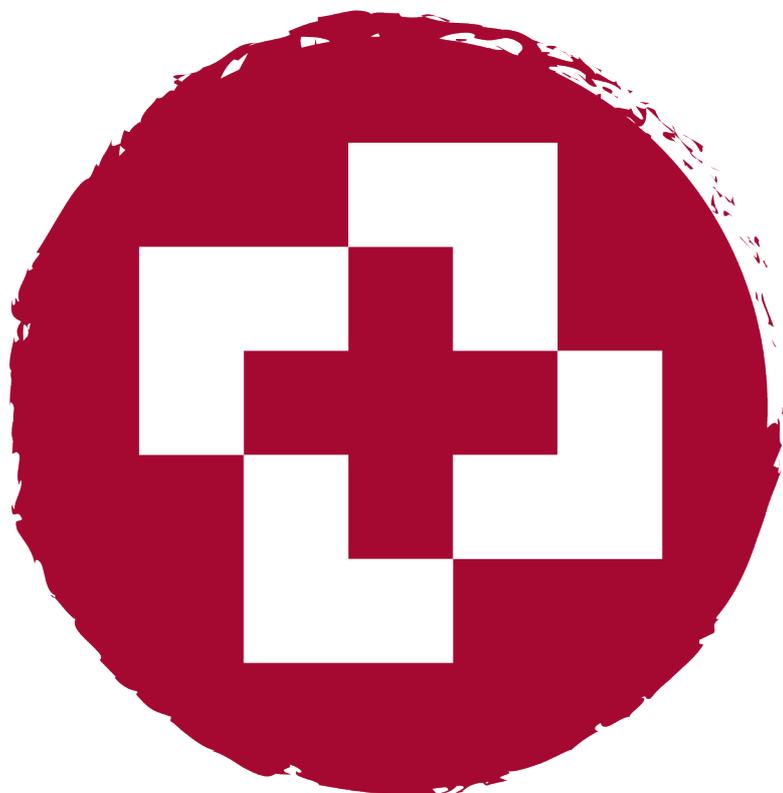


NHS CONTINUING HEALTHCARE

FACTSHEETS



PREPARING FOR NHS CONTINUING HEALTHCARE ASSESSMENTS

Preparing for NHS Continuing Healthcare Assessments

Whether you are being assessed for the first time or having your eligibility for NHS Continuing Healthcare funding reviewed it is important that you prepare thoroughly in advance. Even a seemingly routine review can result in withdrawal of eligibility for funding.

Understanding the Law

When an individual needs care (whether in their own home or in a residential home) there are two sources of statutory funding – the Local Authority (social services) and the NHS (NHS Continuing Healthcare). The assessment process is designed to work out which of these two are responsible for paying for the individuals care.

[National Framework for NHS Continuing Healthcare and NHS-funded Nursing Care](#) and the associated assessment process were developed in large part in response to the Coughlan Judgement. As such they are only Department of Health **guidance** and must be subordinate to The Law (as interpreted by The Court in the Coughlan judgement).

The National Framework and Practice Guidance for NHS Continuing Healthcare recognise this and, whilst cautioning against drawing generalisations about eligibility, state at:

National Framework Paragraph 157 ***"CCG's should be aware of cases that have indicated circumstances in which eligibility for NHS continuing healthcare should have been determined, and where such an outcome would be expected if the same facts were considered in an assessment for NHS continuing healthcare under the National Framework (e.g. Coughlan....."*** and;

National Framework Paragraph 131 ***"The DST [Decision Support Tool] supports practitioners in identifying the individual's needs, which, combined with the practitioner skills, knowledge and professional judgement, should enable them to apply the primary health need test in practice,***

However:

- a) the National Framework also states that eligibility cannot be based on diagnosis alone but on a full assessment of the individuals care needs, and;
- b) it is very important to realise that assessors are unlikely to be familiar with the Coughlan Judgement and it's particular relevance to people with SCI.

The National Framework and fact sheets detailing other aspects of NHS Continuing Healthcare are available in the [Resources Section](#) of our website. More information about the Coughlan Judgement is also available on request from our NHS Continuing Healthcare Advice Service.

Understanding the Care Domains

The first step in preparing for an assessment is understanding the care domains and how the effects of spinal cord injury manifest themselves in each of the 12 care domains (see our fact sheet on [Accessing NHS Continuing Healthcare](#)).

It is really important to bear in mind that the assessment process and the 12 care domains were not designed with spinal cord injury in mind. It is used to assess people with all sorts of conditions from old age to mental health issues. Our objective is therefore to make sure that all of the needs associated with spinal cord injury are recorded in the assessment process. This means that you will need to fit your need into an imperfect framework.

For detailed information on the types of things you should consider in each care domain please contact our Continuing Healthcare Service using the details below.

Documents You Should Prepare

Although the assessment process is standardised across the country it is possible to submit additional documentation for consideration. These can help strengthen your case for eligibility for NHS Continuing Healthcare funding:

1. Care Needs Preparation Document – against each care domain write down the needs that you have that need to be taken into consideration and recorded during the assessment.

When considering your care needs there are a number of principles to bear in mind:

- The National Framework for NHS Continuing Healthcare and NHS Funded Nursing Care states quite clearly that a well-managed need is still a need . So, for example, the reason you haven't had an episode of Autonomic Dysreflexia recently is because your body is well-managed, but the needs associated with Autonomic Dysreflexia still exist.
- It is important not to understate your needs. Imagine your care needs on your worst day, and use that as a basis for recording your needs.

Use this information to target a level of need you would like to be scored at in each domain.

