



# Helping someone home from hospital

## What you need to know



Working together for Essex

Action for Family Carers, Carers First, Carers UK,  
Essex Carers Support, Essex Wellbeing Service,  
NHS, Mobilise.

# You're not alone: support before and after hospital discharge

If you support a family member, friend or neighbour who couldn't manage without your help, you're not alone - and support is available.

Whether you've been supporting someone for a while or not, we are here to help while the person you look after is in hospital and after they return home.

Anyone of any age who provides unpaid care to someone with a disability, illness, long-term condition, or age-related need is recognised as offering essential support. You have rights, and you deserve to be involved and supported.

▶ This leaflet offers practical information, guidance, and helpful prompts to support you through the hospital discharge process and beyond.

## Your right to be involved:

You likely know the person you support best of all. If they agree, you have a legal right to be involved in decisions about their care and discharge from hospital. Please let a hospital staff member know you are a carer so that you are involved as early as possible.

If the person you look after will need support after leaving hospital, you should be involved in the discharge planning as early as possible. This helps make sure you feel confident and prepared to look after them safely once they're home.



## Caring is your choice

Taking on caring responsibilities is a personal decision. You should not feel pressured to start or continue caring for someone. If you're unable to look after someone, other arrangements should be made to ensure the person you support is safe and well after leaving hospital.

Support is available to help you explore your options and make the right decision for both of you. If you are unsure, speak to a hospital staff member or contact one of the support services listed in this leaflet.

## Before leaving hospital – what to check

Use this checklist to help make sure everything is ready before the person you look after leaves hospital. Not every item will apply to every situation, but this will guide you through what might need to be considered.

**Discharge Summary of Care Plan** – A written summary of what will happen next, including any support or follow-up care required.

☐

**Clothing and belongings** – suitable clothes, keys, personal items and a bag.

☐

**Medication** – Do they have their medicines and know when/how to take them, and how to get more?

☐

**Appointments** – Details of any follow-up appointments or check-ups.

☐

**Assessments** – Should you ask about care assessments for the person you care for, and a carer's assessment for yourself? See further help section for more information on who to contact.

☐

**Transport** – How will the person you look after get home safely? Will there be someone available to settle them back home?

☐

**Equipment** – Are any aids or adaptations needed at home (e.g. walking frame, grab rails)?

☐

**Contacts** – Who should be contacted for medical advice if needed after leaving hospital?

☐

## Once home or in a care setting – what to prepare

**Support network** – Do family, friends and relevant professionals know what is needed and how they can help? Is there a new or revised Care Plan to share? ☐

**Home safety** – Is the home safe and easy to move around in? ☐

**Care services** – If being used, have you asked who will be visiting, when they will be coming and what help they'll be providing? ☐

**Diet and nutrition** – Are you aware of any special dietary needs or food preferences? ☐

**Health monitoring** – Do you know what signs to look out for that may need medical attention? ☐

**Emergency contacts** – Keep important phone numbers somewhere easy to find. ☐



## Further help

If you're unsure about anything, you're not alone, support is available. If you're outside the Essex County Council area, please contact your local council for support.

### Local carer support organisations

These organisations offer free, local support - helping you with practical advice, emotional wellbeing, and ways to connect with others in similar situations.

#### Action for Family Carers/Essex Carers Support

(Harlow, Uttlesford, Epping Forest, Colchester, Tendring)

**T 0300 770 8090** | **W** [affc.org.uk](http://affc.org.uk)

#### Carers First

(Braintree, Chelmsford, Maldon, Rochford, Castle Point, Basildon, Brentwood)

**T 0300 303 1555** | **W** [carersfirst.org.uk/essex](http://carersfirst.org.uk/essex)

#### Mobilise

Mobilise provides free online support services for unpaid carers in Essex.

**W** <https://support.mobiliseonline.co.uk/essex>

### Essex County Council

#### Carers Assessment

A Carer Assessment is a chance to let your local council or NHS Trust know how your caring responsibilities affect you physically and emotionally. They will use the assessment to find out what support you need, whether you're willing or able to carry on caring, what you want to achieve in your daily life and how you can be supported in fulfilling this.

**T 0345 603 7630** | **E** [socialcaredirect@essex.gov.uk](mailto:socialcaredirect@essex.gov.uk)

## **Essex County Council – continued**

### **Emergency planning for carers**

Creating an emergency plan can give you peace of mind and ensure that others know what to do if you're ever unable to look after the person you support. You can register your emergency plan with Essex County Council, who may be able to assist in an emergency.

### **Care technology service**

Care technology refers to technological solutions designed to improve the quality of care services. Some devices to help with safety and independence (e.g. fall detectors, medication reminders) are available for free if you are eligible.

### **Reablement Care**

Short-term help to support recovery and independence for those who are eligible.

**T 0345 603 7630 | E [socialcaredirect@essex.gov.uk](mailto:socialcaredirect@essex.gov.uk)**

## **Digital resources to help you through hospital discharge**

### **Carers UK**

Carers UK is a national carer support organisation, they provide information and guidance including frequently asked questions and a factsheet relating to leaving hospital.

**W [www.carersuk.org/help-and-advice/practical-support/coming-out-of-hospital](http://www.carersuk.org/help-and-advice/practical-support/coming-out-of-hospital)**

## **NHS Support – Patient Advice and Liaison Service (PALS)**

PALS is a free, confidential NHS service offering support and information. They help resolve concerns about NHS care, provide advice and signposting for health services if you have any concerns or feel you have not been listened to.

Broomfield, Southend, Basildon: **T 0300 443 0330**

Colchester: **T 0800 783 7328**

Princess Alexandra (Harlow): **T 01279 827211**

## **Find local support with Frontline**

Frontline can help you find local health and wellbeing services in your area.

**W** <https://essexfrontline.org.uk>

## **Still need help?**

Unsure where to start? The Essex Wellbeing Service offers advice and will make connections for you to specialist organisations who can help you.

**T 0300 303 9988** | **W** [provide.essexwellbeing@nhs.net](mailto:provide.essexwellbeing@nhs.net)

This information is issued by:  
Adult Social Care

Essex County Council  
County Hall, Chelmsford,  
Essex CM1 1QH

[www.essex.gov.uk](http://www.essex.gov.uk)



[essexcountycouncil](https://www.facebook.com/essexcountycouncil)



[essex\\_cc](https://www.instagram.com/essex_cc)



[Essex County Council](https://www.linkedin.com/company/essex-county-council)



[essex\\_cc](https://twitter.com/essex_cc)



[Essex County Council](https://www.youtube.com/essexcountycouncil)

Stay up to date with the Your Essex e-newsletter.  
For a monthly snapshot of news, events and  
activities across the county, sign up at:

[www.essex.gov.uk/youressex](http://www.essex.gov.uk/youressex)

The information contained in this document  
can be translated and/or made available in  
alternative formats, on request.