

Easy Read



Comisiynydd Pobl Hŷn Cymru
Older People's Commissioner for Wales

Getting the help you need when you are leaving the hospital

A guide for older people in Wales



This document was written by the **Older People's Commissioner for Wales**. It is an easy read version of 'Ready to go: Helpful information about what to expect when you're ready to leave hospital'.

December 2023

How to use this document



This is an easy read document. You may still need support to read it. Ask someone you know to help you.



Words in **bold blue writing** may be hard to understand. They have been explained in a box below the word. You can check what all the bold words mean on **page 35**.



Where the document says we, this means the **Older People's Commissioner for Wales** and her team. For more information contact:

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Cymraeg

This document is available in Welsh.



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Introduction

About us



We stand up for the rights of older people across Wales.



We work to make Wales a good place to grow old.



We make sure older people:

- can share their views
- have choice and control
- do not feel lonely
- get the support and services that they need
- are not treated badly or unfairly.

About this guide



This guide is for older people in Wales.

It explains:



- What happens when you are **discharged** from the hospital.

Hospital **discharge** is the process that happens whenever a patient leaves hospital.



- What care and support you can get after you leave hospital.

Hospital discharge



Before leaving hospital, you will have a **discharge assessment**.

A **discharge assessment** checks if you need more care after leaving hospital.



The **discharge assessment** will make sure you are fit to leave hospital. This is called being **Medically fit for discharge**.

After the **discharge assessment**:



- you may be able to go straight home



- or you may need more support before you can go home.

If you need more support



You may be moved to a different ward, hospital, or care home. This is called **step-down care**.



You may get **rehabilitation**.

Rehabilitation is treatment that helps you get back as much of your strength as possible. It is also sometimes called reablement.



You should be given a **Care Coordinator**. They will help you through hospital **discharge**.



Make sure you find out who your **Care Coordinator** is. And ask for their contact details.



Your **Care Coordinator** will be your first point of contact. They can update you on your **discharge** plans.

About rehabilitation services



Rehabilitation is also sometimes called **Reablement**.



The aim of **rehabilitation** is to:

- Get your skills and confidence back.
- Help you do things for yourself at home.
- Rely less on others to care for you.



Rehabilitation often starts when you are still in hospital. And carries on after you leave hospital.



This could be things like physiotherapy and speech therapy.



Rehabilitation is free for the first 6 weeks.



After 6 weeks, if you still need support you can get home care.



Your **Care Coordinator** or other care professionals will talk to you about this.



Or you can contact us. See **pages 29 to 34**.

Longer term care



If you need longer term care, a **social worker** will do a **Care and Support Assessment**.



The law does not say how long it should take:

- for you to be given a social worker
- for your needs to be assessed.

If you are waiting for too long



You can make a complaint to your local authority social services department. **See pages 29 to 34.**



If you are not happy with a NHS or social care service, you can talk to **Llais**. **See pages 29 to 34.**



Llais was set up by the Welsh Government. Llais makes sure people in Wales have a say about their:

- health services
- and social care services.



To get an update on waiting times, contact your:

- Care coordinator
- Local authority social services department



When you have a **social worker**, make sure you have their contact details.



They will be your main contact for organising care and support.

How do I get the care services I need to go home



Your **social worker** will do a **Care and Support Assessment**.

You have the right to:



- A **Care and Support Assessment** if you might need help to return home.



- Have your views and wishes heard.



- An **Independent Professional Advocate**. Ask your social worker about this.

An **Independent Professional Advocate** is a specially trained advocate. Advocates speak up for you. And help make sure your voice is heard.



- Get a copy of your **Care and Support Assessment**.



When your **Care and Support Assessment** is finished, a **Care and Support Plan** will be made.



Your **Care and Support Plan** will say:

- What services will be provided
- How your needs will be met
- When the services will be provided
- Who will provide the services



The person creating your plan must listen to you.



If you are not happy with your **Care and Support Plan**, you can complain.



You can complain to your **local authority social services department**. See **pages 29 to 34**.

Can I choose my own care workers



Your local authority can give you money instead of a service. This is called a **direct payment**.



This gives people more choice and control.



Adults of any age can get **direct payments** if they have care and support needs.



Your social worker should talk to you about **direct payments**. And how they could work for you to meet your needs.



You must agree with your local authority how **direct payments** will be used.



Sometimes a person may not be able to get **direct payments**.

Waiting for home care



If you are going to have **home care**, you may need to wait.



