer Support, Information and Advice Service or Dysphasia Support Service.
- If you require nurse assistance at home for wound care, this will also be arranged and appropriate equipment and dressings provided. You may be discharged from hospital with a supply of tablets that you have had during your stay.
- Please remember to check your locker and bed area to ensure that you take all your personal belongings when you leave. Transport is only provided on medical grounds and is not routinely available. The aim is to discharge patients before 11am.
- Appropriate transport should be organized if required
- A discharge letter should be sent to the patient's GP within 24 hours
- You should be notified of any follow up appointments, as well as details of who to contact if you have any problems
- Any necessary home care services should be put in place to start on the day of discharge

- A discharge 'lounge' (or similar space) should be available for use in the hospital while waiting for transport, medications etc

NHS Continuing Care Assessment

This is an assessment to establish whether the NHS should continue to fund your care after you have been discharged from hospital. The care is provided free of charge. To qualify for NHS Continuing Care, a person leaving hospital must have a 'primary health need', a need for nursing or other health services which are not just incidental or ancillary to services which the Care Trust could be expected to provide. The person would need to have high or severe levels of need in such areas as cognition, behaviour, psychological and emotional needs, communication, mobility, nutrition, continence, skin and tissue viability, breathing, drug therapies and pain control, and consciousness; they may qualify for funding if a panel of professionals agrees that the criteria has been met.

The carer's view of the patient's needs should be included when the multi disciplinary team assesses the eligibility for continuing care. If continuing care is agreed, it can be provided in someone's own home or in various types of residential care, such as a nursing home.

Moving into a Care Home from Hospital

Following the patient's assessment, it may be decided that it would be unsafe for a person to return to their own home and that their needs can no longer be met in the community and they need to move into a care home. As mentioned on page 9, this care may be funded via NHS Continuing Care if they meet the criteria. The Financial Assessment and Benefits Team will arrange a financial assessment to decide whether they will need to make a contribution towards the costs of the care home. An assessment of the needs of the patient will be made and the carer should be advised of the banding level of charges and the type of care home that is suitable for the patient.

The charging for stays in Care Homes is very complicated, Age UK have a range of information sheets that may be useful. Some are listed below, other can be found on their website <http://www.ageuk.org.uk/home-and-care/care-homes/>

or by contacting Signposts for Carers.

- 📄 *Introduction to Care Homes*
- 📄 *Finding a Care Home*
- 📄 *Care Homes checklist*
- 📄 *Paying for Permanent Residential Care*

Hospital staff should understand that you and the cared for will need time to make such an important decision and should not put pressure on you to choose a home too quickly.

Torbay Disability Information Service produces a range of information sheets detailing the different types of homes in the Bay.

- ☰ *C01 Care Homes: Paignton and Brixham*
- ☰ *C02 Care Homes: Torquay*
- ☰ *C03 Care Homes: Nursing, Torbay*
- ☰ *C04 Care Homes: Dual Registered to include Nursing*
- ☰ *C05 Care Homes: Learning Disabilities, Torbay*
- ☰ *C06 Care Homes: Dementia – over 65, Torbay*
- ☰ *C07 Care Homes: Nursing – Dementia – over 65, Torbay*
- ☰ *C08 Care Homes: Mental Health, Torbay*

Discharge from an out of area hospital

If the person you are caring for has been in a hospital outside of Torbay, a similar procedure should apply. The ward staff should be discussing the discharge arrangements with you and the patient and can arrange for their Social Services Team to assess both of your needs. If it is then felt that a package of care or other support needs to be put in place, they will liaise with Torbay Care Trust to ensure it is put in place before the patient can come home.

Practical help for the cared for person

There are a wide range of care services that may be offered to the patient, depending on their individual needs and circumstances.

Intensive Home Support Service: this service is accessed following an assessment of needs and offers Domiciliary Care for up to 6 weeks. They are a team of very experienced care workers who are used to working with patients who have just been discharged from hospital, it is a chargeable service.

Palliative care: this refers to the type of care needed when someone has a health condition which is not expected to be cured by medical treatment. There is a difference between this and a *'terminal illness'* where death is expected to take place within a given period of time. Palliative care will consist of pain relief and other appropriate medical treatments, as well as providing emotional and practical support. The care may take place in a hospice, care home or in someone's own home. Where the illness is thought to be terminal, the patient may be *'fast tracked'* for immediate provision of NHS Continuing Health Care.

