Fundamentals of Care

Do you receive care?
Do you know what to expect?
Do you provide care?

Quality of care for adults
Foreword by Jane Hutt, Minister for Health and Social Services

The twelve aspects of care described in this booklet draw together, for the first time, guidance on the quality of care you may expect from health and social care providers in Wales.

I know from talking to those of you who use these services, that you are as interested in the way care is given as in its outcome. I also recognise that quality of care often varies. This guidance will help ensure that the fundamental quality of care you receive is the same, wherever you are in Wales.

I am pleased to commend this booklet to you and look forward to it being widely read and used. I would encourage those of you who receive care, now or in the future, to refer to it, when you wish to compliment staff on good service or when seeking improvements.

Jane Hutt AM
Minister for Health and Social Services
Are you an adult receiving care?

If so, this booklet will explain the care you may expect from those employed to provide care.

Are you employed to provide care?

This booklet explains the quality of care you should be providing.

Are you a Carer assisting a friend, neighbour or relative?

You may find the information which follows provides you with useful advice on helping the person you look after or in assisting them to receive the care they may need from employed staff.
What to expect or provide in...

- the home
- a care home
- a hospital
- any environment where adults are cared for.

If you believe that care falls short of that recommended in this booklet, then you can make your views known. See page 18 for advice on how to do this. If any shortcomings are identified, then steps can usually be taken to achieve improvement.

Most of the sections relate to the provision of care in any setting, but some will be less relevant in a person’s own home.

Whether you receive or provide care, to gain maximum benefit, you will need to read every section. Issues such as respect, independence, communication and choice are important in every situation.

Making life better...

- Communication and information
- Respecting people
- Ensuring safety
- Promoting independence
- Relationships
- Rest and sleep
- Ensuring comfort, alleviating pain
- Personal hygiene, appearance and foot care
- Eating and drinking
- Oral health and hygiene
- Toilet needs
- Preventing pressure sores
Communication and information

You will receive full information about your care in a language and manner sensitive to your needs.

- Your health, personal and social care needs will be assessed and set out in a regularly reviewed plan of care. This will be agreed by you and the people caring for you. The plan will only be shared with others with your consent.

- If you have speaking, sight or hearing difficulties, special needs or learning disabilities, you will be provided with appropriate assistance or specialist aids.

- If necessary, you will be provided with access to a translator or a member of staff with appropriate language skills.

- You will be consulted about any treatment and care you are to receive. A suitably knowledgeable person will explain treatment or care options so that you can make informed choices. Your consent or refusal will be clearly and accurately recorded.

- Your personal records will be regularly updated and available to you. To ensure confidentiality, they will be kept secure and comply with the Data Protection Act 1998.

- The person providing or organising your care will take time to listen and actively respond to any questions and concerns you or your relatives may have.

- You will be given information explaining how to comment on your care or make a complaint. You can also request information on how to obtain independent advice and support.
Respecting people

Your human rights to dignity, privacy and informed choice will be protected at all times, and the care provided will take account of your individual needs, abilities and wishes.

- You will be treated with respect, courtesy and politeness.
- You will be able to access free and independent advice so that you can make choices about your care and lifestyle.
- You will be addressed by your preferred name.
- Confidentiality and privacy will be respected as far as possible, especially in hospital wards, public spaces and reception areas.
- Your mail will be given to you unopened unless you request otherwise.
- Your feelings, needs and problems will be actively listened to, acknowledged and respected.
- Information and care will always be provided with compassion and sensitivity.
- Your spiritual and cultural needs and practices will be acknowledged and respected.
Ensuring safety

Your health, safety and welfare will be actively promoted and protected. Risks will be identified, monitored and where possible, reduced or prevented.

- You will receive support free from abuse, neglect and inappropriate care.
- You will be protected against verbal, physical, sexual and financial abuse.
- Your environment will be clean, properly maintained, safe and secure. Your independence and personal choice will be respected.
- Equipment will be clean, properly maintained and stored safely.
- You will be assessed for risk to your own safety and that of others. A plan for managing the risk will be agreed between yourself and the person caring for you.
- The person caring for you will receive appropriate information, training and supervision to ensure you and your carer’s safety.
- You will be encouraged to develop or maintain the level of independence you want, striking a responsible balance between risk and safety.
- You will be able to summon help easily at all times, using a telephone, bell or other convenient means.
Promoting independence

The care you receive will respect your choices in making the most of your ability and desire to care for yourself.

- The person caring for you will have time to support and encourage you to care for yourself.

- Ongoing assessment, involving all those relevant to your care, will form the basis of your plan of activities and care. This will take account of your personal requirements, strengths, abilities and potential.

