

# Guide to Continuing NHS Health Care

This leaflet provides important information for people who want to know if they, or a relative, or someone they care for, might be eligible for Continuing NHS Health Care.

This leaflet explains what Continuing NHS Health Care is and how eligibility will be determined. It also gives answers to some frequently asked questions and details of where to get more information.

## What is Continuing Care?

The Department of Health defines "Continuing Care" as follows:

"Continuing Care" (or long term care) is a general term that describes the care which people need over an extended period of time, as the result of disability, accident or illness to address both physical and mental health needs. It may require services from the NHS and/or from social care. It can be provided in a range of settings, from an NHS hospital, to a nursing home or residential home, and people's own homes.

**(Department of Health HSSC 2001/015)**

There are 2 levels of continuing care: category 1 and category 2.

### Category 1:

Continuing NHS Health Care is a package of care arranged and funded solely by the NHS. If

someone is eligible, Continuing NHS Health Care can be provided in an NHS hospital, a care home with nursing care, a hospice, NHS contracted beds or, in some instances, at home. This will be funded within available Primary Care Trust (PCT) resources. Continuing NHS Health Care came into effect on 1 April 1996.

### Category 2:

This includes care that is not fully funded by the NHS but is provided by a GP, district nurse and/or other community health services. Individuals in a nursing home are entitled to the Registered Nursing Care Contribution (RNCC) towards care which is provided by a registered nurse.

RNCC was introduced on 1 October 2001 for people funding their own care. NHS payment for RNCC is made directly to the nursing home and should then be passed on to the

client by whichever method the home chooses. From April 2003 Local Authority funded clients became eligible and payment\* is made direct to the Local Authority. In each case the NHS payment forms part of the total weekly fee.

*\*In Surrey this applies only to Surrey County Council clients. The RNCC for clients funded by other Local Authorities is paid to the Nursing Home.*

### **How is eligibility assessed?**

Determining eligibility for Continuing NHS Health Care is based on a multi-disciplinary assessment of an individual's needs. An NHS nurse with specialist training will determine the individual's eligibility for Continuing NHS Care funding.

The individual, and their carer(s) where appropriate, will be involved in the assessment process. The assessment will decide whether the individual's

health care needs meet the eligibility criteria that would entitle him or her to Continuing NHS Health Care.

It is important to remember that simply having a specific condition, for example Alzheimers disease or a stroke, does not mean that someone automatically qualifies for Continuing NHS Health Care. This is because the needs of each individual vary, as does the extent of the nursing or health support that he or she may need.

To be eligible for an assessment for Continuing NHS Health Care that is funded by Surrey or Sussex Primary Care Trusts, the individual must be registered with a GP within a PCT in Surrey or Sussex. Individuals registered with a GP in a PCT outside Surrey and Sussex need to contact their local PCT.

## **What to do if someone does not meet the criteria?**

If an individual does not meet the eligibility criteria for category 1 care, any identified health care needs will still be met by the NHS, normally through local health services. All other needs (e.g. accommodation or social care needs) and requirements will be met within the individual's private means or be subject to a means tested assessment of eligibility for Local Authority or statutory benefits.

Any concerns about the outcome of the assessment should be discussed with the local team that carried it out.

If you think that you, or the person that you are helping to claim for, may be eligible but the local assessment team disagrees, you can ask for the decision to be reconsidered locally. You will be informed when this will happen and invited to provide any new information to support your case.

If the assessment team still find that you or the claimant are not eligible, and you are unhappy with their decision, you can ask for an Independent Review.

To ask for an Independent Review, please write to Surrey and Sussex Strategic Health Authority at the address given at the end of this leaflet.

The following details need to be included:

- the name and address of the individual whose case is to be reviewed
- the name of the organisation and individual who is responsible for the claimant's health care (i.e. Consultant/GP, and Primary Care or Hospital Trust).

Surrey and Sussex Strategic Health Authority will reply with information about how the request for an independent review will be dealt with.

## Frequently asked questions

### What are the eligibility criteria?

The criteria are part of a document that has been developed in line with Department of Health guidance to assist with determining entitlement to Continuing NHS Health Care. Copies are available from the local teams whose contact details are given on the last pages of this leaflet.

### Can anyone request an assessment for Continuing NHS Health Care?

Yes.