Rehabilitation, Intermediate Care and recovery services: these are After Care Services to promote independent living and make it less likely that the patient will need to be re-admitted to hospital. They are often undertaken by visits from a therapist or nurse. Intermediate care is active rehabilitation in one's own home or a care home for a focused period of time to address recent loss of function or confidence aimed at maintaining someone in their own home if possible, following a hospital stay. There is no charge for intermediate care. Patients with chronic conditions, such as Parkinson's disease, as well as those who need rehabilitation following a stroke for example, may have longer term rehabilitation services available to them.

Residential care (Care Home or Nursing Home: the patient may be assessed as unable to go back to their own home and in need of residential care of some type. Both the patient and carer should be given detailed information and advice before taking this type of decision. In most cases the Care Trust does not have the power to force the patient to go into residential care. Where it is refused, the patient does not have the right to stay in the NHS acute ward but the Care Trust and hospital should work with both of you to look at other options.

There are 'Choice of Accommodation Directions', available from the Department of Health, which set out how the individual should be allowed to choose their preferred accommodation. This is subject to certain conditions, such as the Care Trust deciding that the accommodation is suitable and that

the cost of them providing this accommodation is not more than they would usually pay to meet the assessed needs of the person.

Sheltered Housing Schemes: where there is someone on site or who visits regularly to provide assistance where needed, although the amount of support will vary from scheme to scheme.

▣ *P25 Housing Options for Older People*

Supported Living: this refers to schemes where residents receive some assistance with daily living but are encouraged to be as independent as possible.

Care at Home

The following services may also be provided, either as an alternative to the services listed above or in addition to some of them:

- Aids and adaptations such as hand rails, bathing equipment. There may be Disabled Facilities Grants available for large scale adaptations, but minor works (under £1000) should be provided free of charge. Disabled Facilities Grants are not means tested for children under 19.
- Paid Care Workers who will provide support, eg help with getting in and out of bed, washing and dressing, these services are chargeable and a financial assessment will be undertaken.
- Day care facilities for recreation or therapy
- Help with home maintenance, eg handyman services
- Laundry/incontinence services
- Meals on wheels
- Holidays

▣ *P02 Bathing and Showering*

▣ *P07 Equipment Centres*

▣ *P05 Domiciliary Care Agencies*

▣ *C09 Care Homes – Day Care*

▣ *P10 Home Maintenance Services and Building Adaptations*

▣ *P11 Housework, Domestic Help and Laundry Services*

▣ *P14 Meal Delivery Services*

▣ *P09 Holiday Services (national contacts)*

Direct Payments

Once the services that a patient can receive have been agreed, the patient can choose whether they will be arranged by Torbay Care Trust or arrange and 'purchase' the services needed themselves and receive a 'direct payment'. Carers can also have direct payments for any services they have been assessed for.

It is very important to be fully aware of all that is involved before deciding to have a direct payment. Using the payment to employ a careworker of your own choice may give you more flexibility and independence. However, this will make you an employer for legal purposes and has all of the responsibility that goes with that role, such as making deductions for tax and national insurance contributions, dealing with holidays, sickness, redundancy etc. Torbay Care Trust can help access payroll services, if required.

If you are financially assessed as paying in full for your care, Direct Payments will not apply.

☎ (01803) 219782

📍 Direct Payments, Torbay Care Trust, 3rd Floor, Union House, Union Street, Torquay, TQ1 3YA

Practical help for the carer

Signposts for Carers – information and advice

Signposts for Carers is a specialist information and advice service for unpaid carers in Torbay, who are looking after someone with any type of condition. The service, which is part of Torbay Care Trust, aims to provide accurate information and advice, listen carefully and impartially and ensures confidentiality. Although primarily a telephone service, pre-arranged appointments are possible at the Disability Information Service.

Calls are diverted to the Community Alarm Service outside opening hours, and messages forwarded to **Signposts** on the next working day.

📍 Signposts for Carers, Chadwell Annexe, Torquay Road, Paignton TQ3 2DW

☎ (01803) 666620 Monday-Thursday, 9.00am – 4.30pm. Friday, 9.00am - 1.00pm.

✉ signposts@nhs.net

Carer Support Workers based with GP Surgeries

All GP Surgeries in Torbay have Carer Support Workers whose aim it is to identify carers, raise awareness of carer's issues, and develop support for carers in the practices, including drop in advice surgeries and linking carers to other support services and agencies. Contact **Signposts for Carers** if you are unsure who your worker is.

📖 *Carer Support Workers, Supporting Carers in GP surgeries*


☎ (01803) 666620 Signposts for Carers – for further information


Carer's Register and Emergency Card

The Emergency Card is a free service operating 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, aiming to give carers peace of mind when away from home.

