

## Patient information factsheet

# NHS continuing healthcare: Fast track pathway

## Information for patients and families

We have given you this factsheet because you or your relative may be suitable for NHS continuing healthcare (CHC) fast track funding. It explains what NHS CHC funding is and what the fast track pathway involves so that you know what to expect. We hope it helps to answer some of the questions you may have. If you have any further questions or concerns, please speak to a member of the healthcare team caring for you or your relative.

### What is NHS CHC?

Some people with complex health needs qualify for health and social care arranged and funded solely by the NHS. This is known as 'NHS continuing healthcare (CHC)'.

If you are eligible for NHS CHC, your care will be funded by the NHS and provided in the community rather than in a hospital setting. This may include receiving care in your own home, in a residential care setting, or another suitable place.

### What is the NHS CHC fast track pathway?

The fast track pathway provides quick access to NHS CHC funding for people with serious health needs who need care without delay, avoiding assessments that can take up to 28 days.

### Who is eligible for the NHS CHC fast track pathway?

A fast track funding application will be considered if a person has a primary health need arising from a rapidly deteriorating condition, where the condition may be entering a terminal phase. Rapid deterioration means a person's condition is getting worse quickly or suddenly, often changing from one day to the next.

### What does the NHS CHC fast track pathway involve?

Please see the steps below for an overview of the pathway.

1. The clinical lead (doctor in charge) overseeing your or your relative's care will discuss with the wider healthcare team (known as a multidisciplinary team or 'MDT') if they believe a fast track application is appropriate.
2. The clinical lead will complete a fast track application form.
3. The nursing and therapy teams will complete a separate needs assessment to identify care and support needs.

4. The ward team will ask for written consent to proceed with the application. They will then share the details with the All Age Continuing Health Care (AACC) service (this is the team who will determine whether an individual is eligible for NHS CHC).
5. Once the application is complete (including all the appropriate evidence to show that you or your relative meet the criteria for fast track funding), it will be sent to the AACC team. The AACC team will then decide whether you or your relative are eligible for NHS CHC.

## What happens after the application has been submitted?

We will receive a decision from the AACC team typically within 48 hours. In some cases, the AACC team may need more information to support the application. We will keep you updated throughout this process.

**If the application is approved**, care will be arranged through a separate brokerage team (a team that facilitates access to appropriate services and support for individuals). The brokerage team will contact you or your relative to discuss this. Please note that the length of time it will take to arrange appropriate care will depend on the level of care needed and the availability in your local area.

You will be allocated a key contact person from the AACC team. They will discuss your options with you and help find the most suitable location for your or your relative's care (for example, at home or a care home) and the appropriate care package.

Please be aware that if you arrange care without the agreement of the AACC team, you may be liable for the full cost of the care.

**If you or your relative are not eligible for fast track funding**, our complex discharge team can advise you on the next steps regarding future care.

## How long will funding for NHS CHC be provided?

Funding for NHS CHC is not permanent. Your or your relative's need for the funding will be reviewed on a frequent basis after leaving hospital (usually at six, eight, and ten weeks). If you or your relative no longer meet the required criteria for NHS CHC, the funding will be withdrawn. Please note that you will be fully involved in this ongoing assessment process.

## How you can help assist the fast track process

You can help assist the process by:

- providing any requested details to the ward team who are completing the application (including giving consent to make the referral)
- taking necessary phone calls from the AACC team to discuss ongoing care

The hospital and community discharge planning teams will talk with you about what help family, friends, and local community groups can offer, alongside any formal care that has been arranged. If a family member or carer is able and willing to help provide some care, either on leaving the hospital until the full care package is set up (known as 'bridging the care') or as an ongoing arrangement, please inform the ward team. We will need confirmation that funding and care arrangements are in place to proceed with this option.

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## Before leaving hospital

Before leaving hospital, the healthcare team will:

- explain what to expect as your or your relative's condition progresses
- explain how to recognise changes in symptoms
- guide you on who to contact for further support
- provide you with a copy or link to any helpful information resources that you may need (see 'Useful links' section below)

If you or your relative think additional support equipment may be needed after leaving hospital, please discuss this with the therapy team who will be able to advise you on how to access it.

Depending on individual circumstances, we may prescribe a small supply of medication (known as 'just in case' medicines) to take with you when you leave hospital. We will send a letter to your or your relative's general practitioner (GP) to inform them about any new or changed medications and ask them to set up a repeat prescription for these medications.

For more information about 'just in case' medicines, please speak to a member of the ward team or read our "Just in case" medicines for adults' factsheet which you can find in the 'Useful links' section below.

## Useful links

National framework for NHS continuing healthcare and NHS-funded nursing care:

[www.gov.uk/government/publications/national-framework-for-nhs-continuing-healthcare-and-nhs-funded-nursing-care](http://www.gov.uk/government/publications/national-framework-for-nhs-continuing-healthcare-and-nhs-funded-nursing-care)

Fast-track pathway tool for NHS continuing healthcare guidance:

[www.gov.uk/government/publications/nhs-continuing-healthcare-fast-track-pathway-tool/fast-track-pathway-tool-for-nhs-continuing-healthcare-guidance](http://www.gov.uk/government/publications/nhs-continuing-healthcare-fast-track-pathway-tool/fast-track-pathway-tool-for-nhs-continuing-healthcare-guidance)

## UHS resources

'Just in case' medicines for adults

[www.uhs.nhs.uk/Media/UHS-website-2019/Patientinformation/Bereavement-and-end-of-life/Just-in-case-medicines-for-adults-3721-PIL.pdf](http://www.uhs.nhs.uk/Media/UHS-website-2019/Patientinformation/Bereavement-and-end-of-life/Just-in-case-medicines-for-adults-3721-PIL.pdf)

What to expect in the last days and weeks of life: When your loved one is staying in hospital

[www.uhs.nhs.uk/Media/UHS-website-2019/Patientinformation/Bereavement-and-end-of-life/What-to-expect-in-the-last-days-and-weeks-of-life-When-your-loved-one-is-staying-in-hospital-3684-PIL.pdf](http://www.uhs.nhs.uk/Media/UHS-website-2019/Patientinformation/Bereavement-and-end-of-life/What-to-expect-in-the-last-days-and-weeks-of-life-When-your-loved-one-is-staying-in-hospital-3684-PIL.pdf)

What to expect in the last days and weeks of life: When your loved one has been discharged from hospital

[www.uhs.nhs.uk/Media/UHS-website-2019/Patientinformation/Bereavement-and-end-of-life/What-to-expect-in-the-last-days-and-weeks-of-life-When-your-loved-one-has-been-discharged-from-hospital-3685-PIL.pdf](http://www.uhs.nhs.uk/Media/UHS-website-2019/Patientinformation/Bereavement-and-end-of-life/What-to-expect-in-the-last-days-and-weeks-of-life-When-your-loved-one-has-been-discharged-from-hospital-3685-PIL.pdf)

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For help preparing for your visit, arranging an interpreter or accessing the hospital, please visit **[www.uhs.nhs.uk/additionalsupport](http://www.uhs.nhs.uk/additionalsupport)**

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