The Transition of Older People from their own Residence to a Care Home

RCN principles
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Introduction

The transition from a person's own home to a care home is often emotional for both the individual as well as their family and friends.

Registered nurses working in the community are an excellent resource to draw upon and can help make the transition as smooth as possible. Nurses working in the community, general practice, intermediate care or in a specialist nursing role, and who are involved in caring for the individual, can all make a positive contribution towards this transition.

Background

These principles have been created by nursing experts, with contributions from representatives of resident groups. They are based on current evidence-based literature and best practice.

It is recognised that arrangements necessary to enable people to move to, and live in, a care home are different in the four UK countries and, where possible, this has been explained within this guidance.

These principles are designed to be used by all nurses who are supporting people through this period of transition, regardless of role. Nurses are uniquely placed to ensure a smooth transfer of care for the individual and to ensure the appropriate support for those who have been caring for the person.
Principles for registered nurses supporting people in transition

**Principle 1**
A joint assessment of nursing needs should be undertaken. This should include the resident and family/carer, together with nurses from both the community setting and the care home.

There needs to be good communication between all individuals involved and this should be supported by appropriate documentation and key information from the wider team. This might include:

- a statement of needs for funding arrangements
- medicine reconciliation
- any relevant documents which set out the person’s wishes or requests in relation to health care interventions and advanced care planning.

It is important that nurses are familiar with the care homes in the area where they work.

**Principle 2**
Registered nurses at all levels of practice and in all roles, should demonstrate professional development. This should include:

- shared learning opportunities
- clinical supervision
- reflection
- revalidation support.

Professional development should be undertaken collaboratively and involve staff in the care home, other independent sector organisations and the NHS.

**Principle 3**
Registered nurses should ensure a key individual is identified to co-ordinate the transition period and that information sharing agreements are in place. This person must be known to the new resident and their family, and their contact details be available. The nurse who is co-ordinating the transition period should:

- be accessible
- understand the potential difficulties that can occur during transition
- be highly motivated to make the process as smooth as possible
- understand the individual needs of the person and their family, and be able to signpost to sources of support.

If a couple need to move to a care home every attempt should be made for them to be in the same home unless there are explicit reasons to the contrary (for example, safeguarding issues).

**Principle 4**
Registered nurses need to demonstrate an advanced level of communication skills and knowledge so that they can:

- facilitate conversations regarding transition at an early stage
- help both the individual and their family manage the emotions that may arise during this time.

This leads to person-centred choices and outcomes. It is particularly important to allow time to discuss feelings; best practice indicates that when you listen to people they are more likely to be comfortable with the subsequent decisions. Nurses must work within information sharing agreements and promote the use of person-centred timescales.

**Principle 5**
Registered nurses will have knowledge and understanding of funding streams, plus be able to signpost to advice (specific to country and area of practice). The funding of living in a care home is complex and can differ between the four UK countries. Therefore, registered nurses must be knowledgeable about their area but do not undertake financial assessment.

Registered nurses have a key role in completing health care assessments and producing care plans; this includes signposting individuals to appropriate resources.
Resources to support principle 1

- **National Health and Wellbeing Outcomes**, Scottish Government (2014). High-level statements of what health and social care partners are attempting to achieve through integration and ultimately through the pursuit of quality improvement across health and social care. By working with individuals and local communities, integration authorities will support people to achieve the outcomes.
  www.gov.scot/Topics/Health/Policy/Adult-Health-SocialCare-Integration/Outcomes

- **My Home Life** (a UK-wide initiative that promotes quality of life and delivers positive change in care homes for older people).
  www.myhomelife.co.uk

  www.nice.org.uk/guidance/ng27/chapter/recommendations

  https://professionals.carers.org/triangle-care-dementia

  www.qni.org.uk/for_nurses/policy_and_practice/district_nurse_standards

- **Medicines optimisation**, Royal College of Nursing.
  www.rcn.org.uk/clinical-topics/medicines-optimisation


Resources to support principle 2

- **NHS England new care models: Enhanced health in care homes vanguards** (2016). These are six enhanced health in care home vanguards working to improve the quality of life, health care and health planning for people living in care homes.

