

**BRAIN BOOSTER**

**BY FUSION**

**MANAGING HIGH  
BLOOD PRESSURE**

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Care Software

**Empowering Outstanding Care Through Technology**

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# MANAGING BLOOD PRESSURE

## Heart Month (UK)

### What It Is



National Heart Month is observed throughout February in the United Kingdom, led by charities like the British Heart Foundation (BHF) and supported by other heart health organisations.

Its purpose is to raise public awareness of heart and circulatory diseases, promote heart-healthy lifestyles, educate people on risk factors (like high blood pressure and cholesterol), and raise funds for research and support services.

Heart and circulatory diseases, including coronary heart disease, stroke, and heart failure, affect millions in the UK – with millions living with these conditions and someone dying from one approximately every three minutes.

# Blood Pressure Awareness in the UK

Blood pressure (BP) awareness isn't limited to Heart Month but ties closely with it, because high blood pressure is a major risk factor for heart disease and stroke. High BP often has no symptoms — earning it the reputation of a “silent killer.”

High blood pressure increases strain on the heart and arteries, significantly raising the risk of heart attacks, strokes, kidney disease and vascular dementia.

High blood pressure (hypertension) is extremely common among older adults and is a major health concern in UK care homes. While it often has no obvious symptoms, unmanaged high blood pressure can significantly increase the risk of heart attacks, strokes, falls, kidney disease, and reduced quality of life.

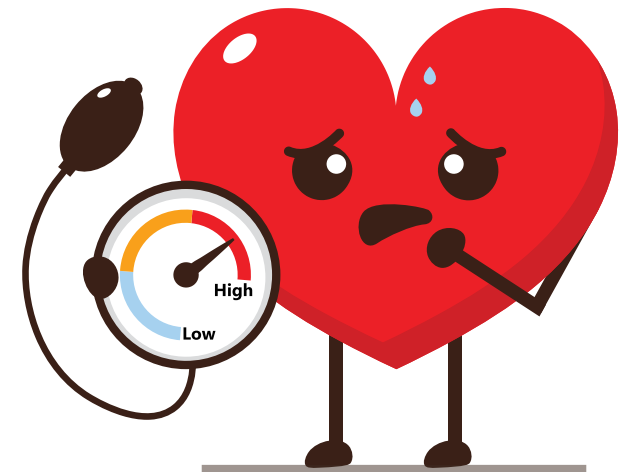
For care home residents, effective blood pressure management is not just a medical issue — it is a key part of person-centred, preventative care.



# How Heart Month and BP Awareness Connect

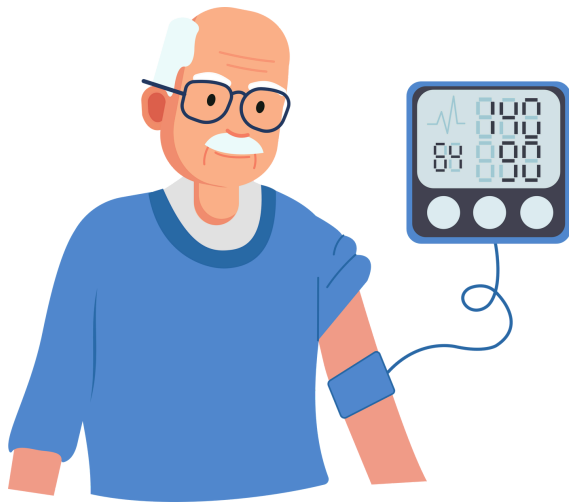
Heart Month focuses broadly on heart and circulatory health, and high blood pressure awareness fits inside that because:

- High Blood Pressure is a major risk factor for heart attacks and strokes.
- Public events and campaigns during Heart Month often include advice on checking and understanding blood pressure, alongside other heart-healthy actions.



# Why High Blood Pressure Matters in Care Homes

Many care home residents are living with multiple long-term conditions, reduced mobility, or cognitive impairment such as dementia. High blood pressure can quietly worsen these challenges by:



