

Care Homes for the Armed Forces Community

Resident's Handbook

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ROYAL BRITISH LEGION



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The Royal British Legion

We are at the heart of a national network that supports our Armed Forces community through thick and thin – making sure your unique contribution is never forgotten. We've been here since 1921, and we'll be here as long as you need us.

We are the country's largest Armed Forces charity, with 210,000 members, 50,000 volunteers and a network of partners and charities that help us give support wherever and whenever it's needed.

We support serving members of the Royal Navy and Royal Marines, British Army, Royal Air Force, Reservists, veterans and their families.

We help veterans, young and old, make the switch to civilian life. We help people find employment, help with financial issues, provide respite or lifelong care if needed, and help people recover and live independently.

From sports and arts-based rehabilitation courses to tailored personal support – we're by veterans' sides, every step of the way.

We provide nursing services through our six care homes, which we run just for ex-service men and women and their dependants.

We provide a wide range of help to a wide range of people. (For more details, please see our statement of purpose, which you can read in the reception area of your care home.)

Our organisation has grown and developed over the years to meet the changing and diverse needs of the people we help.



Our board of trustees heads up our decision-making arm. The board is made up of elected and appointed members who decide our policy. The board holds an annual conference and is advised by various committees and subcommittees across the organisation.

The Director General heads each division of our organisation and, through the directors of each division, makes sure our policy is carried out.

The Head of Operations (Care Homes) reports to the Director of Care Services and Recovery, who reports to the Executive Director of Services and, ultimately, the Director General.

You can read more about us and our history in our statement of purpose, which is available in the reception area of your care home. Ask the receptionist if you can't find it. Please return the statement to reception when you have finished with it so other people can read it too. You can also ask us for a copy of the statement if you would like one to keep.

Personal possessions

When you first come to live at the home, all the personal possessions you bring with you must be recorded on the possessions form in your care plan. If you do not want to tell us about all your belongings for us to record their value, make a note of this on the form and tell the Home Manager.

Please tell us if you bring any new items of value into the home after you move in, or if any of the possessions listed on your form are removed from your room and taken home for safekeeping, so that we can update our records.

Personal items such as glasses, dentures and hearing aids should be labelled with your name to help make sure you don't lose them when you take them out of your room. If your family can't label your personal items, please tell a member of staff and they will do it for you.

If you have any concerns about the equipment or contents in your room, or damage to your personal possessions or anything else in your room, please tell the Home Manager so we can take appropriate action.

The administration office in your home has a safe which can hold a limited number of valuables. Ask the Home Manager if you want to keep any of your valuables in the safe. If they agree to this, they will keep a record of the items we are storing for you.

If any valuable personal item goes missing, and is not found following a thorough search of your room and the shared areas in the home, you must report this to the Home Manager immediately.

All your clothes must be labelled with your name. The Head of Housekeeping can give you advice on this.

We cannot wash clothes by hand or have them dry-cleaned. If this applies to any of your clothes, your relatives and representatives will need to arrange this.

Tell the Home Manager if any of your laundry is lost or damaged. Depending on the circumstances, they may arrange a replacement.

You can bring furniture into your room as long as the items are in good working order and the Home Manager agrees to this.

Protecting your belongings

We provide limited insurance cover for cash and valuables that you keep in your room. If you have any questions about insurance limits, speak to the home's Business Manager or the Home Manager. You should arrange your own personal insurance for valuable items that are worth more than our insurance limits.

We recommend that you do not bring expensive personal items into the home.

Possible extra insurance costs

We do not provide the following insurance, so you will need to arrange these separately if necessary.

- Insurance for items that are worth more than our insurance limits.
- Mobility scooter insurance.



Pets in our care homes

Bringing your own pet to live in the home

If you want to bring your own pet to live with you at the home, speak to the Home Manager. They will decide whether you can do this.

We may look at the following when deciding whether to allow you to bring your pet to live at the home.

- The effect on your health and well-being if we don't allow you to bring your pet.
- The effect on other people (including staff), and their safety, if we do allow you to bring your pet.
- Whether other residents and their families agree to you having your pet in the home.
- Whether you can manage to look after your pet independently. For example, can you walk or exercise it, groom it, feed it and clean up after it? How would you manage if it became ill? Would you be able to afford vets' bills?
- Any extra costs to the home.
- Whether staff agree to help you care for your pet. It is not in our staff's contracts to manage pets, so if they agree to do this, they must do so in their own time and must make sure it doesn't take them away from managing other residents' needs.
- What plans could be put in place if you cannot look after your pet because your circumstances change.



Most of our care homes have pets, including cats, rabbits, fish and even a pair of goats.

Visitors' pets in the home

Your visitors are welcome to bring your or their pets to see you. The pets must be kept under control at all times, and their vaccinations must be up to date.

If your visitor wants to take a pet to meet other residents in the home, the Home Manager should make sure the other residents agree to this. The Home Manager will tell your visitor where in the home they are allowed to take the pet. Your visitor will also need to confirm that the pet is friendly and that there is a low risk of harm to other people.

Pet owners can exercise their pets in the grounds of the home, but must pick up after them. We will tell owners how to dispose of the waste safely.

Complaints and openness

Complaints

We are committed to providing safe and high-quality services.

If you are not satisfied with a service you have received, it is important that you let us know. You, your family and our stakeholders (people with an interest in our organisation) don't need to worry about complaining to us.

When we receive a complaint, a person with the appropriate level of seniority and expertise will investigate and respond fairly, openly and without delay.