- **Employing nurses in local authorities**, Royal College of Nursing (2014).
  www.rcn.org.uk/professional-development/publications/pub-004680

  www.nmc.org.uk/standards/code

  http://revalidation.nmc.org.uk

- **Integrating health and social care across the UK: toolkit for nursing leaders**, Royal College of Nursing (2017).
  www.rcn.org.uk/professional-development/publications/pub-005910

Resources to support principle 3

  www.nice.org.uk/guidance/ng27

- **8 pillars model of community support**, Alzheimer Scotland. Action on Dementia. An integrated and comprehensive evidence-based approach to supporting people with dementia living at home during the moderate to severe stages of the illness.
  www.alzscot.org/campaigning/eight-pillars_model_of_community_support
• Carers UK – making life better for carers, a national membership charity for carers. www.carersuk.org


• Your guide to care and support, NHS Choices, for people who have care and support needs, their carers and people who are planning for their future care needs. www.nhs.uk/conditions/social-care-and-support-guide/Pages/what-is-social-care.aspx

Resources to support principle 4

• Royal College of Nursing Council priorities. www.rcn.org.uk/about-us/how-the-rcn-is-governed/rcn-council

• The Money Advice Service – if you or someone you care for lacks mental capacity. www.moneyadviceservice.org.uk/en/articles/help-manage-the-money-of-someone-youre-caring-for

• The Hub – Care Inspectorate (Scotland), provides a ‘one-stop-shop’ access to a range of resources aimed at supporting improvement in the social care and social work sectors through the use and sharing of intelligence and research-led practice. www.hub.careinspectorate.com


Resources to support principle 5

• Care To Be Different. A website that offers advice on securing NHS funding for care fees. http://caretobedifferent.co.uk

• What is NHS-funded nursing care?, NHS Choices. www.nhs.uk/chq/Pages/what-is-nhs-funded-nursing-care.aspx


• Think Local Act Personal. A national partnership transforming health and care through personalisation and community-based support. www.thinklocalactpersonal.org.uk

• Mental wellbeing of older people in care homes, National Institute for Health and Care Excellence (2013). www.nice.org.uk/guidance/qs50

Principles for organisations and employers

**Principle 1**

Organisations that provide funding or deliver education across sectors, professions or higher education institutes, should create opportunities for shared learning, clinical supervision and networking between care home staff and other services.

All staff should have access to high quality senior clinical support and arrangements may need to be fostered across sectors for this to happen. There is much to be gained by shared learning opportunities and the fostering of close working relationships.

**Principle 2**

Nursing care should promote the continuity of high quality services so that older people receive stable and sustainable care.

**Principle 3**

Care transition must incorporate, where possible, the wider wishes of the individual, family and those that are important to them, including choice and end of life care.

**Principle 4**

Employers should promote tailored preceptorship packages during periods of role transition, including quality clinical supervision.

**Principle 5**

Nursing should be promoted as a positive career choice in the care home setting. This will help ensure there are diverse and appropriate career structures and frameworks throughout the sector. It will also underpin the knowledge, skills and attitudes required to support older people who are making the transition to a care home.
Resources to support principle 1


- NHS Education for Scotland – NHS Scotland's education and training body ensures that patients and their families get the best health care possible from well trained and educated staff. www.nes.scot.nhs.uk

- Person First, the Bupa approach to aged care and dementia. www.bupa.com/corporate/our-purpose/healthy-ageing-and-dementia/person-first-the-bupa-model-of-care

- Care homes, information on finding a Bupa care home. www.bupa.co.uk/care-services/care-homes

- Shaping the future. CQC’s strategy for 2016 to 2021, Care Quality Commission (2016). www.cqc.org.uk/content/our-strategy-2016-2021


Resources to support principle 2

- Refer to local clinical commissioning groups (CCGs) operational/strategic plans.


