SHORT GUIDE

Choosing care at home: the short guide

Choosing live-in care: the short answer from each of our 17 guides, with the address of the full guide.

This is a summary, not the whole story. Each full guide explains the conditions, exceptions and sources behind its short answer. They are online at the addresses below, and together in our full handbook, **www.dayandnightcare.co.uk/leaflets/brochure-choosing-care.pdf**.

First steps when someone needs care: a start-here guide

Start with safety today, then information, then decisions. In a crisis, call 999 or NHS 111 and the council's adult social care team (its emergency duty team out of hours), which can arrange urgent help before any assessment. When there is time, ask for a free care needs assessment, check what help could pay for care, and compare the options, from visiting care and live-in care to a care home, with the person at the centre of every decision.

Full guide: **www.dayandnightcare.co.uk/guides/first-steps-when-someone-needs-care/**

What is live-in care? A complete guide for families in England

Live-in care means a trained carer lives in your home and supports you through the day, with help at night when it is planned, so you can stay where you feel most yourself. It suits many people who need help at different points in the day, including people living with dementia and couples. In England it is priced by the week and is often comparable to a care home place; with Day and Nightcare it starts from £1,550 a week.

Full guide: **www.dayandnightcare.co.uk/guides/what-is-live-in-care-guide/**

Types of care at home: live-in, visiting, night and respite care

Care at home ranges from a 30-minute visit to a carer who lives in, and most packages can be mixed and changed as needs change. Visiting care suits people who manage well between visits, live-in care suits people who need help throughout the day, and waking nights or 24-hour shift care suit people who need help through the night. After an illness or a hospital stay, short-term reablement arranged by the council is free for up to six weeks.

Full guide: **www.dayandnightcare.co.uk/guides/types-of-care-at-home/**

Managed or introductory live-in care: what is the difference?

With fully managed live-in care, a CQC-registered provider employs or manages the carer, writes and reviews the care plan, supervises the care and arranges cover. An introductory agency only introduces a self-employed carer: it does not have to register with CQC, and the family directs the care and arranges cover. Introductory care can look cheaper, but the family carries much more of the responsibility and risk.

Full guide: **www.dayandnightcare.co.uk/guides/managed-or-introductory-live-in-care/** · Guide last reviewed 30 October 2026

How to choose a care provider: checklist and questions to ask

Choose a care provider by checking three things: that it is registered with CQC and well rated, that it can show how it will meet this person's needs with consistent, well-trained carers, and that its prices and terms are clear and in writing before care starts. Speak to two or three providers, meet the person who would manage the care, and notice how they treat the person who needs care as well as what they say.

Full guide: **www.dayandnightcare.co.uk/guides/how-to-choose-a-care-provider/**

CQC ratings explained: how to read a care provider's report

The Care Quality Commission (CQC) registers, monitors, inspects and rates health and adult social care services in England, including home care and live-in care providers. It rates services outstanding, good, requires improvement or inadequate, overall and for five key questions: safe, effective, caring, responsive and well-led. Read the full report and check its date, not just the headline rating, and ask the provider about anything that concerns you.

Full guide: **www.dayandnightcare.co.uk/guides/cqc-ratings-explained/**

Care assessments and care plans: what to expect

There are two kinds of care assessment: a free council care needs assessment under the Care Act 2014, which decides whether the council will help, and a provider's own assessment before care starts. Both should lead to a written, person-centred care plan that the person helps to shape, receives a copy of and can change. Care plans should be reviewed after the first few weeks, at least once a year, and whenever needs change.

Full guide: **www.dayandnightcare.co.uk/guides/care-assessment-and-care-plan/**

Care contracts: what to check before you sign

If you pay for your own care, you have a contract with the care provider, and consumer law requires its terms to be clear, fair and available before you agree. Check the price and what it includes, every extra charge, how and when fees can rise, deposits, notice periods, what happens during a hospital stay or after a death, your right to cancel and how to complain. An unfair term is not binding on you.

Full guide: **www.dayandnightcare.co.uk/guides/care-contracts-what-to-check/**

Preparing your home for a live-in carer: a practical checklist

A live-in carer needs a private bedroom with a comfortable bed and somewhere to keep their things, use of a bathroom and the kitchen, and ideally Wi-Fi or a good phone signal. Before the carer arrives, agree food, household money, house rules and the daily break, check equipment and safety, and tell your home insurer. Then allow time: the first few weeks are about getting to know each other.

