

# CARING FOR YOUR CARERS



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# CONGRATULATIONS ON HAVING A LIVE IN CARER

*We believe in the work of our industry and take pride in its delivery. Our 30 years' experience lends to an unwavering faith in our ability to provide a safe and secure care service, which is individually tailored and champions independence.*

We recognise that many people new to having live in care may feel concerned about how the relationship between them and their carer works, more specifically they want to know how the domestic arrangements will work.

This whitepaper is designed to offer guidance and assist your journey through the live in care service, smoothing the path and addressing some of the unspoken concerns that you may have with regards to taking on a live in carer.

All recommendations are based on our own experience and opinions. We would always advise you seek professional advice for specific enquiries such as financial assistance.



# CARING FOR OUR CARERS

Having a live in carer proves to be a joy for many people as it opens doors to a new, independent life. Our carers and companions are carefully selected and vetted to ensure they are of a high enough standard and able to deliver an unrivalled live in care provision.

Once selected, we train and develop our staff, ensuring they feel as well looked after as those in their charge. By following a strict induction programme we can be confident of their ability and that you, in turn, are receiving the best care from the best carers. Our methods work as proven by the positive feedback our carers give us and through the longevity of their employment with us.



## WHO IS MY CARER?

Our carers have a particular vocation for the work they do, which means they have a natural aptitude for delivering a person-centered care provision. They are skilled, compassionate workers who understand that one size does not fit all with regards to care and relish the opportunity to build lasting bonds with those they care for.

It is the combination of working compassionately and receiving guidance and training in accordance with regulations that ensures the well-rounded level of care that is delivered.

# WHAT WILL THEY DO?

Bearing in mind that our services are designed to be an alternative to a reliable care home, our staff are trained (amongst many other things) in:

- 🍃 **How to move and position people safely**
- 🍃 **How to produce nutritious meals**
- 🍃 **How to look after people's skin**
- 🍃 **How to recognise if someone is ill and when to call a doctor**



Although fully supported by our management team, our carers are very much the front line in care provision and need to be thoroughly competent in their skills. It is important that their **professionalism is recognised** and all parties acknowledge the specific care duties they have been engaged to deliver.

Why is this relevant? A previous enquiry requested “a girl from the village who just wants a bit of pin money”. Arbour Companions and Care absolutely do not provide this sort of service.

## THE “SHADOW WITHOUT A BODY”

This phrase was coined by one of our carers to explain their presence in the cared-for person's home. Our carers are trained to quietly adapt to their surroundings, maintaining a respectful attitude towards the home they are in. They can be as involved as required, they can sit with the cared-for person or disappear into the background, it is your choice. However, they will only ever deliver the level of care agreed and outlined in the care plan, which is why the initial assessments we carry out are so vital.

# JOINING IN WITH FAMILY

One sized does not fit all when it comes to live in care provisions, which is why we carefully select and assign our carers during the initial assessment stage to ensure it's a good match. Our preference is to keep as much continuity as possible however experience has taught us, to be cautious about encouraging singular, long-term relationships between the carer and their families. It is best for everybody if the cared-for person gets to know two or three carers in preparation for potential changes in circumstances for either the carer or the cared-for person.

In instances where strong bonds are formed, the carer can become almost part of the family and this can result in them taking on duties outside his/her caring responsibilities. This is absolutely fine, so long as everybody understands that it is the carer's choice to do so and it does not become an obligation or burden to the carer. More importantly, it does not interfere with the delivery of the agreed care responsibilities.

## CULTURAL ISSUES

All of our carers speak clear English, with our core staff originating from EU countries such as Poland, Lithuania and Hungary. Many have joined us on the recommendation of their friends and we are thankful for this as they are some of the most talented and caring individuals we've seen during our 30yrs our service to the industry.

We select and retain our staff based on their ability to provide exceptional care and blend into their families. We would not make any generalisation about how individual cultures might behave differently, suffice it to say that we expect all of our staff to demonstrate a strong care and work ethic, behave respectfully, be polite and be well-mannered regardless of their cultural background.



# MEAL TIMES

Dependant on individual preferences, the carers are all able to cook basic English meals and will happily eat the same as the cared-for person. However, it is kind to bear with the staff who may from time to time want to cook something from their own region.

It is a good idea at the beginning of the contract for you to agree with the carer as to whether they eat with you or after they have finished their evening duties. Many prefer to eat after they have finished their work and are happy to organise their own food so feel free to state your personal preference. We expect the contract you have with us to cover the cost of food up to approx. £35 per week.

## WORKING HOURS & BREAKS

At the beginning of your contract, you will agree with the manager exactly how many hours work the carer provides, based on the level of care needed. This will range from between 10 and 12 hours per day. Care work is both physically and emotionally demanding and so our carers value their two hours break. This extends to a 4 hours break once a week if they work a 12 hour day. We insist on this time being protected as it allows the carer to get sufficient rest and also allows them to enjoy some personal time speaking to their friends and families via skype.

Although our carers work flexibly around your daily schedule, the most popular time for them to take their break is between 2 and 4 pm when the cared-for person is also enjoying a rest. This ensures their personal time never impacts on their duty of care. In addition, we do not allow our carers to use their mobile phones and other devises whilst working so any contact with managers and/or their friends and family will be done during their break. It can be quite isolating working on your own in a family so we ask that you are respectful of their time and try not to disturb them during their breaks.