The Card enables the pre-planned emergency support plan to be put in place for the person you care for, if you are taken ill, have an accident, or are unable to return home because of an emergency. Registered carers receive copies of the quarterly Torbay Signposts newsletter, details of new initiatives, training courses for carers, etc. Cardholders can also access discounts at a range of shops and businesses in the Bay.

 *Torbay Carer's Register and Emergency Card*


 Signposts for Carers, Chadwell Annexe, Torquay Road, Paignton, TQ3 2DW

 (01803) 666620

Carers Education & Training

A regular programme of training courses are arranged for carers in Torbay including First Aid/Manual Handling, Exercise for Better Health, Looking After Me and Introduction to Computing, amongst others.

For further details, contact **Signposts for Carers**

 (01803) 666620

Breaks from caring

Torbay Care Trust aims to provide a range of breaks for carers that meet individual circumstances. The scheme is for users who have been assessed as needing regular breaks. In discussion with a Care Manager/Key Worker, a decision will be made whether short-term residential breaks or home based breaks are the best way to meet your needs.

 *Short Breaks Voucher Scheme*

 *Home Based Carers Breaks (Leonard Cheshire)*

 *Getting Help & Support – Carers Assessments Made Clear*

 (01803) 666620 **Signposts for Carers** – for further information

Emotional Support Scheme

You may be entitled to use the free Emotional Support Scheme for Carers if you are aged 18 or over and are caring for someone who lives in Torbay. You will need to have had a Carer's Assessment that identifies that the scheme may be appropriate for you. The Scheme provides for 10 free sessions with a qualified counsellor who will aim to address your particular needs.

 *Emotional Support Scheme for Carers*

 (01803) 219700 for your Care Manager

 (01803) 666620 – **Signposts for Carers** for further information.

Welfare Benefit Checks

Carers in Torbay can get free help with both benefit (social security) checks and the completion of benefit application forms from Torbay Care Trust's Financial Assessment and Benefit team (FAB) if you are receiving a package of care.

☎ (01803) 219768 or 219770

Otherwise please contact **Signposts for Carers** who are able to offer appointments for carers and the people they care for to help with benefits forms.

☎ (01803) 666620 – **Signposts for Carers** for further information.

Caring for yourself

Caring for someone can be physically and emotionally demanding. Your own health is important, you need to take care of yourself or you will find it more difficult and stressful to care.

Ask for help from friends and relatives as well as health professionals. They are often keen to be involved but may be embarrassed to offer. It is very helpful to them if you make a specific request such as shopping, or cooking a few meals for the freezer, sitting for a while with the patient to give you a chance to go out, perhaps for a coffee or to have your hair cut.

Torbay Health Trainers are able to provide one to one advice and support on:

- Coping with stress and promoting positive emotional health and wellbeing
- Healthy eating and weight management
- Becoming more physically active
- Stopping smoking
- Reducing alcohol intake/sensible drinking

📄 *Torbay Health Trainers*

☎ (01803) 208840 to make an appointment to see a Health Trainer

Stress

Signs of stress can include loss of confidence, lack of concentration, exhaustion or even feelings of hostility towards the person you care for.

If you feel you are becoming stressed, it is important to ask for help and support. You might find counselling through the Emotional Support Scheme (see page 12) helpful. Also, joining one of the support groups and meeting and talking to other carers can be very helpful.

Having a break

It is important to ensure that you have regular breaks from caring, whether it is just a chance to have a brisk walk, go to the hairdressers or meet friends. If you decide you need a longer break, Torbay Care Trust may be able to

arrange care in the home or visits to a day care centre for the person you care for, if appropriate.

If, as part of your Carer's Assessment, it is felt that regular, longer breaks are required, vouchers can be issued for stays in residential care. A financial assessment will be carried out to determine your contribution towards each break.

 *Short Breaks Voucher Scheme*

Caring for a child

Going home

The staff looking after your child will help you plan for when they are ready to leave hospital. They may need to ask you about your home, for example how many stairs you have and whether your child has help and support from Children's services or community health professionals. The aim is to make sure you have all the services you need before you leave hospital.

Before you leave, please make sure you have been told and understand:

- What to expect when you are home
- What to watch out for
- Who to call if you have concerns

You will also need to know:

- What medicines your child is taking
- How and when to get a repeat prescription
- What help you can expect from your local GP, health visitor or paediatric nurse.