- Information on care homes with data on inspection checks, Care Quality Commission. www.cqc.org.uk/content/care-homes


Resources to support principle 3

- End of life care, information and resources, Royal College of Nursing. www.rcn.org.uk/clinical-topics/end-of-life-care

- Palliative Care Knowledge Zone, information, knowledge and support to help nurses deliver the best possible care for people living with a terminal illness, Marie Curie. www.mariecurie.org.uk/professionals/palliative-care-knowledge-zone

- Safeguarding, information and resources for all areas of nursing practice, in all settings, whether with children all adults, Royal College of Nursing. www.rcn.org.uk/clinical-topics/safeguarding

- Court of Protection (England and Wales), makes decisions on financial or welfare matters for people who can’t make decisions at the time they need to be made. www.gov.uk/courts-tribunals/court-of-protection


- What to look for when choosing a care home:
  - Good care guide – an independent forum that has been developed to allow people to find, rate and review local care throughout Britain. www.goodcareguide.co.uk
• Care homes, advice covering all the main things you need to know, from tips on how to find a good care home, to advice on funding, Age UK. www.ageuk.org.uk/home-and-care/care-homes


• Care England, representing independent care providers. www.careengland.org.uk

• Care and Social Services Inspectorate Wales, regulate and inspect to improve adult care, childcare and social services for people in Wales. http://cssiw.org.uk/splash?orig=

• The Regulation and Quality Improvement Authority, registers and inspects a wide range of health and social care services. www.rqia.org.uk

• Care Quality Commission, the independent regulator of health and social care in England. www.cqc.org.uk

• Health Improvement Scotland, main purpose is better quality health and social care for everyone in Scotland. www.healthcareimprovementscotland.org

• Ageing well at home, Care and Repair England – a small charitable organisation set up to improve the homes and living conditions of older people. It believes that older people should be able to live in a decent home of their own choosing. http://careandrepair-england.org.uk

• Staywell – an independent charity providing a range of services for people living in south west London and Surrey. Staywell’s core work is with older people and their carers, supporting users to live with independence and dignity, decide the direction of their own lives and enjoy life as part of the community. www.staywellservices.org.uk

• Guidelines and Audit Implementation Network (GAIN) Guidelines for Palliative and End of Life Care in Nursing Homes and Residential Care Homes (2013).

Resources to support principle 4


• Fit for Frailty – a British Geriatrics Society campaign (2014). www.bgs.org.uk/fit-for-frailty/resources/campaigns/fit-for-frailty/fff-headlines


• Social Services and Well-being (Wales) Act (2012). www.ccwales.org.uk/the-act


• Flying start NHS – an NHS Education for Scotland development programme for newly qualified nurses, midwives and allied health professionals. It aims to support their learning and build their confidence during their first year of practice in NHS Scotland. www.flyingstart.scot.nhs.uk

• Enhancing care for older people. A guide to practice development processes to support and enhance care in residential settings for older people, Health Service Executive (2010).
Conclusion

These principles can be used by nurses, organisations and employers to improve the process of transition for people moving from their own residence into care homes. This publication has been designed to support nurses working with people living in the community as well as nursing staff in care homes. The principles aim to underpin a person-centred transition and provides a wide range of resources to help do this.

Resources to support principle 5

- *Principles of nursing practice*, Royal College of Nursing.  
  [www.rcn.org.uk/professional-development/principles-of-nursing-practice](http://www.rcn.org.uk/professional-development/principles-of-nursing-practice)

- *Nursing in social care*, Skills for Care.  

- Supporting nursing in care homes, Department of Health Sciences York University, project funded by the RCN Foundation (2014).  
  [www.rcnfoundation.org.uk/?a=620718&now=1429088648](http://www.rcnfoundation.org.uk/?a=620718&now=1429088648)

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