Full guide: **www.dayandnightcare.co.uk/guides/preparing-your-home-for-a-live-in-carer/**

A day with a live-in carer: what live-in care looks like

With live-in care, the day follows the person's own routine: a gentle start, personal care, meals, company, outings and a settled evening, with a carer close by throughout. The carer takes a daily break, sleeps in their own room and helps occasionally at night, and keeps a daily record of the care. The day described here is imagined, to show how live-in care can feel; real care is always planned around the individual.

Full guide: **www.dayandnightcare.co.uk/guides/a-day-with-a-live-in-carer/**

Live-in care or 24-hour care: which does your family need?

One live-in carer is usually enough when the person sleeps most nights and needs only occasional help after bedtime. When help is needed regularly through the night, or two people are needed to move someone safely, a live-in carer plus a waking night carer, two live-in carers, or 24-hour care with carers working in shifts is safer. A two-week night diary is the most reliable way to tell which is needed.

Full guide: **www.dayandnightcare.co.uk/guides/live-in-care-or-24-hour-care/**

When a care home may be the right choice: an honest guide

A care or nursing home may suit better than care at home when someone needs a nurse on hand day and night, needs two carers for most tasks around the clock, has no room or suitable home for a live-in carer, or would be happier with company around them. Choosing a care home is not giving up: for some people it brings safety, friendship and rest for the whole family. Whenever the person can decide, the choice is theirs.

Full guide: **www.dayandnightcare.co.uk/guides/when-a-care-home-may-be-the-right-choice/**

What a live-in carer can and cannot do: a clear guide

A trained live-in carer can help with personal care, moving around, meals, housework connected with the person's care, company, outings and medicines, from reminders to giving each dose and recording it, as the care plan sets out. Some healthcare tasks, such as insulin injections or some catheter care, can be done by a carer only when a nurse or other health professional delegates the task and makes sure the carer is trained. Clinical decisions and nursing care, such as managing a syringe driver, stay with the district nurses, GP and other health professionals.

Full guide: **www.dayandnightcare.co.uk/guides/what-a-live-in-carer-can-and-cannot-do/**

Live-in carer breaks, rotas and handovers explained

Live-in carers need a daily break, a proper night's sleep and regular time off, and a good care plan says exactly when each happens and who looks after the person meanwhile. Many providers plan a break of around two hours a day, and carers usually live in for a set period before a regular second carer takes over after a careful handover. Arrangements differ between providers and people, so the written care plan, not a general rule, sets them for each person.

Full guide: **www.dayandnightcare.co.uk/guides/live-in-carer-breaks-and-handovers/**

Arranging care urgently: what to do when care is needed now

When care is needed tomorrow, start with safety: NHS 111, the GP, an NHS urgent community response team and the council's adult social care team, which can meet urgent needs before any assessment, can all act quickly. Private care can sometimes start within a day or two, but it depends on local carers being free, and live-in care also needs a spare room, so put an interim plan in place too. Even in a hurry, check CQC registration, get the care plan, risk assessment and every charge in writing, and leave long-term decisions until things are calmer.

Full guide: **www.dayandnightcare.co.uk/guides/arranging-care-urgently/**

Signs an older person needs more help, and what to do about each

Look for changes rather than single bad days: weight loss, an empty fridge, missed medicines, unopened post, falls, a neglected home, new confusion or withdrawal. Sudden confusion, or a fall with injury, needs urgent medical help the same day. For gradual changes, start with a GP check and a free council needs assessment, and talk with the person about what would help.

Full guide: **www.dayandnightcare.co.uk/guides/signs-an-older-person-needs-more-help/**

Living well with a live-in carer: house rules, privacy and trust

Living well with a live-in carer comes down to three things agreed early and reviewed often: clear house rules that respect the person's home and the carer's time off, privacy for everyone, and honest, kind communication. Write the main points down, tell your home insurer, keep money arrangements simple and transparent, and raise small problems with the provider before they grow.

Full guide: **www.dayandnightcare.co.uk/guides/living-well-with-a-live-in-carer/**

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