- Where possible you will be shown different ways of doing things to help you be independent.

- If appropriate, you will be offered equipment to help you walk, move, eat, hear and see. This equipment will be well maintained.

- Equipment provided specifically for you will be kept for your own use.

- To promote your independence and ability to care for yourself, your environment will be made as accessible, comfortable and safe as possible, in accordance with your wishes.

- You will be encouraged to be active, through work, taking appropriate exercise and/or recreation as far as your condition allows.
Relationships

You will be encouraged to maintain your involvement with family and friends and to develop relationships with others, according to your wishes.

- You will be able to receive visitors within reasonable hours provided you are sensitive to the needs of others.

- A comfortable area such as a visitors’ room will be available for private telephone calls or to spend time with relatives and friends.

- You will be encouraged and enabled to be part of the community.

- You will decide on how much your family and any informal carers are involved in your care.

- Arrangements will be made to ensure a close relative or friend can stay overnight if you become critically ill\(^1\).

- You will be offered support with verbal and written communication, particularly if separated from family and friends in your home culture or country of origin\(^2\).

- You will be put in touch with relevant voluntary organisations if you would like them to provide a visiting service.

- You will be able to discuss your sexual health needs and supported in planning to meet those needs.

\(^1\) Arrangements only (and not reimbursement)

\(^2\) This does not include the cost of postage and phone calls
Rest and sleep

Consideration will be given to your environment and comfort so that you may rest and sleep.

- The person providing your care will do their best to minimise noise and to control levels of heat, light and ventilation to help you sleep at night.

- Televisions and radios in shared sleeping areas will have earphones to enable individual listening.

- Waking, sleeping and resting times will be as flexible as possible to meet your needs and preferences.

- Where beds and bedding are provided, efforts will be made to ensure your comfort.

- If your sleep is disturbed, you will be made comfortable and offered the support you need.
Ensuring comfort, alleviating pain

You will be helped to be as comfortable and pain free as your condition and circumstances allow.

- You will be encouraged and given the opportunity to express pain, discomfort or emotional distress with support or assistance offered promptly.

- If you need special aids or equipment in order to maintain a comfortable position, these will be provided and you will be helped to use them correctly.

- Your level of discomfort, pain or distress will be assessed. A plan for controlling or relieving your pain or distress will be agreed, taking into account your preferences.

- You will have access to a range of appropriate pain relieving therapies and drugs in accordance with an assessment of your needs.

- Specialist advice will be sought if your symptoms or emotional distress are not controlled or relieved.
Personal hygiene, appearance and foot care

You will be supported to be as independent as possible in taking care of your personal hygiene, appearance and feet.

- Your personal hygiene, appearance and foot care will be discussed with you and any assistance will be based on your needs.

- You will be helped as necessary to keep your feet comfortable to enable you to be as mobile and independent as possible.

- Facilities and equipment for all aspects of personal hygiene and appearance will be accessible, clean and well maintained.

- Wash bowls and towels will be provided for your personal use, as necessary. Toiletries will be provided to meet any short-term needs.

- Care will be discreet and sensitive, ensuring privacy.

- You will be referred to a State Registered Podiatrist/Chiropodist for assessment if you have a condition or illness which may require specialist foot care. A plan of care will be agreed with you and your carer.

- You will be encouraged and helped to select, purchase and wear your own clothes and shoes.

- Arrangements can be made for your clothes to be laundered and maintained.

3 This includes washing, shaving, bathing and use of make-up, care of hair and nails, dressing and undressing.
Eating and drinking

You will be offered a choice of food and drink that meets your nutritional and personal requirements and provided with any assistance that you need to eat and drink.

- Your nutritional needs and physical ability to eat and drink will be regularly assessed. If necessary, you will be provided with specialist advice and support.

- You will be encouraged to eat nutritious, varied, balanced meals hygienically prepared and served at regular times.

- Your food and drink will be served in an acceptable setting. They will be at the right temperature and attractively presented.

- You will be offered food if you miss a meal, and/or you will be able to access snacks and drinks at any time.

- Fresh drinking water will be available to you at all times, except when restrictions are required as part of your treatment.

- You will be provided with any special diets in accordance with your medical needs.

- If eating and/or drinking cause you difficulties, you will receive assistance, encouragement and appropriate aids or support.
Oral health and hygiene

You will be supported to maintain a healthy, comfortable mouth and pain-free teeth and gums, enabling you to eat well and prevent related problems.

- Following assessment, a plan of care to keep your mouth healthy and comfortable will be agreed with you.

