



Residential care, respite care, nursing care – what's the difference?

With so many variations when it comes to the types of care on offer in care homes, it's helpful to understand what each of these terms mean if you're beginning your search.



What is nursing care?

You might have heard the term 'nursing home'. Though often used quite broadly, this in fact refers to a care home that offers nursing on site – typically with registered nurses present 24 hours a day and additional support provided by visiting general practitioners. This type of care is best suited for those who require regular medical support.

The best nursing care environments acknowledge that a person's medical needs are just part of their overall well-being and are best complimented by other important forms of support.

Across all St Monica Trust care homes, we have a team of physiotherapists, occupational therapists and assistants to provide support and treatments to help residents remain as physically active, mentally stimulated and socially engaged as possible. For residents this can enhance their mobility, independence and well-being, helping them continue to lead lives with meaning and purpose.



What is residential care?

Sometimes confusingly used as an umbrella term for all care offered to live-in residents in a care home environment, residential care in the strictest sense is for those who would benefit from the assistance and security of living in a care home but don't need regular nursing support.

In these environments, care is delivered by trained care and support assistants, rather than nurses, and usually includes assistance with everyday tasks such as getting up and ready in the morning, washing and taking medication. As with nursing care, the best environments support a person's whole well-being so, once again, our teams of therapists are available to provide advice and support to residents.

Residential care is available at Charterhouse, our care home at the heart of The Chocolate Quarter, in Keynsham between Bristol and Bath.

What is dementia care?

Dementia care provides specialist support for individuals living with dementia in its various forms. Broadly speaking it can be divided into residential dementia care or nursing dementia care.

Residential dementia care

If a person has a diagnosis of dementia but no regular nursing needs then residential dementia care may be the best fit. It's important when selecting a care home to ensure that, should the resident develop nursing needs, the provider has the capacity to be able to meet their changing needs.



Nursing dementia care

If the resident living with dementia also has nursing needs then nursing dementia care will offer them the right kind of support, as nurses are available 24 hours a day.

People with dementia usually require different support to those with other care needs. Though one person's experience may be very different to another's, memory loss and sensory challenges are common.

The most beneficial environments support residents by really getting to know them as individuals. Taking the time to understand a person's own interests allows care and support staff to create personalised plans for activities, conversations, and social engagement that will resonate with the resident.

What is respite care?

When talking about the care of older people, respite care usually involves a temporary stay in a care home environment. It can offer some valuable time for primary caregivers to rest and take part in important aspects of life that might otherwise be hard to access, such as seeing friends and travelling. For the older person, the stay offers a chance to access services on offer within the home and meet potentially likeminded individuals. Respite care is also common for people returning from a stay in hospital and who need support to regain confidence before moving home full-time

For further information on any aspect of the care we offer at St Monica Trust, our care home admissions team will be happy to help. Please call

0800 952 0300

or email: carehomes@stmonicastrust.org.uk