After a hospital stay, a lot of children may have nightmares and be a little naughtier than usual, even for a while after returning home. That is a natural reaction. If your child experiences safety, love and closeness in their everyday life, these things ebb away. But it may take a couple of months.

Children's Specialist Community Team

The Team aims to provide a holistic service to enable children with a life limiting or life threatening illness or complex medical needs to live as full and normal a life as possible so that they are regarded as a child first and foremost.

The team undertakes to:

- Develop and provide a flexible community based service for children and families.
- Work with the child, their family and carers in all settings where their care is required.
- Provide further assessments and appropriate strategies to assist in the management of any issues that cause concern.
- Work with the child, their family and carers to minimize difficulties and prevent a crisis.
- Work with other agencies to meet the assessed needs of the child, family and carers.
- Provide psychological and emotional support.
- They can also offer bereavement support for up to one year. They are available Mondays to Fridays from 9.00am – 5.00pm.

☒ Children's Community Team, Rooms 210/211, The Old Finance Building, Torbay Hospital Annexe, 187 Newton Road, Torquay, TQ2 7BA

☎ (01803) 654616

Charging for Services

Residential Care

If NHS Continuing Care has been agreed, there will be no cost to the person going into residential care. If a level of nursing care is required (but not to the level of NHS Continuing Care) the NHS will pay a flat rate contribution (currently £101 per week) towards the cost of care.

A decision about full NHS Continuing Care should be made before any assessment for NHS funded nursing care is made. In other cases, Torbay Care Trust will carry out a financial assessment to work out whether you will need to be 'self-funding' (paying all the cost of care yourself), or pay a contribution towards the costs of care.

It is a very complicated subject and there are numerous information sheets published by Age UK and Counsel and Care, please contact **Signposts for Carers** for further information on (01803) 666620.

- 📄 *Introduction to Care Homes*
- 📄 *Finding a Care Home*
- 📄 *Care Homes checklist*
- 📄 *Paying for Permanent Residential Care*

Care at Home

If part of the care provided at home is NHS Continuing Care (or other NHS services), it will be free of charge. For other services provided by Torbay Care Trust, you will be financially assessed to decide if you will have to make a contribution towards the cost of these services.

Services to Carers and charging

You will also be financially assessed for services provided to you. There are rules about the type of income and capital that can be taken into account. Only your own income and capital (rather than that of the person for whom you care) is relevant. There may also be special arrangements in place so that particular services for carers are provided free of charge.

For further information contact *Signposts for Carers* on 01803 666620.

How to Complain

Hopefully the discharge from hospital will go smoothly. However if something goes wrong, for example the patient may be left without services in place or have been given the wrong information, you may wish to put in a complaint about this.

There are several ways of resolving a dispute but in all cases it is important that you explain as clearly and concisely as possible what it is that went wrong and what outcomes you would like to see.

Informal Complaint

It is generally a good idea to speak to the discharge co-ordinator or social worker, or their manager, who was involved with the arrangements. In some cases you may feel that this is sufficient to resolve the matter.

However, if you are still not satisfied with how your complaint has been handled you can use the formal complaints systems listed below.

Using the NHS complaints system

Either you or the patient can make a complaint about how you have been treated or the care provided. The complaint should normally be made within 6 months of the incident (sometimes a longer period of time would be acceptable).

Assistance in making a complaint about hospital services

The Patient Advice and Liaison Service (PALS) will help you make your complaint and can try to resolve matters at an early stage. They will also be able to put you in touch with your local Independent Complaints Advocacy Service (ICAS) if the complaint needs to go forward.

✉ PALS Officer, Hengrave House, Torquay Hospital, Torquay, TQ2 7AA (for Torbay residents at Torbay Hospital)

☎ 01803 655838

To find PALS offices in other areas you can telephone NHS Direct on 0845 4647.

There are several stages to the complaints process:

Stage 1. The complaint is made verbally or in writing to the 'Complaints Manager' who should acknowledge it in writing. They should then investigate your complaint and must give a written response, normally within 20 working days of the date on which the complaint was made.

Stage 2. If you are still not happy that your complaint has been resolved satisfactorily, an independent review can take place within 2 months of receiving the Stage 1 response. The Healthcare Commission will appoint a case manager to undertake an initial review. The outcome at this stage may include a recommendation that no further action be taken or a referral to a panel hearing or referral to another body such as the Health Service Ombudsman. The complaint may also be referred back to the NHS body with recommendations for further action.

A complaint to the Health Service Ombudsman

If you are unhappy with the results of a panel hearing you could then complain to the Health Service Ombudsman.