Home care is when carers visit you at home to provide care. It is also called **domiciliary care**.



There are not enough trained home care workers.



Some people wait for a long time for home care.



You might have to move to a care home whilst you are waiting.



This will only be until there is home care available for you. You should be able to return home if it what you want. And its what's best for you.



You cannot stay in hospital whilst you wait for home care.



You may have been moved to **step-down care** for **rehabilitation**. You may be able to wait there.



You cannot choose which care home you wait in.



But your **Care Coordinator** and **social worker** must think about your needs and wishes.



For example, where the care home will be. To allow family and friends to visit.



Keep in contact your **social worker**. Do not be afraid to ask for updates.



You can ask your **social worker** for an action plan. This should say roughly how long things will take.



If you are not happy with how long you have had to wait, contact us.

Do I have to pay for my social care



The amount you pay depends on how much money you have.



Some people will not have to pay anything.

Your local authority will do a **financial assessment**.



A **financial assessment** looks at:

- The money you have to live on every week.
- How much you have to pay for things like rent and council tax.
- How much you have in savings.



This will say how much you must pay towards your care and support.



You will not pay more than £100 a week for **home care**.

If you live in a care home



You will usually pay **all** your fees if you have more than £50,000.



This can be in savings, or in things like property you own.



You can read more about **financial assessment** in: **Factsheet 6: Paying for care.** <https://olderpeople.wales/resource/social-services-in-wales>



You can contact us to get a copy of **factsheet 6**.

Mental capacity



Mental capacity is about being able to make your own decisions.



Some people may lack **mental capacity** to make decisions. For example, because of **dementia**.



Dementia is a condition that affects the brain. People with dementia have problems with memory and can be confused. It usually affects older people.



It is important to:

- Make sure people know what your wishes and needs are.
- Think about who you would want to make decisions for you. This is called **Legal Power of Attorney**.



For more information, Read **Lasting Powers of Attorney (LPA - A guide for older people in Wales)**. <https://olderpeople.wales/resource/an-easy-guide-to-lasting-powers-of-attorney>



Or you can contact us to get a copy of this factsheet.



Sometimes your local authority may need to keep you in a care home.



If this is against your wish, they will need permission under the law. This is to prove they need to do this to keep you safe.



This called as **Deprivation of Liberty Safeguards (DoLS)**.



If you lack **mental capacity** a meeting will take place to decide:

- what is in your best interests
- and to think about what you want.



You have the right to take part in this meeting. And to have your views and wishes heard.



A **Mental Capacity Assessment** is done. This is a formal check to see if you can make your own decisions.



You have the right to have a copy of your **Mental Capacity Assessment**.



You should have a copy of the best interest decision that was made.



If you or your family do not agree with the decision, you can challenge it.



You can ask your Care Coordinator or social worker for an **Independent Mental Capacity Advocate (IMCA)**.



If you need help with this, you can contact us. See **page 34**.

Visiting loved ones in hospital



You should be able to visit your loved one when they are in hospital.



Visits are important.



If you are not allowed to visit your loved one, you can complain.



You can complaint to the **Patient Advice and Liaison Service (PALS)** within the hospital. See **page 32**.



Or you can contact us. **See page 34**.

Providing short term care for a loved one



You may be asked to provide short term care. So your loved one can be **discharged** from hospital sooner.



You should not feel pressured in any way to provide care.



If you choose to provide short term care, your rights should not be affected.



The person you care for still has the right to:

- a **Care and Support Assessment**
- and to have their needs met through a Care and Support Plan.



Ask your social worker to write down how long you will need to provide care for.



Ask who you should contact if something changes.
Or if you are struggling to care for your person.



You will also have a right to a **Support Assessment**.
This is the law. It will look at things like:

- your wants and needs
- your health
- and your other responsibilities. Like children or work.



You may be able to get a **Direct Payment**.



You can ask your social worker for more information
on **Direct Payments**.



Or you can contact us. See **page 34**.

