

Frequently Asked Questions

What is Self Care?

Self Care sees you playing an active role in any decision-making about how you receive care and how you choose to manage your health. It happens in close partnership with your GP and with your integrated care team. Everyone is able to 'self-care.'

How does Self Care work?

Self Care works to help you to play an active part in the way that you receive care and manage your own health. As a starting point you will agree a care plan, in partnership with your GP and members of your integrated care team.

What are Self Care goals?

Self Care goals are things that you decide that you want to do, in order to keep yourself as well and as active as you can. It means looking after yourself in a positive and healthy way, whether that's deciding to eat more vegetables, to trying out a class with some new people, or learn more about how they can help themselves.

Your integrated care team will be able to suggest some ways that you can engage in Self Care in a way that you will enjoy and that will best support your health and wellbeing aims.

What if I have one or more complicated long-term health conditions?

With the help of your integrated care team, Self Care will support you to manage any complicated long-term health conditions you have. These services will signpost you to any community events in your area that could help you, your family, or carer, to learn more about managing your condition in the best way for you.

It will also help you to manage your own care where you are able, with a variety of resources specific to your needs.

This can help you to make small but significant changes to improve the quality of your life.

Where does Self Care fit with traditional healthcare?

Self Care sits alongside the traditional health care service. It focuses on helping you to stay active and independent for as long as possible. By increasing your personal responsibility,

Self Care means that you are able to manage certain aspects of your own care at home with confidence and this contributes to your own independence.

Self Care empowers you with the information you need to look after yourself when you can and gives you greater control of your own health. It's about being in control of your life, and supporting you so that you can stay well closer to home.

How does My Care, My Way support Self Care?

One of the key elements of My Care, My Way is that it gives you more time with your GP and more time with your integrated care team. The benefit of this extra time is that you can explore your options more fully and with more support. This includes your options for Self Care in all its forms.

What are the benefits of Self Care?

Self Care promotes your health needs by looking at how you and your integrated care team can work together to support your health, both now and in the future. There are many measurable and significant benefits of engaging in Self Care as an approach to looking after yourself. It can have a positive effect upon all aspects of your life, including your physical, emotional, social and spiritual wellbeing.

Physical health

By following some of the basics of Self Care, such as exercising, eating the right foods, and reducing or eliminating alcohol or tobacco products, you can:

- Potentially enjoy a longer and higher-quality life
- Reduce your risk of certain diseases such as diabetes, cancer, and coronary artery disease
- Boost your overall energy levels
- Enjoy a better night's sleep
- Ease pain and stiffness in your body.

Self Care can also improve your physical health by reducing your stress levels and the associated risks of heart and vascular disease, diabetes, and gastrointestinal problems.

Psychological and emotional health

Looking after yourself physically, emotionally and spiritually, can reduce the risk of mental health problems over time. Self Care can help to build your self-esteem, giving you a sense of meaning or purpose and supporting your ability to manage change in a calm way. It can

also help you to sleep better, to reduce anxiety and manage any feelings of anger or powerlessness.

Interpersonal and social health

Interacting with other people and building a community of like-minded people around you can help you to feel well and happy.

Being able to maintain your existing friendships and make new friends can also help to reduce your stress levels. Self-care activities that help you to build your social circle also help you to build your support network, which can help you to feel valued, boosting our self-esteem.

Spiritual health

Research indicates that spiritual vitality positively impacts health outcomes. Spirituality may not necessarily mean the practice of a religious faith, but rather can be any way in which you find meaning, hope, comfort, and inner peace.

What Self Care activities are on offer in my area?

There are lots of services run by local charities and community organisations in your area that can help you to access Self Care activities. These organisations run all sorts of events, including exercise classes, de-cluttering services, transport, help with shopping, health talks, chaperone services and programmes to help you to manage any existing conditions you may have.

Some services have a specific focus, such as for older people or their carers, people with dementia or those who are housebound. There are also groups for different ethnic communities.

Where do I go to access Self Care services or to find out more?

You may be able to contact the service you're interested in directly, or a member of your My Care, My Way integrated care team can refer you to a service which can help you.

What Self Care activities are available in North Kensington, Queen's Park and Paddington area?

If you live in this area you can access a wide range of Self Care services through community and voluntary organisations like Open Age at the St Charles Integrated Care Centre near Ladbroke Grove. The centre runs over 380 activities every week. There are also services you can access from Age UK Kensington and Chelsea, at the Venture Centre (near St Charles



Integrated Care Centre) and at the Beethoven Centre (off the Harrow Road in the Queen's Park area).

What is One Westminster?

One Westminster is a website which has a comprehensive list of organisations offering Self Care events that you can search by activity or by interest group. Visit www.onewestminster.org.uk.

What Self Care activities are available in South Kensington & Chelsea?

If you live in this area you can access a wide range of Self Care services through New Horizons, which is a short distance from the Violet Melchett Integrated Care Centre in Chelsea. The centre runs over 80 regular activities every week.

There are also services you can access from Age UK Kensington and Chelsea, as well as sessions at Chelsea Theatre, near the Violet Melchett Integrated Care Centre.

What does the Kensington and Chelsea Social Council do?

Kensington and Chelsea Social Council publish a directory of over 900 groups that operate in our area. To find a group that can help you, search KCSC directory of voluntary organisations here: <http://www.kcsc.org.uk/kcsc-directory>

What is the People First website?

The People First website is designed to support independent living and encourage you to take control of your life. Whether you want help or advice to sort out an issue in your life, or to find new things to do, there are plenty of options to help.

The website was launched by the three councils of Hammersmith & Fulham, Kensington and Chelsea and Westminster and is aimed at providing adult residents with a wealth of information.

For a full list of local organisations that can help, resources and a comprehensive calendar of activities and events, take a look at www.peoplefirstinfo.org.uk.

Still have questions?

If you have any more questions about the new way My Care, My Way is providing care for older people in West London, please contact your GP.