If your dispute is about the assessment for Continuing NHS Healthcare

If this is the reason for your complaint, different procedures apply. If you are not satisfied with the outcome of your complaint about the continuing care assessment you can apply to the Strategic Health Authority (SHA) panel for a review.

Complaints about Torbay Care Trust

If your complaint is about social care or local primary care service such as your GP, please contact PALS in the first instance, who will be able to help you with your complaint. For their contact details, see previous page. They will be able to supply you with a copy of the Care Trust's complaints Policy.

Again, it is important to raise your concerns with the worker you normally see from the Care Trust. You can also contact the Manager for the service you are concerned about. The Manager will arrange for your complaint to be looked into under the Local Resolution stage of their Complaints Procedure, and when this is done you should receive a written reply within 10 working days.

If your complaint is not resolved you may be able to take it to the Local Government Ombudsman.

Advocacy Services

Advocacy services can help people say what they want, help them make their choices known and represent their interests or help them obtain services they need or help them complain.

 *PO1 Information, Advice and Advocacy*

Who's who?

Care Assistants or Home Care Teams help with tasks at home, such as washing, dressing etc. They may be employed by social services, community services, hospitals or private agencies.

Children's Community Nursing Teams specialise in caring for children and families, and provide nursing and supportive care at home. They can be contacted through the hospital, at the GP's surgery or directly at their base.

Community Matrons support people with complex nursing needs and multiple long term conditions and enable more care to be provided at home.

The District Nurse or Community Nurse provides hands-on nursing care and practical advice in the home. They may be available 24 hours a day and can usually be contacted through the GP's surgery or directly at their office or at night through Devon Doctors on 0845 6710 270.

The GP (General Practitioner or Family Doctor) is responsible for all aspects of medical care at home, and can arrange help from other professionals or services.

The Health Visitor specialises in the care of babies and young children at home. They are based at your surgery and can offer advice and training. They can also arrange other services that your family might need.

Health and Social Care Co-ordinators take referrals and help arrange care services.

Hospice Staff include doctors, nurses, social workers, physiotherapists and volunteers, complementary therapists, occupational therapists, music & art therapists.

Occupational Therapists give advice on and provide equipment to help you in your caring role. This could be bathing equipment, specialist beds, mobility aids etc. For patients with complex needs, there are Specialist Palliative Care Occupational Therapists based at Rowcroft who offer specialist treatments aimed at optimising your quality of life who liaise closely with Torbay Care Trust.

Oncologists are doctors who specialise in treating cancer. A clinical oncologist treats cancer with radiation. A medical oncologist treats cancer with drugs. They are based at hospital.

Physiotherapists teach people special exercises to improve things or stop something getting worse. They sometimes teach breathing exercises.

The Primary Healthcare Team usually includes the GP, district/community nurse, children's community nurse, practice nurse, practice manager, receptionists and other associated professionals, eg health visitors.

Rowcroft Hospice is the Torbay and South Devon Hospice, care is given through day services, an 18 bed in patient ward, a lymphoedema clinic and the community team.

Social Workers and Community Care Workers can help you get emotional support, practical help and financial assistance. They are usually employed by Torbay Care Trust but some work in hospices and hospitals. Some specialise in a particular area, such as working with children or bereavement support.

Torbay Care Trust is the integrated community health and adult social care organization. It was set up in December 2005 when social care teams from Torbay Council joined community health colleagues in the new NHS Trust.

Specialist Support

Devon Doctors

Devon Doctors is the out of hours GP service for Devon. They offer 'family doctor' urgent medical and nursing care when your usual GP surgery is closed. Devon Doctors recognises that patients with palliative care needs and their carers can be reluctant to seek help out of hours. They are available throughout the entire out of hour's period and there will always be a doctor available for you to speak to.

Your GP or nurse will have informed Devon Doctors about the medical condition of the person you care for. However, they will still require some very brief personal information about them when you call. Please be prepared to tell their operator:

- Patient's name
- Patient's date of birth
- Patient's telephone number and address
- Patient's GP and practice name
- An idea of the patient's current symptoms

They will understand that you need a rapid response and your call will be treated as urgent. A doctor will call you back as soon as possible (they aim to return your call within 20 minutes where possible).

When should you call?

Please do not hesitate to call Devon Doctors if the person you are caring for experiences:

- Increased pain that does not settle within two doses of breakthrough medication.
- Nausea, vomiting or other symptoms that do not settle with their usual medication.
- Distress (either you or the person you care for)
- A sudden deterioration in their condition.
- You should always call Devon Doctors if you have been advised to contact a doctor by a Hospice or Specialist Palliative Care worker.

