

Care Partners



**WE ALL
MUST DO IT
TO GET
THROUGH IT**



**KEEP
DISTANCE**



**WEAR FACE
COVERING**



**WASH
HANDS**

What is a Care Partner?

Care Partner arrangements are in addition to the normal visiting arrangements as defined in the Visiting With Care – A Pathway guidance. It is important to highlight that having a Care Partner arrangement put in place should not be viewed as simply another opportunity to visit - a Care Partner supports their relative with an identified need such as encouraging them to eat and drink.

A Care Partner is a defined practical role to provide additional support to Care Home residents. **Care Partner arrangements are not for everyone.** A Care Partner is complementary to the care delivered by the staff in the Care Home. It is individualised and tailored to the needs of the resident. A Care Partner will normally be a close family member or friend who has a long standing relationship with a resident and plays an essential role on a regular basis on maintaining a resident's health and wellbeing.

How can I become a Care Partner?

It is important that the resident, relative and Care Home manager discuss the benefits of a Care Partner arrangement. The Care Home manager will support you and your relative to establish the Care Partner arrangement. The Care Home Manager should explore with you the care required for your relative and how to safely manage any risks associated with the role.

What can I expect as a Care Partner?

It is important to recognise the role of the Care Partner is more than visiting the resident and therefore there are very important arrangements you will need to follow to ensure the safety of you, your relative, other residents, staff and the wider Care Home community.

1. The Care Home Manager will undertake a Risk Assessment before you can become a Care Partner. In partnership with you & the resident this assessment will identify infection control risks, safety measures and training needs to ensure everyone is safe.
2. A Care Partner may be required to undertake a regular COVID-19 test to reduce the risk of transmission in the Care Home. **Although testing provides some level of reassurance all other measures to reduce the risk of transmission must also be followed.**
3. You will be required to agree a plan in relation to the Care Partner arrangement in order that expectations are clear, understood by you and the Care Home, and to ensure safety.
4. You will be required to agree the frequency and how long each Care Partner session will be. This requires consideration of the whole Care Home. If for any reason you are unable to attend it is important you inform the Care Home at the earliest opportunity.

5. You are required to adhere to social distancing arrangement throughout the Care Home (with exception of any tasks to support your relative), to wash your hands when required and on entering and exiting the premises. Hand sanitising will be available and is in addition to washing your hands.
6. Your Care Partner visits should be confined to the resident's own room as far as possible.
7. You must only enter and exit the Care Home through an agreed route and only meet with your relative in the designated location. If you require any assistance staff will be available to help you.
8. You are required to wear appropriate Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) for the period of time you are in the Care Home. This includes safely putting and taking off (sometimes referred to as Donning & Doffing) PPE. The Care Home will provide training on this process or you can access free training on <https://youtu.be/9PCqT3aS8d8>
9. You should not bring in food or treats to the resident. You should only bring items the resident needs and these should be identified to staff on arrival.
10. It is important to look after yourself and to be sure that you are well enough to take on this role. Being a Care Partner is rewarding however it can be an additional pressure on you and your family so if possible you can share the role with another family member; however only one Care Partner can attend at any given session. **Children under 18 are not considered appropriate as Care Partners.**
11. You will be required to advise the Care Home if you have developed any signs or symptoms of COVID-19; If you feel unwell you should not attend the Care Home and seek further guidance if you need to isolate. You may be asked to complete a survey on each visit. This may include recording your temperature to provide assurance you are well.

When There Is An Outbreak

When the Care Home is experiencing an outbreak situation, given that routine testing of care partners is in place, if you are infection free you can continue with care partner arrangements. However, you must consider the risks associated with visiting a care home experiencing an outbreak, and the potential for you becoming infected.

All care partners must understand that their presence in Care Homes increases their relative/friend's person to person contacts and as such must be considered an increased risk to the resident in this pandemic period.

All Care Partner arrangements should be regularly reviewed to ensure it is beneficial to all involved. For the most up to date guidance and information go to:

www.health-ni.gov.uk/Covid-19-visiting-guidance

If for any reason you are not happy with the Care Partner arrangement or in relation to a decision regarding a Care Partner for your relative you should first speak to the Care Home Manager. It may be necessary to include in a further conversation the resident's key worker or Social Worker to identify a resolution made in the best interest of the resident and their community in the Care Home.

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