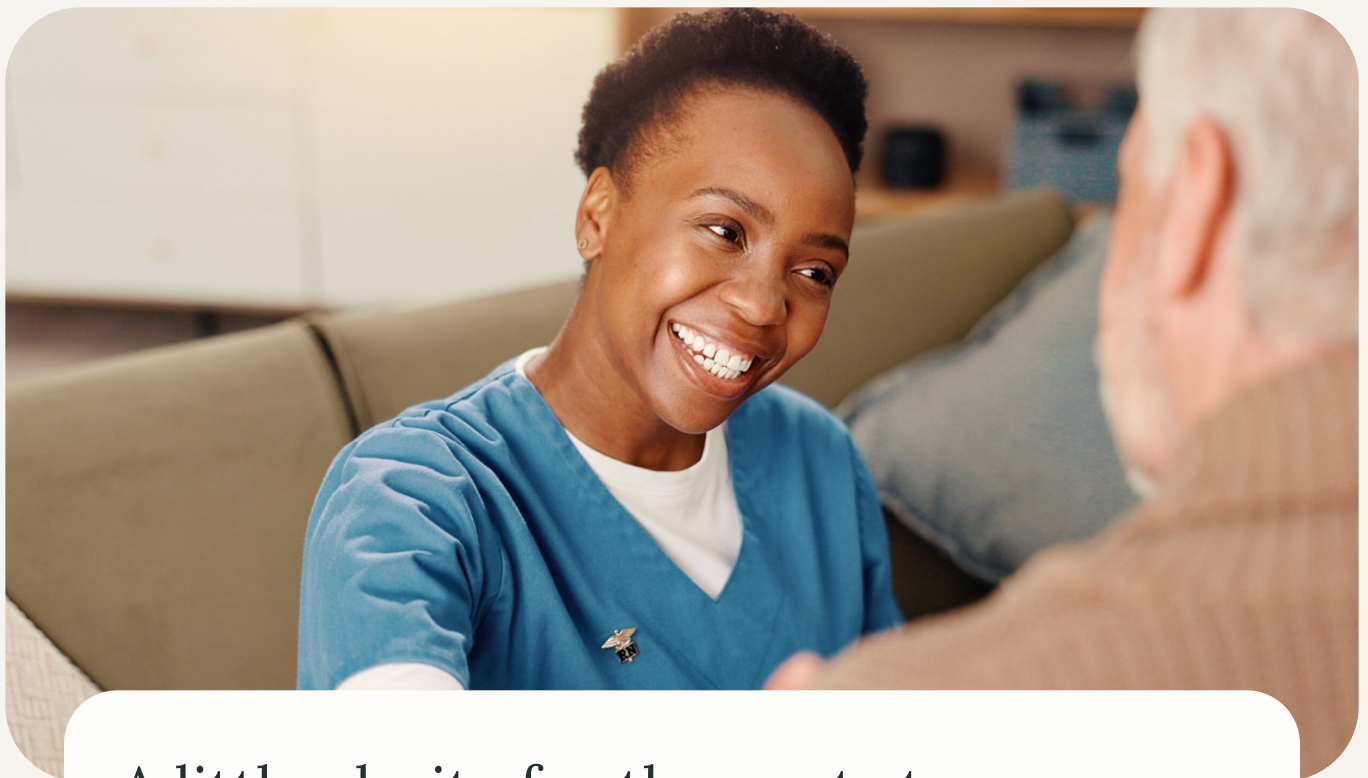


Family Support Guide

Understanding care at home, together.



A little clarity for the next step.

For anyone thinking about support for themselves or someone close to them. Explore the options, prepare useful questions and understand what happens when care is arranged.

Start with what matters to them.

Home care should support a person's choices, dignity and independence. Begin with their experience of daily life, rather than a list of tasks.



Notice the everyday changes.

Perhaps meals, washing, dressing or household tasks are becoming harder. Someone may feel lonely, need reassurance after a hospital stay, or rely on a family carer who needs a break.

A change does not automatically mean a large care package is needed. Talk about what feels difficult, what is going well and the help the person would welcome.

Make room for an honest conversation.

Choose a calm moment. Ask permission to talk about support, listen without rushing and include the person in decisions as much as possible.

- “Which parts of the day would you like to feel easier?”
- “What would you most like to keep doing for yourself?”
- “Would you feel comfortable trying help with one or two things?”

A useful starting point

Write down what matters most: familiar routines, preferred language, cultural or faith needs, favourite activities and the people they want involved.

Different needs. Different support.

You do not need to choose a service label before contacting us. Describe the situation and ask which support could be appropriate.

Personal care at home

Agreed help with washing, dressing, grooming, toileting, meals and daily routines, with privacy and dignity at the centre.