What Devon Doctors can do?

The Doctor will return your call and assess the problem over the telephone. Following this, you may receive:

- Advice over the phone
- A home visit
- A prescription of medicine or dose adjustment to help control your symptoms.

Your GP will be informed about your contact with Devon Doctors on the next working day.

☎ 0845 6710 270

Money & Benefits

Caring for someone can mean additional costs, such as higher heating bills or travel to hospital for appointments. Some carers need to carry on working, not just for financial reasons but because they feel it is important to have a break from their caring role. Discuss your preferences – to continue working or possibly work from home. Keeping the employer informed about the illness and your plans allows them to help you in whatever way they can.

There are several benefits which you or the person you care for may be entitled to claim for. Most are provided by the Department for Work and Pensions, however, they are very complex and it is very important to get impartial advice.

Attendance Allowance provides extra money for people aged 65 and over who have difficulty looking after their personal care needs, who are not in receipt of DLA.

Disability Living Allowance provides extra money for people who claim before the age of 65 and have difficulty looking after their personal care needs or who have difficulties getting around outside. It continues after the age of 65 if the conditions for payment are still met.

People under 65 should claim Disability Living Allowance; people over 65 should claim Attendance Allowance. For a claim form:

☎ 0800 88 22 00

Bereavement Payment is a tax-free, lump-sum payment of £2000 for spouses bereaved on or after 9th April 2001 and for civil partners bereaved after 5th December 2005. The qualification rules are quite complex, please ask for advice.

Bereavement Allowance is payable if you were aged 45 or over when your spouse or civil partner died and is payable for 52 weeks starting from the Tuesday on or following the death. The amount paid is related to your age and is based on your spouses or civil partner's National Insurance contribution. The amount is taxable.

Carer's Allowance maybe available to you if you are providing at least 35 hours a week of care, and the person you care for either receives the middle rate care component of Disability Living Allowance or Attendance Allowance. There are other conditions too, such as earning etc

Carer Premium/Addition: This is an extra amount of money included in the calculation of Income Support, income-based Job Seeker's Allowance, Housing Benefit and/or Council Tax Benefit. An equivalent amount is used in the calculation of Pension Credit. You will need to qualify for Carer's

Allowance or an underlying entitlement to receive the carer's premium. For further information, please contact Signposts for Carers on (01803) 666620.

Council Tax Benefit can help you pay your Council Tax bill. The amount depends on your income, savings and family circumstances. You might get a discount on your council tax bill if your home is adapted for a disabled person or if a paid care worker lives with you. You might also get a discount if you are caring for someone.

Employment and Support Allowance took over from Incapacity Benefit from the end of October 2008. It is the new benefit paid to people whose ability to work is limited by ill health or disability.

Health Benefits cover things like help with paying for prescriptions, dental charges, eye tests, travel to hospital, costs of NHS wigs and fabric supports.

Housing Benefit/Local Housing Allowance is paid to people living in rented accommodation. The amount you receive depends on your income, savings and family circumstances.

Incapacity Benefit is for people who are unable to work because of illness or disability and have paid the appropriate amount of National Insurance contributions. For new claimants this benefit is now Employment and Support Allowance.




Income Support is a benefit paid to people generally under the age of 60, whose income is below a minimum level. This level depends on your circumstances. If you are aged 60 or over, the support is more generous and is called **Pension Credit**.

School Allowances are for school meals, uniforms and further educational maintenance for college students.

The Social Fund pays for one-off expenses. Some should be paid for automatically such as winter fuel allowances for people over 60, others such as maternity and funeral grants have to be applied for.

Other sources of help

The benefits system is very complicated, it is very important to seek advice to ensure that you are claiming all of the money you may be entitled to.

 Signposts for Carers, Chadwell Annexe, Torquay Road, Paignton TQ3 2DW
 (01803) 666620
 signposts@nhs.net

The Department for Work and Pensions has a website for further information.

 www.dwp.gov.uk or www.directgov.uk

Macmillan Cancer Support produces a booklet offering advice about money issues and may be able to offer grants to help with the additional costs of your illness.

☎ 0800 500 800

www.macmillan.org.uk/abetterdeal

Finding Funding for Extra Needs

Disability Information Service (part of Torbay Care Trust) produces an information sheet about additional sources of funding including local and national charities. There is a 2 page questionnaire at the back of the sheet, which when completed, can be returned to them for a search of suitable charities to apply for funding.