### What is the Registered Nursing Care Contribution?

This is a payment made by the NHS towards the costs of an individual's care in a care home that has registered nursing beds and employs registered nurses. (This excludes care homes without nursing beds.) The patient is classified into one of 3 bands according to the level of

their Registered Nursing care needs. The bands are high, medium or low.

### How long does Continuing NHS Health Care or RNCC funding last?

It is not necessarily for life, and health needs will be reviewed as part of an on-going process. If a patient's health needs change then the funding may be reviewed.

### Is there an age limit?

The information in this leaflet applies to adults who are 18 or over.

### What is the difference between health care and social care?

Eligibility for Continuing NHS Health Care is based on an individual having intense or unpredictable or unstable or complex health needs that require NHS support.

Assistance with bathing, eating, getting in or out of bed, personal hygiene etc. are usually considered to be social care needs.

### **What if I am funding my own care and my money is running out or I am finding it difficult to pay?**

A number of organisations can give you advice regarding funding your care including the Citizens Advice Bureau, Social Services and Voluntary Agencies. Age Concern produces helpful fact sheets on this subject.

### **I have heard that some health authorities have not applied the assessment process properly?**

The eligibility criteria for Surrey and Sussex have been agreed as legally compliant, in line with Department of Health guidelines and as "Coughlan compliant" by the solicitors who were involved with Miss Coughlan.

## **Retrospective funding**

### **What if my relative has died?**

He or she may still qualify for a retrospective review. This would be a paper based assessment, involving examination of all clinical notes, including those held by a GP, Nursing Home and Social Services.

### **What is the qualifying period in Surrey and Sussex for a retrospective claim?**

The earliest date from which retrospective claims can be made is April 1996.

### **How long will the assessment take?**

It will be completed as soon as possible, depending on the time it takes to obtain the notes about the individual. The local team will provide regular progress reports.

## Further information and contact details for the local teams:

For further information please speak to your local team or your GP.

For copies of Surrey and Sussex Strategic Health Authority's eligibility criteria please contact your local team at the address below.

### For **Guildford and Waverley PCT, Surrey Heath and Woking PCT, and North Surrey PCT:**

✉ NHS Funded Health Care Team  
The Mill  
Abbey Mill Business Park  
Eashing  
Surrey  
GU7 2QJ  
☎ *Telephone 01483 860038*

### For **Brighton & Hove PCT, Hastings & St Leonards PCT and Bexhill & Rother PCT:**

✉ NHS Funded Care Team  
PO BOX 124  
St Leonards on Sea  
East Sussex  
TN38 9WH  
☎ *Telephone 01424 458227*

### For **Eastbourne Downs PCT:**

✉ NHS Funded Care Team  
Eastbourne Downs PCT  
1 St Annes Rd  
Eastbourne  
East Sussex  
BN21 3UN  
☎ *Telephone 01323 738397*

### For **Adur, Arun and Worthing Teaching PCT:**

✉ Continuing NHS Health  
Care Team  
The Causeway  
Worthing  
West Sussex  
BN12 6BT  
☎ *Telephone 01903 708400*

For **Western Sussex PCT:**

✉ Funded Nursing Care Team  
Arundel District Hospital  
Chichester Road  
Arundel  
West Sussex  
BN18 0AB  
☎ *Telephone 01903 881705*

For **Sussex Downs and Weald PCT:**

✉ 7 Horsted Square  
Bell Brook Industrial Estate  
Uckfield,  
East Sussex  
TN22 1QG  
☎ *Telephone 01825 761300*

For **Crawley PCT, Mid Sussex PCT, and Horsham and Chanctonbury PCT:**

✉ NHS Funded Care Team  
Sheencroft  
10-12 Church Road  
Haywards Heath  
West Sussex  
RH16 3SN  
☎ *Telephone 01444 475700*

For **East Surrey PCT and East Elmbridge and Mid Surrey PCT**

✉ NHS Funded Care Team  
Fitzalan House  
70 High Street  
Ewell  
Surrey  
KT17 1RQ  
☎ *Telephone 0208 393 8526*

**To request an Independent Review, please contact:**

Surrey and Sussex Strategic Health Authority,  
York House, 18-20 Massetts Road, Horley, Surrey, RH6 7DE  
[www.surreysussexsha.nhs.uk](http://www.surreysussexsha.nhs.uk)

**This leaflet came into effect February 2005.**