## FRESH AIR & EXERCISE

There is no expectation on our carers to leave the house in the evenings even when they have completed their designated hours – this is the value of live in care. However, if it has been agreed in the care plan that it is safe to leave the cared-for person alone for a short while, then the carer will appreciate being able to go out of the house for his/her break.



## NIGHT AWAKENINGS

Our carers will get up during the night to support their care-for person, sometimes up to twice per night. However we must insist that on these occasions, they are not up for more than an hour and a half overall. If this happens regularly then we will need to discuss how the carer makes up his/her loss of sleep, as clearly any expectation for them to work consistently at night as well as during the day is unrealistic.

## ACCOMMODATION

Our carers generally require little maintenance and are not concerned with the size of their rooms, as long as they are warm and clean. A television in their room is always welcome as is internet access, which enables them to keep in touch with the world. Carers will be self-sufficient, washing their own bed linen weekly. As you would expect, we do not allow our staff to live in an environment that not safe, clean and hygienic.

# LIGHT HOUSEWORK

Our carers are expected to keep the kitchen clean and tidy, washing all dishes as they are used. They will participate in light housework such as:

- 🍃 **Cleaning up after cooking & mealtimes**
- 🍃 **Lightly dust the living areas**
- 🍃 **Keeping the bathrooms clean**
- 🍃 **Removing dead flowers**
- 🍃 **Keep the medication area clean & tidy**
- 🍃 **Keeping your clothes clean and tidy (If you agree)**



However they do not provide a “deep clean” service and this should not be expected as part of their general duties.

# MEDICATION

It is hugely important that the care plan outlines the level of responsibility afforded to the carer with regards to assisting with medication. The carers training enables them to know if the medication needs reviewing, at which point they will either contact the GP directly or ask their manager for advice. They must, by law, follow the instructions of the GP as to which medicines are given, at what time and by what method. Any changes have to be advised in writing by the GP and where tablets are not given, the manager and the GP must be informed of such in writing. There is strictly no “borrowing” of tablets from other people’s stock.



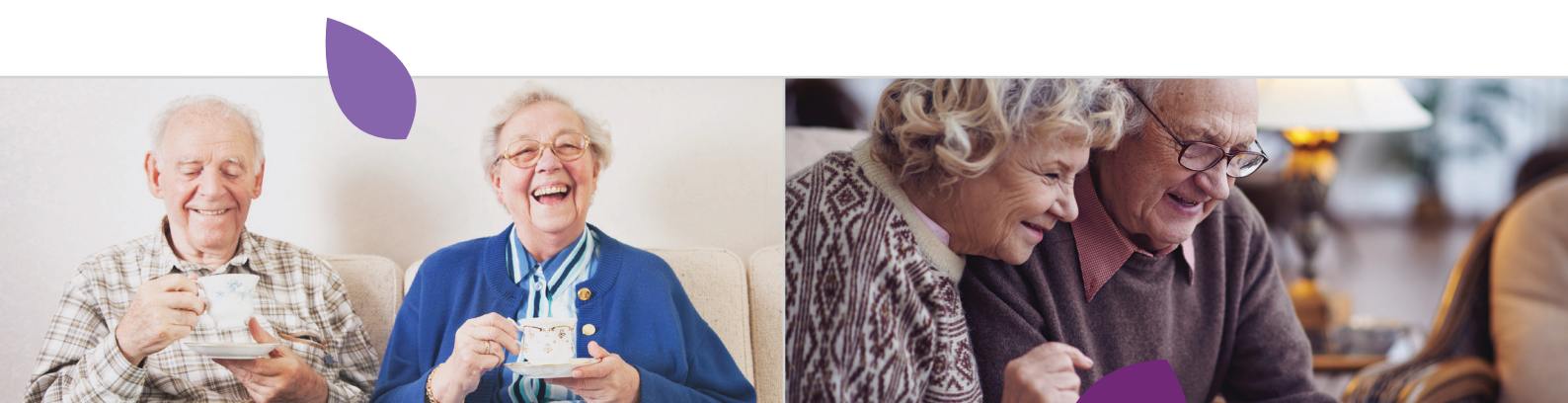
# LIAISON WITH PROFESSIONALS

It has been our experience that the families of the cared-for person very much want to be in charge of their loved one's care and we do encourage this. However on occasion, when a decision has been made by the family that conflicts with what has been agreed in the care plan, the carer can find themselves in a difficult position.

It is their duty of care to ensure best practice and compliance with the agreed care plan and we would hope that this is well understood. Any conflict of opinions can usually be resolved by talking through the problem with the manager. However, by law, a carer is not allowed to do anything that is detrimental, in their view, to the well-being of the care-for person, including not providing care as prescribed by the professional. As a company, we are obliged to seek professional advice on areas outside our immediate expertise and must retain the ability to do just that.

# GOING OUT WITH YOUR CARER

Once a bond forms between the carer and the care-for person, the working relationship can become more akin to friendship. Although their duty of care remains the priority, many of our carers enjoy spending time with the cared-for person outside of the house. In instances like this, we ask that our carers are respected and treated as equals, understanding that they are not "in service". Unless agreed beforehand, they will gladly join on excursions such as theatre trips and dinners, however, they should always be introduced as a valued carer.



## Caring For Your Carers

by Christina Sell © 18/2/2016