📄 *Finding Funding for Extra Needs*

📍 Disability Information Service, Chadwell Annexe, Torquay Road, Paignton, TQ3 2DW

☎ (01803) 546474

Legal Matters

Mental Capacity Act 2005

The Mental Capacity Act 2005 came into effect in 2007 and affects everyone aged 16 and over in England and Wales, This new Act will have a large impact on carers in their own right, and especially if you care for someone who may have difficulty in making decisions.

The inability to make a decision could be because of a brain injury or stroke, dementia, learning disability, mental health problems, alcohol or drug misuse, the side effects of medical treatment or any other illness or disability.

The person you care for may lack capacity to make decisions about money, health and other matters. You may need to help them to make those decisions or you may have to take action or make decisions on their behalf. The Mental Capacity Act sets out what should happen when someone lacks capacity to make decisions.

The new Act will allow people aged 18 and over to choose and appoint someone to make their health, welfare and/or financial decisions if in the future they lack capacity to make these decisions for themselves. This person is called an attorney and is appointed by a formal document called a Lasting Power of Attorney (LPA).


There are two different types of LPA:


1. A personal welfare LPA is for decisions about both health and personal welfare, such as where to live, day-to-day care or having medical treatment.
2. A property and affairs LPA is for decisions about finances, such as selling the cared for's house or managing their bank account.

If you already have an Enduring Power of Attorney in place, this will still be valid for finance decisions, but you can make a separate LPA for welfare decisions if required.

For further information, contact ***Signposts for Carers:***

 Signposts for Carers, Chadwell Annexe, Torquay Road, Paignton TQ3 2DW

 (01803) 666620

 signposts@nhs.net

Banks and Benefits

If you need to have access to another person's bank account, you can contact the bank to arrange a third party mandate.

Pensions and benefits are usually paid directly into a bank account. If you need to help someone collect their pension or benefits, contact your local Department for Work and Pensions office about becoming an agent or appointee. An agent can collect someone else's benefits for them. An appointee deals with all aspects of benefits for someone who cannot act for themselves.

Making a Will

If someone dies without making a Will, this may cause problems. It might mean that the person's wishes are not followed. Even though it is a difficult subject, try to encourage the person you care for to think about what they would like to happen to everything they own after their death. They may also like to plan their funeral.

It is a good idea to seek legal advice from a solicitor about making a Will, as the rules about signing and witnessing Wills can be complicated. For information about finding a solicitor or making a Will, contact

 0870 606 6575 The Law Society of England and Wales
 www.lawsociety.org.uk

Emergencies

- Make an emergency appointment with your doctor (GP) or call your doctor's surgery out-of-hours service if the emergency is at night or the weekend, **Devon Doctors 0845 6710 270**
- Information can be obtained from **NHS Direct on 0845 4647**
- Contact Torbay Care Trust's **Emergency Duty Team on (01803) 524519**
- If there are serious concerns for health call the **Ambulance Service on 999**

Local Contacts

You may find it useful to keep a note of useful contact numbers on this page.

Brixham Hospital	01803 882153
Carer Support Worker	
Children's Disability Team	01803 402781
District Nurse	
GP Surgery	
Home Care Team	
Hospital Consultant	
Hospital Specialist Nurse	
Paignton Hospital	01803 557425
Signposts for Carers	01803 666620
Torbay Care Trust	01803 219700
Torbay Hospital	01803 614567

National Information, Advice and Reading

This information sheet does not include all sources of national information, but the following organisations are particularly good sources of information.

AgeUK – Helpline 0800 169 6565 www.ageuk.org.uk

Alzheimer's Society - Helpline 0845 300 0336 www.alzheimers.org.uk

Carers UK - 0808 808 7777 (Wed & Thurs 10am – 12pm & 2pm – 4pm)
www.carersuk.org

Contact a Family – 0808 808 3555 www.cafamily.org.uk

Macmillan Cancer Relief – 0808 808 0000 (Mon – Fri 9am – 8pm)
www.macmillan.org.uk

MS Society – 0808 800 8000 www.mssociety.org.uk

Princess Royal Trust for Carers – 0844 800 4361 www.carers.org

The Stroke Association – 0303 3033 100 www.stroke.org.uk

Reading

The Selfish Pig's Guide to Caring by Hugh Marriott (Polperro Heritage Press)
The author's aim in writing this book was to bring into the open everything he wished he'd been told when he first became a carer. The book airs topics such as a sex, thoughts of murder, coping with incontinence, and dealing with the responses of friends and officials who fail to understand. An excellent read!