Please ask for a copy of our complaints policy.

Openness

It is our policy to be honest and open with you. If things go wrong with your care or the way we treat you, we will give you (and other relevant people) support, honest information and a written apology.

There are risks associated with health and social care services. Service users, families and carers usually understand this and want to know that if there is an incident that affects someone's safety, the organisation involved will make every effort to put things right and to prevent similar incidents from happening again to other people.

We will be honest and open at all levels within our organisation and will make sure we have systems in place so that people can report safety incidents, and we can let the relevant people know as soon as possible about any incidents that happen in our care homes.



Giving notice

Your health and well-being is our main concern. If you decide you want to leave our care home we would like to talk to you to find out why. However, it is entirely up to you whether you tell us why you are leaving.

If the NHS or your local authority pay for your care, we will need to speak to them to make sure they support your decision and to deal with any concerns you or they may have.

Please see your care home agreement for information about how to give us notice if you want to leave (for example, how much notice you need to give, who to give it to, and what happens about your personal possessions and any fees you have paid). If you are not sure about anything, you can ask a senior member of staff or get personal or professional advice.

We ask you to give us formal notice if you want to end your agreement with us. This is to make sure we are all clear about the arrangements for you leaving the home.

The notice you have to give to end the agreement will not be longer than the notice we would give you to end it.



Planning your care

Your care plan is a document that tries to find out as much about you as a person as it does about your physical and health needs and personal preferences. By asking for this information we hope to create a plan that directs how we meet your needs and choices and how we can support you and help you to live a fulfilling life. We will involve you and your relatives in creating your care plan when you first move into the home. This can be a time-consuming process but it is worth the effort.

We provide 'person-centred' care which we tailor to meet the unique needs of each person. We ask your relatives and friends to take the time to help us to gather information about your values, beliefs and history, as well as your physical and behavioural needs.

A named member of staff will review your care plan every month, and every year we will invite you to a more formal review of your plan. We will also measure your satisfaction with your care through our 'resident of the week' care review process.

We will invite other people to these reviews if they may need to be involved, or if you want them to be involved.

You have the right to see any information we hold about you. You can ask to see your care plan at any time. Please ask your named nurse or key worker to help you if you are not able to work the digitally coded box that stores the care plan in your room. If you can manage the box, we will give you the code so that you can open it at any time.

You can ask us to change your care plan at any time if you feel the care or service we are providing is not meeting your needs or choices. Please discuss this with your named nurse or key worker. Or, if you prefer, you can discuss this with the Deputy Manager.



Your relatives can only access your care plan with your permission or if they hold a power of attorney covering health and welfare.

Nursing and care staff involved in providing your care will need continuous access to your care plan. Your GP, district nurse, social worker or any other health and social care professional involved in your care will also need access.

If your mental capacity deteriorates between reviews, we will consult your family and representatives to work out the best way to meet your needs and act in your best interests. If necessary the Home Manager will arrange for a multi-disciplinary team (one made up of professionals from various health and social care departments) to review your care plan.

Health and well-being appointments

GP appointments

When you move into the home, you will be registered with the local GP practice and we will help you to arrange and attend appointments. Please speak to a member of staff for more details.

If you are receiving residential care, we expect you to go to your GP's surgery for routine visits. If you are too ill to go to your GP's surgery, we will organise a home visit. If there are any changes to your prescribed medication, or if you are diagnosed with any new conditions, please tell the Home Manager or the Deputy Manager so they can provide the care you need.

Emergency care

If you have an accident, we will assess any injury you have suffered and either call an emergency ambulance and contact your relatives so they can make their way to the hospital, or take you to the local A&E so the hospital staff can decide what treatment you need.

Other health and well-being services

We strongly recommend that you have regular appointments with your dentist and optician, and we will help you to arrange these.

Please speak to a member of staff about any other services you need, including chiropody and physiotherapy.

A hairdresser visits the home regularly. Please talk to a member of staff about appointments and charges.

You can continue to access any private holistic or complementary therapies that you attended before coming to live in the home, but please let a member of staff know about these so they can check for any possible interactions with your medicines.



Mobility aids

If you have an electric powered wheelchair or scooter, you must arrange your own insurance. We recommend that you take out cover for third-party accident and breakdown. You must give us a copy of the current insurance certificate for filing in the administration office. You are also responsible for any maintenance and repairs that your electric wheelchair or scooter needs.

If our physiotherapist assesses that you need a wheelchair, they will refer you to NHS wheelchair services for the appropriate chair. The NHS will maintain and service any mobility equipment they provide.

If you use a scooter or electric wheelchair, please remember that there are frail elderly people walking in the corridors. Please watch your speed and always take care when going round corners.





Transport

Our homes have their own transport that is insured and equipped to carry disabled passengers.

If you have a hospital appointment we will expect you to use the hospital ambulance service. We can only provide a member of staff to go with you to a hospital appointment, or to the dentist, chiropodist or optician, if you have no family member or representative available to take you. Whether we can provide a member of staff to go with you will depend on your needs and the availability of staff.

Although we try to provide a member of staff to go with you to appointments, we cannot always guarantee this, and it will depend on staff availability. We ask that your relatives and friends help by taking you to medical appointments and on personal social outings whenever possible.

Please speak to a member of staff if you would like them to give you phone numbers for local taxi companies you can use. You would have to pay for any taxi you arrange.

Your visitors may be able to park in the grounds of the home, but please check with reception beforehand. Vehicles are left at the owner's risk.

Please also speak to staff at the home if you have your own vehicle you would like to bring.



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