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| Chandos & Dent’s Almshouses | Increasing Care Needs |
| Owner | Appointments & Welfare |
| Author |  |
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**BACKGROUND**

It is a requirement that those accommodated in almshouses should be able to live independently which fortunately the majority of residents are able to do into advanced age. However, circumstances sometimes arise which as a result of illness, infirmity and frailty lead to it being inadvisable for residents to continue living in their almshouse.

As an aid to understanding ‘living independently’ the NHS has some guidelines used by healthcare professionals to refer to the basic self-care tasks an individual does on a day-to-day basis. These are referred to as Activity of Daily Living ADL. These activities are fundamental in caring for oneself and maintaining independence. An individual’s ability or inability to perform ADLs is often used by health professionals as a way of measuring an individuals functional status, especially that of older adults or those with disabilities.

These could be used by the Trust as some objective measure of increasing physical and mental frailty. However, residents will have differing individual characteristics and needs and therefore these guidelines should be used sensitively and always in conjunction with the opinions of health and social care professionals.

Basic ADLs are self care activities routinely performed which include (but are not limited to)

* Functional mobility, which includes the ability to walk and transfer in and out of a chair or bed. Essentially, it’s the ability to move from one place to another as a person goes through their daily routines.
* Personal hygiene, oral care and grooming, including skin and hair care.
* Showering and/or bathing
* Toileting, which includes getting on/off the toilet and cleaning oneself
* Dressing, which includes selecting appropriate attire and putting it on
* Self feeding

**POLICY STATEMENT**

There are certain arrangements that the Trust will need to set in place or strongly recommend to residents.

* Residents are to nominate a next of kin or close friend whom the Trustees may contact in case of need. This is included in the appointment of a resident.
* The Trust need to be advised of the name and address of the resident’s GP in a letter of authority enabling them to make contact with the GP in case of need. This is included in the appointment of a resident.
* Residents will be advised to arrange for a Power of Attorney to be put in place. There are two types of such Lasting Powers of Attorney – one dealing with Health & Welfare, and the other dealing with Property & Financial Affairs. Details of this should be provided to the Trust in order that the Trustees may be aware of whom they should refer to in case of need.

The papers relating to the resident’s financial affairs should be easily accessible to the person(s) appointed by the Property & Financial Affairs Power of Attorney.

This is included in the Residents’ Handbook.

For guidance in this connection see <http://www.gov.uk/power-of-attorney>

* Residents should be strongly encouraged to make a Will and advise the Trust where it is lodged.

This is included in the Residents’ Handbook.

INCREASED FRAILTY

In the case of a resident experiencing increased frailty every effort should be made to find a way forward, which might involve Social Services.

Trustees should be aware that a Social Services Assessment of Needs can be requested by the resident or their family or any concerned party including the Trust by contacting the Adult Social Needs Desk at Tewkesbury Borough Council. Where appropriate the resident’s family should be encouraged to apply. This will establish an objective yardstick of need.

Where practical Trustees will endeavour to authorise adaptations to the almshouse to make life easier. However, Trustees should inform residents that permission must be sought on all occasions before any adaptations are made. If a Care Package is needed, again Trustees should be informed accordingly.

Trustees should speak to neighbours when appropriate about whether they have any concerns, what their concerns are and whether it is impacting unreasonably upon them. The Trustees should enquire if there are ways in which the Trust might help.

Trustees should not prevent a resident from returning home to their almshouse if, for example, they have been a patient in a hospital, even if they feel the resident can no longer cope. They must follow the due process and take legal advice.

If increased frailty or ill health makes it impossible for a resident to continue to live independently Trustees may feel it necessary to request the resident to move to more appropriate accommodation where care is provided. This should only be done after full consultation with the resident, their relatives and if applicable medical practitioners. This transition should be made as easy as possible for the resident.

Setting aside a residents’ appointment should be regarded as being the absolute last resort when all efforts to remedy the situation have failed. The Almshouse Association strongly advises that legal advice should be taken. They recommend that the Trust contact a solicitor who not only specialises in charity law but also has knowledge of almshouse charities.

The Trust must keep written and dated records of all actions, telephone calls, conversations, incidents that occur regarding any resident who they consider to have increasing care needs.

If the Trustees believe that the resident is reaching a stage where it is considered that they can no longer live independently two Trustees from Appointments & Welfare should meet with the resident and/or with the next of kin to explore a way forward. The position should be confirmed in writing to the resident and the next of kin suggesting a timetable when next steps should be taken.

In terms of considering Increasing Care Needs the Trust needs to anticipate that safety and ease of access will be a key requirement for all residents regardless of care needs. This will be of paramount importance in any future design changes and modernization of almshouse accommodation.