- You will be encouraged and helped to care for your mouth with all procedures and routines explained in advance and support available when needed.

- A toothbrush and toothpaste or denture brush and bowl will be provided to meet any short term needs.

- If appropriate, you will be able to have your dentures identified with your name in case they are lost and they will be stored safely when not in use.

- If you have no teeth or dentures, you will still receive support to ensure your mouth is comfortable and healthy.

- If you have any specific problems with your mouth, teeth, dentures or gums, arrangements will be made for you to see a dentist, if necessary in your own home.

- You will be offered appropriate check-up appointments with a dentist in accordance with your needs.
Toilet needs

Appropriate, discreet and prompt assistance will be provided as necessary, taking into account your specific needs and privacy.

- Your need for assistance to get to or use the toilet will be assessed and if appropriate you will be enabled to use the toilet (or commode) independently.

- If you have difficulty in controlling your bladder or bowel functions, you will be offered assessment by a professional health worker and a plan of care agreed.

- Toilet facilities will be clean and appropriately equipped with toilet paper, soap and fresh hand towels.

- Toilet facilities shared by others will have clear signs and provide privacy.

- If required, you will be helped to manage your bladder and bowel functions with privacy and dignity, maintaining your continence and giving you as much independence as possible.

- If needed, you will be aware of and have easy access to the methods for calling assistance.

- Body waste will be hygienically disposed of promptly, appropriately and with sensitivity.

- You will have access to hand washing facilities after using the toilet or equivalent equipment e.g. commode.
Preventing pressure sores

You will be helped to look after your skin and every effort will be made to prevent you from developing pressure sores.

Note: a pressure sore is the breakdown of the skin and underlying tissue which occurs, usually over bony areas such as the buttocks, heels, shoulders, and elbows, as a result of unrelieved pressure or friction.

- You will be assessed for risk of pressure sores and if considered at risk, will receive further assessment by a registered nurse and a plan of care will be drawn up.

- You will be made aware of the risks of pressure sores and shown ways of preventing them. You and the person caring for you will be encouraged and advised on appropriate care procedures.
Appropriate beds, chairs and other equipment will be made available to reduce the risk of pressure sores. More specialist preventative equipment such as special mattresses and cushions will also be available if necessary. All equipment will be clean and properly maintained.

Correct moving techniques will be encouraged, including regular turning and appropriate self-care, helping you to avoid pressures sores, increasing your well-being, your independence and dignity.

If at risk, your skin will be checked at least once daily, preferably when attending to your personal hygiene.

If you already have a pressure sore, you will have access to advice from a registered nurse. This will include assessment and a plan of care based on recognised best practice.
What do we expect from you?

We would like you to:

- Treat the person caring for you and other service users with courtesy and politeness.
- Explain what you want to achieve through your care.
- Work in partnership with staff to fulfil the requirements you agreed in your plan of care.
- Make use of and look after any equipment provided for you and return it when you have finished using it.
- Ask for any other help you need if not covered in your plan of care.
- Ensure the person caring for you is aware of any cultural or religious matters relevant to your care.
- Inform the person caring for you if you are going to be unavailable for a visit or an appointment.
- Be as responsible as you can for your own safety and that of others.
Would you like to know more?

A document to guide staff on the use of Fundamentals of Care is available free from NHS Direct Wales on

0845 46 47

www.nhsdirect.wales.nhs.uk
or for an electronic version access the Welsh Assembly Government website at:
www.wales.gov.uk/subihealth/content/booklet-e.pdf

Useful points of contact:

Association of Welsh Community Health Councils
Tel. 029 2023 5558

Care Council of Wales
Tel. 029 2022 6257

Patients Association
Tel. 020 8423 9111

Information for Carers (if you are providing care for a relative, friend or neighbour) See Carer’s Assessment Leaflet
www.wales.gov.uk/subisocialcarers/

Carers National Association
Tel. 029 2081 1370
If you are unsure about any aspect of your care, have a concern or complaint or want to comment on the good quality of your care:

- talk to the person providing your care, who will take time to listen and actively respond

or you can consider the following:

- talk or write to the manager of the service
- contact your Community Health Council. You can find out about your local office from the Association of Community Health Councils in Wales
  Tel. 029 2023 5558
- contact the Social Services Department at your local County Council
- contact Care Standards Inspectorate Wales
  Tel. 01443 848451.

This booklet is available in the following languages: Arabic, Bengali, Chinese, English, Gujerati, Hindi, Punjabi, Urdu and Somali.

A Braille version and an audio tape version of this booklet are also available.

For more information please contact 029 2082 6556

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