

What are the alternatives to moving into a care home?

Many people who have difficulty with everyday life due to disability, illness or general problems associated with getting older, often believe they have no option other than to go into a care home.

However, with the changes in support available in the community, the majority of people are now able to stay in their own homes and maintain as much independence as their situation allows.



There are now care companies offering a range of care and support to people in their own homes both long-term and short-term. Whether you need a full-time live in carer, or someone to help for a few hours a week most people can remain at home.

One person who has seen many changes in care is Ken Waterhouse, managing director of a local care agency called Home Care Preferred. "When I started my career in the care sector, older people, who became frail and in need of care, would nearly always end up being admitted to a care

home. No matter how good a care home is, people typically want to remain in the comfort of their own homes. We are now supporting people to do just that. Many of our clients have hourly support but where we are seeing big growth is with live-in care. A lot of people are understandably reluctant for someone to live in their home however we are seeing time and time again how successful this can be".

And it's not just older people who may need some support at home. Many care providers, like Home Care Preferred, can provide support to adults of all ages with physical disabilities, learning disabilities and end of life care. They can also provide short term help to people coming out of hospital or recovering from an operation.

We've all heard the frightening stories of poor care and abuse but it is possible to receive high quality care that can make a positive difference. Ken Waterhouse advises people to ask a number of key questions when they approach a care company.

Is the person on the phone friendly and informative? Are they happy to answer questions and offer a free, no-obligation assessment?

Do they provide an "introductory visit" so you can meet the caregiver before they start work. Having someone new in your home can be an unnerving experience and you need to feel comfortable with the person before they start.

What kind of supervision and training is provided? Will you be able to contact someone 24/7 if problems arise?



Are all the team members carefully vetted? Make sure the company has carried out Criminal Record Bureau (CRB) checks on all caregivers and taken up references.

Is the company registered with the Care Quality Commission (CQC)? This is the government body that license and regulate all care providers.

Importantly ask for testimonials from existing clients. Recommendations on the quality of service are a good indication of the standards you are likely to expect.

Ask about the experience of the management team and the

owners of the company. A face to face meeting will determine whether you are comfortable with the people that run the company.

Ken went on to say "It's worth bearing in mind that whilst your care must be affordable, your decision should not be based on cost alone. Paying just a little extra could make a big difference to the support you receive and ultimately your quality of life".

For further information

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