Paying for Care

Unlike the NHS, social care services are not free. How much you pay for your care depends on your income and savings.

We will work with you to understand your financial circumstances by carrying out a ‘Financial Assessment’ of your income and savings to decide whether the council will make a contribution towards the cost of your care.

The value of your property will usually be taken into account if you go into a care home. If you own a second property the value of this property will be included within your financial assessment.

If you are assessed as needing to pay for your care and support you will need to start putting money aside for when you receive invoices from the council. Some types of income, such as money from certain disability benefits and pensions, and certain types of capital, may not be counted in the Financial Assessment. This will be explained further at your Financial Assessment.

If you’re eligible for financial assistance to pay for care and support, the council can arrange services for you. Alternatively you can choose to receive Direct Payments and arrange the services yourself. You can find out more about Direct Payments on page 6.
Paying for care at home

If you need care and support whilst living at home, we will carry out a financial assessment. The assessment looks at your financial circumstances to work out if the council will contribute towards the cost of your care, and if so, how much that contribution will be.

The following types of support may be chargeable, depending on the outcome of your financial assessment:

- home care
- general care and support
- day opportunities and day activities
- respite care

Charges for care services, such as home care, day activities or respite care, are based on your own financial circumstances. No-one is asked to pay more towards their care than their financial assessment shows they can afford.

If you are eligible for Reablement, which is short term support to help you regain your independence, this will be free for the time it is in place.

Paying for care in a care home

If you need care and support and have been assessed as needing to receive that care in a care home, we will carry out a financial assessment. The assessment looks at your financial circumstances to work out if the council will contribute towards the cost of your care, and if so, how much that contribution will be.

The financial assessment will calculate how much you need to pay by looking at your income, savings, capital and benefits, including any additional benefits you may be entitled to.
Financial Assessment

If you have capital or savings over £23,250, including the value of your home (if owned), you will need to pay the full cost of your care. If your home continues to be occupied by a partner, child under the age of 18 or an older or disabled relative, then it will not be included in the financial assessment for as long as that person remains living there.

If your savings are less than £23,250, and you own your own home, its value is usually not included in the financial assessment for 12 weeks from when your care starts.

Care Home Charges

Care home costs can vary from home to home. If the council is contributing towards the cost of your care, your choice of care home will be limited to those that accept the council’s funding level. If the home you have chosen charges more than the council’s contribution, you must find someone to help pay the difference.

Except in limited circumstances, the law states that you are not allowed to make this additional payment yourself.
The responsibility for this often falls to a member of your family or a benevolent sponsor, such as a charity. Once confirmed, the responsible person must sign an agreement with the council formalising the arrangement.

If the person making these extra payments cannot continue to make these in the future, the council may not automatically pay the difference. If the home will not accept a lower rate, you may need to think about moving to a less expensive care home.

If you pay the full cost of your care home fees, arranged it without our assistance and the care home fees are higher than the council's funding level, you will need to think about how the fees will be paid if your capital and savings are likely to fall below £23,250 in the future.

**Deferred Payment**

Deferred payment of care home fees means that people should not have to sell their home in their lifetime to pay their care home bills. A deferred payment agreement means that care home payments are made by the council on your behalf as an ongoing loan, using your home as security.

The funds loaned are to be repaid to us either when you sell your home, or after your death.

If your savings or capital are less than £23,250, you are entitled to keep an allowance from your income and benefits - the remainder is usually required as your contribution towards your care home costs.

It is always best to obtain independent financial advice to help you decide how best to manage and arrange your finances to pay your care home fees.
How much will you pay?

Here’s how the Financial Assessment for social care will look at your income and savings, and how this will affect what you pay for care.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Your Capital</th>
<th>What you will have to pay</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>If you have over £23,250</td>
<td>You must pay the full cost of your care</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>If you have between £14,250 and £23,250</td>
<td>You may have to pay for your care. The council may make a contribution towards the cost</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>If you have less than £14,250</td>
<td>This amount will not be included in your financial assessment. The council will pay for your care, however you may still need to make a financial contribution which will be based on your income</td>
</tr>
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The highest charge that you could pay, if your financial circumstances permit this, is the actual full cost to the council of the care you receive. If you choose not to have a financial assessment, we will assume that you are able to pay for the full cost of your care, and will charge you on that basis.

The council can arrange care for you and you will be invoiced for this, or you can arrange your care privately and pay for it directly.

If you pay the full cost of your care and ask the council to arrange your care and support for you, you will be liable to pay an annual arrangement fee in addition to the costs of meeting your assessed care and support needs.

This arrangement fee covers the cost of putting the care and support you need in place.
Personal Budgets and Direct Payments

This guidance is for people who have already had a social care assessment and a financial assessment and are eligible for council funded care and support.

Personal Budgets

A personal budget is an amount of council funding made available to meet your social care and support needs, following a care and support assessment.

Your care and support plan is used to calculate a weekly amount of money to be used towards meeting the cost of your care.

Your personal budget may be used to:

- arrange a care agency or Personal Assistant to provide you with care and support at home with things like getting dressed, preparing a meal and washing
- arrange day activities
- arrange and pay for respite care - to give you and your carers a short break
- pay for any support you may need when your carer takes a break

You can choose how to spend your personal budget, provided that it meets your eligible social care needs and helps to meet the outcomes agreed and outlined in your care and support plan. You can choose to take your personal budget as a Direct Payment.

Direct Payments

A Direct Payment is when your personal budget is paid directly to you. It can also be paid directly to an authorised person or to an organisation acting on your behalf.

Direct Payments can be used to buy your own care and support and can give you a greater ability to choose and control your own care services helping you to achieve better outcomes.
You can use a Direct Payment to employ your own Personal Assistant to help and support you. You would need to pay them a wage from your Direct Payment. You may also use your Direct Payment to pay for certain types of equipment to help you live independently at home.

If you take your personal budget as a Direct Payment, you will be issued with a pre-paid card that allows you to purchase the care and support that you need.

In Peterborough you can get help and advice with your Direct Payments from Peterborough Council for Voluntary Services (PCVS).

In Cambridgeshire you can get help with your Direct Payments from People Plus Group.

If you want to find out more about paying for care:

**Cambridgeshire**
Visit [www.cambridgeshire.gov.uk](http://www.cambridgeshire.gov.uk) and search ‘paying for care’ or call 0345 045 5202.

**Peterborough**
Visit [www.peterborough.gov.uk/pin](http://www.peterborough.gov.uk/pin) and search ‘paying for care’ or call 01733 747474.

Find out more on our suite of Welfare Benefits Fact Sheets.