Resources

[Example of assessment preparation](#)

[Example of a Daily Care Plan](#)

[Decision Support Tool](#) - see section 2 for descriptions of need

2. Personal Risk Profile - because things like Autonomic Dysreflexia are unique to spinal-cord injury it is useful to illustrate to the assessors how they impact on your health and well-being. Remember that it is quite likely that your assessors will not know about these conditions, so assume that you will have to explain them.

3. 48-Hour Care Diary – because the complexities involved in managing spinal-cord injury are unique it is useful to have a written account of the care interventions you require in a normal 48-hour period. This has the dual purpose of backing up your Care Needs Preparation Document and detailing how much care (in hours) you will need funding for.

Other Useful Documents

1. [Statement on Tetraplegia](#). To improve the understanding of tetraplegia, particularly in relation to assessments for NHS Continuing Healthcare, the SIA Academy has published this statement on tetraplegia which you should cite. This statement is the considered opinion of [BASCIS](#) (the British Association of Spinal-Cord Injury Specialists) and [MASCIP](#) (the Multidisciplinary Association of Spinal Cord Injury Professionals). These are the bodies representing the healthcare professionals (including Consultants, Nurses, Physiotherapists, and Occupational Therapists) involved in the treatment, management and welfare of people with SCI in the UK.
2. [NSIC Information on Autonomic Dysreflexia](#) - an NHS document that was produced by the National Spinal Injuries Centre at Stoke Mandeville Hospital and explains Autonomic Dysreflexia and can be included with your assessment as evidence of your ongoing risk of developing Autonomic Dysreflexia and the associated care needs.. (It's important to recognise that the assessors are likely to be unaware of and unfamiliar with the causes and effects of Autonomic Dysreflexia).
3. [NRH Fact Sheet On Autonomic Dysreflexia](#) - this document was produced by The National Rehabilitation Hospital in Dublin (The Republic of Ireland) and is an easy read pictorial explanation of Autonomic Dysreflexia. It can be included with your assessment as

evidence of your ongoing risk of developing Autonomic Dysreflexia and the associated care needs.

4. **Summary of Care Need Descriptions By Domain** - Because the National Framework for NHS Continuing Healthcare and NHS Funded Nursing Care is a lengthy document we have prepared a summary of the description of the levels of care need in each of the 12 care domains
5. Assessment and reviews of eligibility for NHS Continuing Healthcare must be carried out by a Multidisciplinary Team (MDT) in order to comply with the National Framework for NHS Continuing Healthcare and NHS Funded Nursing Care (revised 2018). In order to establish the competencies of the people carrying out your assessment SIA has prepared a [list of questions](#) you might want to consider asking them.
6. Resources regarding the Pamela Coughlan case are listed below, please contact our NHS Continuing Health Service for copies.
 - a) **Summary of Pamela Coughlan's Care Needs For Comparison** - this summary has been produced by SIA using information in the public domain and interviews with Pamela Coughlan.
 - b) **Pen Picture of Pamela Coughlan's Nursing and Care Needs** - this was produced by the Association of Directors of Adult Social Services (ADASS).
 - c) **Pam's Day** - this is another description of Pamela Coughlan's care needs.

For further information contact: CHC@spinal.co.uk

Disclaimer

This factsheet has been prepared by SIA and contains general advice only, which we hope will be of use to you. Nothing in this factsheet should be construed as the giving of specific advice and it should not be relied on as a basis for any decision or action. SIA does not accept any liability arising from its use. We aim to ensure the information is as up-to-date and accurate as possible, but please be warned that certain areas are subject to change from time to time. Please note that the inclusion of named agencies, companies, products, services or publications in this factsheet does not constitute a recommendation or endorsement by SIA.

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About SIA

The Spinal Injuries Association (SIA) is the leading national user-led charity for spinal cord injured (SCI) people. Being user led, we are well placed to understand the everyday needs of living with spinal cord injury and are here to meet those needs by providing key services to share information and experiences, and to campaign for change ensuring each person can lead a full and active life. We are here to support you from the moment your spinal cord injury happens, and for the rest of your life.

For more information contact us via the following:

Spinal Injuries Association
SIA House
2 Trueman Place
Oldbrook
Milton Keynes
MK6 2HH

T: 01908 604 191 (Mon – Fri 9am – 5pm)

T: 0800 980 0501 (Freephone Advice Line, Mon – Fri, 11am – 1pm/2pm – 4.30pm)

W: www.spinal.co.uk

E: sia@spinal.co.uk

Charity No: 1054097



Please support SIA

SIA relies on fundraising, donations and gifts in wills to provide services that help spinal cord injured people rebuild their lives.

With your help, we can provide the right support to spinal cord injured people and their families and friends so they can enjoy a full and independent life after injury. Your donation today will go towards changing someone's life.

I would like to give: £15 £20 £53 other amount £.....

Method of payment

I enclose a cheque/postal order/CAF voucher made payable to Spinal Injuries Association.

I would like to pay by Mastercard/Visa/Maestro/Switch (delete as appropriate)

Card number

Start date

Expiry Date

Security Code

Signature

Date.....

Name.....

Address

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Postcode Tel no.....

Email address.....

Please gift aid my donation

If you tick the box it means for every £1 you donate we can claim an extra 25p from the taxman, at no extra cost to you. You need to pay an amount of income tax or capital gains tax at least equal to the tax we reclaim from HM Revenue and Customs – currently 25p in every £1 you give.

Please send your donation to: FREEPOST SPINAL INJURIES ASSOCIATION or you can donate online at www.spinal.co.uk

Thank you for your support!