# Social care in our communities

In the past, healthcare, education and housing weren't provided by governments and people had to look after themselves. However, as countries develop and become richer, they are able to provide support for those people who cannot look after themselves. In the last 80 years, more governments around the world have been providing these services for people.

A: _____

Many governments provide free medical care and hospital treatment for everyone, both rich and poor. This may include eye care and dental care, too. In other countries, people may pay a small part of the cost of their healthcare. Families and individuals register with a doctor at a local clinic or health centre, and the doctor provides health advice and medicines when they are needed. For serious medical conditions and operations people use hospitals and larger healthcare centres.

B: _____

The age that children attend school is different in every country. In general, children usually begin their formal education between the ages of four and seven and continue until 16 or 18. Some countries provide special schools for poor children who have to work to help their families, or children with illnesses or disabilities. While education for children is free in some countries, students usually have to pay for further education at colleges or universities.

C: _____

When people are too poor to buy a house, they can rent a house from a private landlord. However, rents can sometimes be expensive. In some countries, governments buy houses and rent them cheaply to people who need support. This is called community housing. Many governments around the world have been providing community housing since the mid-1900s.

D: *Elderly care*

In some countries, if old people need constant specialist healthcare, the government provides care homes. Care homes have special nurses to look after the elderly residents. Each person has a private bedroom and there is a communal living room, a reading room and gardens where they can make friends and do activities together.