

## Fact Sheet No 3

### Choosing the lifestyle you want

#### Take control of your care and your lifestyle

When you find that you need care on a regular basis you may think or others may encourage you to think that “you need to go into a care home”.

You almost certainly do not need to. For most people who need care there are now much better - and cheaper - alternatives. However there are some circumstances when a care home may be the best lifestyle for you. This Fact Sheet has been written to give you the confidence and information to make your own choice about the care lifestyle you want rather than have others choose it for you. The three main care lifestyle choices are; Care in your own (perhaps adapted) home; Care in an Extra Care or Retirement Living scheme: Care in a Care Home. Further information is provided on each below.

#### The care hours you need

Which lifestyle you choose will be influenced by the number of care hours you need each week; ie the number of hours in a week that you need one to one help from a carer to enable you to carry on your normal daily activities including getting washed and dressed, bathing, preparing and eating your meals, going to the toilet, going to bed. If you do not need more than 20 - 25 care hours a week, then you may well be able to receive your care in your own home or in an Extra Care Development. If you need more than 25 care hours a week then you are probably best suited to receive your care in a care home.

#### How do you measure the number of care hours you need?

My Care My Home has developed and calibrated a measurement system which, on the basis of the answers you give to a series of questions which our Care Advisor will put to you will enable you to know how many care hours you need each week. This tool has been checked and validated by The University of Warwick and forms part of the contracts between Shaw healthcare (Group) Limited (My Care My Home’s parent organisation) and its Local Authority and NHS partners.

Knowing precisely the number of care hours you need is very useful when you are negotiating the specification and the price of your care contract with your chosen care provider. My Care My Home provides this as a chargeable service (See My Care My Home’s Free and Chargeable Services No 2)

#### Care in your own (perhaps adapted) home

There are now many ways in which your own home can be adapted to make it easier for you to receive care in your own home and safer. You may also wish to consider letting or sub-letting a part of your home. This can give you extra income; company and a fall back carer in any emergency. See Fact Sheet No 5 “Do you want to adapt your own home for your care or move to an Extra Care or retirement living scheme”.

## Extra Care Development or Retirement Living complex

Fact Sheet No 5 gives you more details about where to find these and what they offer. They are available for purchase and for rent. The benefits they offer are that they usually are recently built, of very high specification, warm and safe. They usually have 24 hour care available whenever you need it but only to the extent that you ask for. The service is not intrusive. Many of these developments include not only between thirty and sixty individual flats but also have a number of additional hotel type facilities available if you want them. (Restaurant, snack bar, lounges, IT and other facilities, launderette etc.) There is plenty of companionship if you want it - but it is not intrusive. Not only does living in an Extra Care development enable you to retain your independence even though you may need many hours of care - but it will usually be much less expensive than care in a care home (see Fact Sheet No 11: What will your care cost?)

## Care in a care home

In a care home there are carers on duty 24 hours a day to help you with any personal or care need you may have. If you need more than 20 - 25 care hours of care a week then you will be much safer and will almost certainly become happier living in a care home (once you have settled in) than living in your own independent house or flat. It is very important that you choose a care home that is right for you. (See Fact sheet No 7: How can you be sure that the care provider really cares?)

## How My Care My Home can help

You may find it helpful to speak to one of our Care Advisors - either on the telephone (0800 731 8470) or ask for one of our Care Advisors to visit you in your own home.

Over the telephone or in your own home our advisor will talk through with you things you should consider about each of these ways of life: safety and security; independence and cost companionship.

So please do telephone if you wish to talk to one of our advisors or arrange a visit in your own home - with friends and/or family present if you wish.