Past Caring – The Beginning not the End by Audrey Jenkinson (Polperro Heritage Press)

The author describes how she tried to cope with her parents' deaths and recalls the void she felt at the time. She wondered how others coped in similar situations, when she discovered there were no books on the subject, she decided to write one.

Audrey travelled throughout the UK, interviewing former carers and asking them how they rebuilt their lives. The stories she heard were both fascinating and uplifting and she felt other people would find them interesting and helpful. *Past Caring* also includes a twelve-step recovery guide for past carers.

The Complete Idiot's Guide to Caring for Aging Parents by Linda Colvin Rhodes (Alpha Books)

Explores the emotional problems that patients, relatives, close friends and professional's experience when someone is dying and the skills required to support the patient and provide counselling for relatives.

Other Titles in this Series

Most sheets have many pages, and details change often. If you would like copies, please request no more than 5 titles at a time (further details on p. 3).

Disability Support Series	
Bathing and Showering	P02
Computers	P27
Continence Management	P24
Domiciliary Care Agencies	P05
Emergency Care For Pets	P06
Equipment Centres	P07
Equipment Hire and Loan Services (including wheelchair hire)	P08
Finding Funding for Extra Needs	P12
Gentle Exercise	P22
Holiday Services (national contacts)	P09
Home Maintenance Services and Building Adaptations	P10
Home Visiting Services	P23
Housework, Domestic Help and Laundry Services	P11
Housing Options for Older People	P25
Information, Advice and Advocacy Services	P01
Leisure	P28
Meal Delivery Services	P14
Motoring	P17
Parking and Public Conveniences	P15
Shop Delivery Services	P16
Sitting Services	P18
Sport coming soon	P34
Stairlifts and Vertical Lifts	P19
Support for People with High Functioning Autism and Asperger's Syndrome coming soon	P33
Support Groups	P21
Telecare (will include community alarm systems) coming soon	P04
Transport Services	P20
Used Disability Equipment: Where to Find or Place Advertisements	P03
Warm, Safe and Secure (currently including community alarm systems)	P13
Caring Series	
Caring for an Adult with a Mental Health Condition	P29
Caring for an Adult with an Alcohol or Drug Problem	P31
Caring for Someone Coming out of Hospital	P32
Caring for Someone with a Life Limiting Condition	P30
Care Home Series	
Care Homes - Day Care, Torbay	C09
Care Homes: Dementia – over 65, Torbay	C06
Care Homes: Dual Registered to include Nursing	C04
Care Homes: Learning Disabilities, Torbay	C05
Care Homes: Mental Health, Torbay	C08
Care Homes: Nursing – Dementia – over 65, Torbay	C07
Care Homes: Nursing, Torbay	C03
Care Homes: Paignton and Brixham	C01
Care Homes: Torquay	C02

Further information and advice...


Signposts for Carers

Signposts for Carers is Torbay's dedicated telephone support service providing specialist information and advice to unpaid carers in Torbay. Contact Signposts for Carers in confidence to find out about services, equipment, benefits and rights. Support is available on a short or long-term basis.

The service works closely with the Mental Health Information Service and can make referrals for you.

Opening hours: Monday to Thursday, 9.00am - 4.30pm. Friday: 9.00am - 1.00pm.

Calls are diverted to a 24-hour staffed message taking service outside of office hours. Your details and enquiry will be relayed to us and we will respond to your enquiry on the next working day.

 **(01803) 666620**

 **signposts@nhs.net**

Was this information sheet useful?

We are keen to ensure that this information sheet is relevant to your needs and clear. We would be grateful if you would take one minute to complete the simple and anonymous questionnaire below and send it back to us **post-free**.

Our address is:

Torbay Disability Information Service
FREEPOST SWB31050
Chadwell Annexe
Torquay Road
Paignton TQ3 2ZZ

Q: Where did you get this information sheet from?

Q: How old are you?

Q: How long have you lived in Torbay?

Q: Was the information easy to read and helpful? (Please tick **one** box only)

Very Easy

Fairly easy

Undecided

Fairly difficult

Very Difficult

Q: How might we improve it?

.....
.....

Q: What local information do you struggle to find out about?

.....
.....

Note: Please contact us on (01803) 546474 if you need help or have questions about the contents of this information sheet.



Partners in Care

Ref: Signposts for Carers, P32 – December 2010

This document can be available in other languages and formats. For more information telephone 01803 666620.