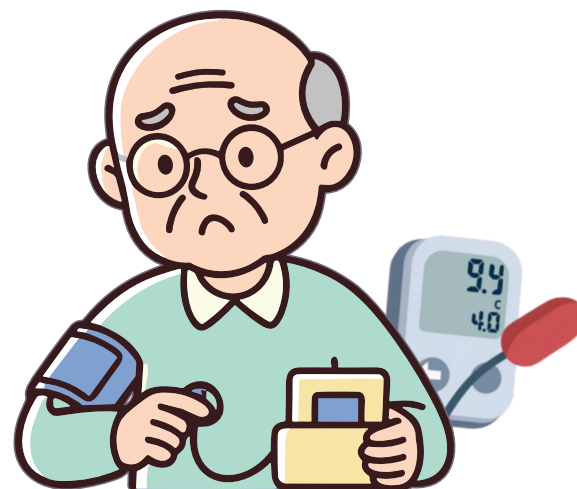
- Increasing the risk of stroke and heart failure
- Contributing to vascular dementia and cognitive decline
- Affecting kidney function
- Increasing the likelihood of dizziness, falls, and frailty
- Complicating existing conditions such as diabetes

Because symptoms are often absent, hypertension can go unnoticed without regular monitoring.

# Understanding Blood Pressure in Older Adults

Blood pressure is measured using two numbers:

- ▶ Systolic pressure (top number): pressure when the heart pumps
- ▶ Diastolic pressure (bottom number): pressure when the heart relaxes



In general, readings consistently at or above 140/90 mm Hg indicate high blood pressure. However, for older people – especially those who are frail – targets may be individualised by the GP or specialist to balance benefits with risks such as falls or side effects.

This highlights the importance of clinical judgement and personalised Fusion care plans.

Blood Pressure monitors must be serviced/calibrated as per manufacturers instructions to ensure accuracy of readings. Does this happen in your home?



# The Role of Care Homes in Blood Pressure Management

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Care homes play a crucial role in identifying, monitoring, and managing high blood pressure through everyday care.

## 1. Regular Monitoring and Record Keeping

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- Routine blood pressure checks should be part of ongoing health monitoring
- Readings should be recorded accurately and shared with GPs or community nurses and documented in Fusion
- Residents identified as having hypertension should have a person-centred care plan written detailing how they manage the condition and what support is needed from staff
- Watch for sudden changes, which may indicate illness, dehydration, or medication issues

Regular monitoring helps detect problems early and supports safer decision-making.

## 2. Supporting Medication Management

Many residents are prescribed antihypertensive medication.

Care staff should:

- › Ensure medications are taken as prescribed
- › Monitor for side effects such as dizziness, fatigue, or postural hypotension
- › Report concerns promptly to healthcare professionals
- › Never stop or alter medication without medical advice

Good medication management reduces risks and improves outcomes.





### 3. Nutrition and Hydration Support

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**A balanced diet plays a key role in blood pressure control, even in later life.**

Care homes can support residents by:

- › Offering meals with appropriate salt levels
- › Encouraging fruit, vegetables, whole grains, and lean protein
- › Supporting adequate hydration, which is especially important for blood pressure stability
- › Considering cultural, medical, and personal food preferences, ensuring these are detailed in their person-centred nutrition and hydration care plan on Fusion
- › Nutrition should always support both health and enjoyment.

## 4. Encouraging Safe Physical Activity

Appropriate movement helps regulate blood pressure and maintain independence.

This may include:

- Gentle chair-based exercises
- Supervised walking
- Stretching or balance activities

Activities should be tailored to ability and risk assessed to ensure safety.



## 5. Reducing Falls Risk

Blood pressure and falls are closely linked, particularly when residents experience dizziness on standing (postural hypotension).

Care homes should:



- ▶ Monitor blood pressure lying and standing where appropriate
- ▶ Encourage residents to rise slowly
- ▶ Ensure mobility aids are available
- ▶ Review medications if falls increase
- ▶ Ensure a comprehensive person-centred care plan is written in their Fusion documentation

Preventing falls is a key element of blood pressure management in older adults.

# Person-Centred and Dignified Care

Managing high blood pressure in care homes must always align with person-centred care principles. This includes:

- › Respecting residents' wishes and comfort
- › Involving families where appropriate
- › Considering quality of life, not just numbers
- › Adjusting Fusion care plans for residents receiving palliative or end-of-life care



The goal is not perfection, but safe, compassionate, and appropriate care.

# Working with NHS Services

Effective blood pressure management relies on good collaboration with:

- GPs and practice nurses
- Community nursing teams
- Pharmacists
- Specialist services where needed

Clear communication ensures timely reviews, medication adjustments, and holistic care.

## Final Thoughts:

High blood pressure is common among care home residents, but it does not have to be inevitable or unmanaged. With regular monitoring, thoughtful medication support, good nutrition, and person-centred care, residents can be protected from avoidable harm and supported to live well.

In care homes, managing blood pressure is about more than numbers — it is about dignity, prevention, and quality of life.