Useful contacts

Local Authority Social Services

Blaenau Gwent County Borough Council

Phone: 01495 315700

Bridgend County Borough Council

Phone: 01656 642279

Caerphilly County Borough Council

Phone: 0808 100 2500

Cardiff Council

Phone: 029 2023 4234

Carmarthenshire County Council

Phone: 0300 333 2222

Ceredigion County Council

Phone: 01545 574000

Conwy County Borough Council

Phone: 0300 456 1111

Denbighshire County Council

Phone: 0300 4561000

Flintshire County Council

Phone: 03000 858858

Gwynedd Council

Llŷn Area phone: 01758 704 099

Caernarfon Area phone: 01286 679 099

Bangor Area phone: 01248 363 240

Eifionydd and Meirionnydd North phone: 01766 510 300

South Meirionnydd Area phone: 01341 424572

Isle of Anglesey County Council

Phone: 01248 752 752

Merthyr Tydfil County Borough Council

Phone: 01685 725000

Monmouthshire County Council

Monmouth/Usk/Raglan phone: 01600 773041

Abergavenny phone: 01873 735885

Chepstow/Caldicot phone: 01291 635666

Neath Port Talbot County Borough Council

Phone: 01639 685717

Newport City Council

Phone: 01633 656656

Pembrokeshire County Council

Phone: 01437 764551

Powys County Council

Phone: 0345 602 7050

Rhondda Cynon Taf County Borough Council

Phone: 01443 425003

City and County of Swansea

Phone: 01792 636519

The Vale of Glamorgan County Borough Council

Phone: 01446 700111

Torfaen County Borough Council

Phone: 01495 762200

Wrexham County Borough Council

Phone: 01978 292066

Patient Advice Liaison Service (PALS) by Health Board:

Aneurin Bevan University Health Board:

Phone: 01633 493753

Email: ABB.PALS@wales.nhs.uk

Betsi Cadwaladr University Health Board:

Phone: 03000 851234

Email: BCU.PALS@wales.nhs.uk

Cardiff & Vale University Health Board:

Phone: 029 2074 4095 / 029 2074 3301

Email: concerns@wales.nhs.uk

Cwm Taff Morganwg Health Board:

Bridgend PALS: 01656 754194

Email: CTM.BridgendPALS@wales.nhs.uk

Merthyr PALS: 01685 724468

Email: CTM.MerthyrCynon.PALS@wales.nhs.uk

Rhondda PALS: 01656 754194

Email: CTM.RhonddaTaffEly.PALS@wales.nhs.uk

Hywel Dda Health Board:

Phone: 0300 0200 159

Email: hdhb.patientsupportservices@wales.nhs.uk

Llais: Your voice in health and social care

Address: 3rd Floor
33 - 35 Cathedral Road
Cardiff
CF11 9HB

Phone: 029 2023 5558

Email: enquiries@llaiscymru.org

Website: www.llaiswales.org/in-your-area

Age Cymru

Address: Ground Floor,
Mariners House Trident Court
East Moors Road
Cardiff, CF24 5TD

Phone: 0300 303 44 98

Website: ageuk.org.uk/cymru/contact-us

How to contact the Commissioner



The Older People's Commissioner for Wales
Cambrian Buildings
Mount Stuart Square
Cardiff
CF10 5FL



Phone: 03442 640 670



Email: ask@olderpeople.wales



Website: www.olderpeople.wales



Twitter: [@talkolderpeople](https://twitter.com/talkolderpeople)

Hard words and important terms

Advocate

Advocates speak up for you. And help make sure your voice is heard.

Care and Support Assessment

An assessment to check if you need social care. It will be done by a social worker.

Care Coordinator

This is the person in charge of coordinating your discharge from hospital. They will be your main point of contact.

Dementia

Dementia is a condition that affects the brain.

People with dementia have problems with memory and can be confused. It usually affects older people.

Discharge

Hospital discharge is the process that happens whenever a patient leaves hospital.

Discharge assessment

A discharge assessment checks if you need more care after leaving hospital.

Financial assessment

A financial assessment looks at:

- The money you have to live on every week.
- How much you have to pay for things like rent and council tax.
- How much you have in savings.

Home Care or Domiciliary Care

When carers visit you at home to provide care.

Independent Professional Advocate

An Independent Professional Advocate is a specially trained advocate.

Lasting Power of Attorney

This is a legal document. This lets you choose 1 or more people to make decisions for you. If you cannot make your own.

Medically fit for discharge

This is when you are fit to leave hospital. You no longer need medical treatment.

Mental capacity

Mental capacity is about being able to make your own decisions.

Rehabilitation

Rehabilitation is treatment that helps you get back as much of your strength as possible.

Social worker

A professional that can assess and organise your social care. They usually work for your local authority. Sometimes they are based in hospitals.

Step-down care

This is a certain ward or community hospital or care home. You can go to step-down care if you no longer need medical treatment. But you still need some care or time for rehabilitation.

Support assessment

An assessment to check your carer's needs. This is done by a social worker.