

NHS Continuing Healthcare

Prompt Card

Explaining the NHS Continuing Healthcare Process

What is NHS Continuing Healthcare?

- Give the individual/their representative a copy of the DH Public Information Leaflet.
- Give a brief explanation of NHS Continuing Healthcare (NHS CHC):
 - It is care for adults aged 18 or over which is arranged and funded solely by the NHS (and is therefore free at point of delivery)
 - Relatively few people are eligible for NHS CHC
 - Only those assessed and found to have a 'primary health need' are eligible for NHS CHC – the term 'primary health need' has a very specific meaning.
 - Whether someone has a primary health need depends on the type and level of their day to day nursing/healthcare needs – it does not depend on having a particular diagnosis or disability.

What is the NHS Continuing Healthcare Checklist?

- It is the tool used by health and/or social care staff to work out whether an individual needs a full assessment for NHS CHC.
- If the individual 'screens in' as needing a full assessment for NHS CHC, this does not mean that they will be eligible for NHS CHC. Many people who 'screen in' for a full assessment are (correctly) found not to be eligible for NHS CHC.
- If the individual does not screen in this does not mean that they won't get any help – it just means that it will not be through NHS CHC.
- The individual can choose, if they wish, to have a family member, friend or other advocate present when the Checklist is completed.
- They will be given a copy of the completed Checklist and if they are not happy with the outcome they will be asked to explain why. They can ask for the Checklist to be reconsidered and, if still dissatisfied, can use the complaints process.
- Whether or not the individual crosses the Checklist threshold their needs might change, so they may have to be reconsidered at a later stage.

Consent and sharing information

Ask the individual for their permission to complete the Checklist and make a record of this. Also, having explained what the Checklist is, ask permission to:

- go ahead with the full assessment for NHS CHC if they 'screen in'
- share information with and between any professional involved in their assessment throughout the process in order to ensure all the relevant facts are considered.

If the individual lacks the capacity to consent to the process and/or to sharing information, there should be consultation with family/friends and 'best interest' decisions made by the relevant professional(s) under the provisions of the Mental Capacity Act. Only a court appointed deputy or someone with Lasting Power of Attorney (welfare) can actually make these decisions on behalf of the individual – otherwise formal 'best interest' decisions should be made.





What other implications should the individual be aware of?

- If the individual 'screens in' using the Checklist then their needs will be considered in more detail using the Decision Support Tool (DST). This will be done by at least two professionals – referred to as the 'multi-disciplinary team' or MDT.
- The individual and/or their representative will be fully involved in the process, so long as they wish this. The process takes time and will consider the individual's current and ongoing care needs in

depth. For some people this process can be upsetting, but they should be reassured that their views will be heard and their questions answered.

- Having completed the DST the MDT will make a recommendation as to whether or not the individual has a 'primary health need'. This is then checked by the CCG. If they are found to have a primary health need they will be eligible for NHS CHC.
- NHS CHC does not necessarily continue. If needs change then at some point the individual may be assessed as no longer being eligible for NHS CHC.
- If the individual is found to be eligible for NHS CHC then:
 - the CCG will be responsible for arranging the care and support and will decide what is possible and appropriate, respecting the individual's wishes wherever possible
 - the individual can ask for this care and support to be provided by way of a Personal Health Budget (PHB)
 - if the individual is receiving NHS CHC in a care home placement their entitlement to some benefits will change
 - if the individual remains at home then their entitlement to benefits won't change (unless they are currently receiving help from the Independent Living Fund).

- If they are not eligible for NHS CHC the professionals working with them will still consider how health and social services can support them to meet their needs.
- If they are found not eligible for NHS CHC and wish to challenge this decision they will be advised of the appeals process.