Companionship & practical help

Conversation, shared interests and agreed outings, alongside help with shopping, laundry, cleaning or other everyday tasks.

Respite care

Planned support when a family carer needs a break or has other commitments. Discuss timing, routines and the person's preferences.

Live-in care

An arrangement for a carer to live in the person's home. Agree duties, accommodation, rest periods and any overnight needs clearly.

Dementia & learning disabilities

Individual support shaped around communication, familiar routines, personal goals, choices and everyday independence.

Palliative & end-of-life support

Sensitive personal and practical care alongside the person's healthcare team, guided by their wishes and agreed care plan.

Ask what can be provided

Suitability, visit patterns, coverage and availability are confirmed through discussion and assessment. Clinical tasks and specialist needs must be agreed with the appropriate professionals.

Questions worth asking.

Keep these prompts beside you when speaking with any care provider. Clear answers help everyone understand what is being agreed.

1 The right fit

Can you meet the person's needs in their area? Which tasks can you provide, and which need another service or professional?

2 People & continuity

How are carers selected, trained and supported? How do you plan continuity, introductions and cover when someone is away?

3 Visits & practical arrangements

What visit times and lengths are available? What happens if a visit is delayed, missed or needs to change?

4 A clear written agreement

What is included in the cost? Are there additional charges, notice periods or cancellation terms? How will changes be agreed?

5 Quality & communication

Who is our main contact? How do we raise a concern? How are care records, feedback and reviews handled?

Look at independent information

Read the Care Quality Commission (CQC) report as well as the provider's own information. DennysonCare's report is linked on our website and on page 8 of this guide.

A plan built around real life.

The aim is to understand the person first, then agree support that fits. Ask us to explain anything that feels unclear.

01 Tell us about your situation.

Explain the help you are considering, where the person lives, the routines they want to keep and any immediate practical concerns. We can discuss available options and the next step.

02 Talk through needs and preferences.

An assessment helps establish what support is appropriate. Include the person and, with their agreement or appropriate authority, family members or others involved in their care.

03 Agree the care before it starts.

Discuss the care plan, tasks, visit pattern, costs, arrangements for access and points of contact. Confirm the start date and what to expect at the first visit.

04 Keep the plan under review.

Needs and preferences can change. Share feedback, raise concerns early and ask how a review or change to support will be arranged.

Before you agree

Ask for the care arrangements and charges in writing. Keep the contact details for day-to-day questions and out-of-hours concerns somewhere easy to find.

Small details make care personal.

Use this checklist with the person receiving support. Share only the information needed to provide their care safely and respectfully.

- Daily rhythm: getting-up and bedtime preferences, meals, drinks, hobbies and important regular activities.
- Personal choices: preferred name, communication needs, language, culture, faith and how the person likes to be supported.
- Access: agreed entry arrangements, who will be present, pets and a safe place for relevant contact information.
- Care information: relevant professional contacts and current support. Agree how medicines, equipment or specialist tasks will be handled; do not assume they are included.
- Family involvement: who may receive updates, how consent or authority is recorded and who to contact if circumstances change.
- The first visit: what has been agreed, any questions still unanswered and how to give feedback afterwards.



Keep a short “about me” note.

The familiar cup. The preferred radio station. A little time to do something independently. These everyday details help someone feel known and respected.

Care works best with communication.

Agree how the person, their family and the care team will stay in touch, while respecting privacy and the person's wishes.

Can support change over time?

Tell the team if needs or preferences change. Any adjustment should be assessed and agreed, including the tasks, visit pattern and costs.

Will we always see the same carer?

Ask how continuity is planned and how introductions and cover are managed. Discuss what familiarity means to the person; avoid assuming a particular carer is guaranteed.

How quickly can care start?

A start date depends on needs, assessment, location and availability. Explain any timing concerns and ask what can realistically be arranged.

How much will care cost?

Ask for a written quotation based on the agreed support. Check what is included, any extra charges, how payments work and the terms for changing or cancelling care.

What if something does not feel right?

Contact the team, explain the concern and ask what will happen next. Keep a note of the conversation. Ask for the complaints process if the issue is not resolved.

Can relatives receive updates?

Agree this with the person and care team, taking account of consent and any appropriate decision-making authority. Clarify who receives updates and by which method.



Tell us what would make life easier.

You do not need to have every answer. Bring your questions, explain what matters and talk through the support you are considering.

Three things to talk about

The help we are considering

The routines and choices we want to keep

The questions we still have

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CQC overall rating: Good

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cqc.org.uk/location/1-3529255358

Based on DennysonCare's service and advice information. September 2026.

This guide supports conversations about care; individual arrangements are confirmed through assessment and agreement.