



# Your Carer's Assessment

**A Preparation Guide for Carers**

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## 1. Introduction

This guide for adult carers has been designed to help you get the best out of your carer's assessment. It is to help you think through what you might want to talk about.

You might find it hard to think what is involved in caring, especially as it may be part of everyday life. The guide may help you to think about how your caring role affects you, prior to your assessment. It may highlight particular concerns or bring up questions that you would like answered.

If you would like a copy of this guide in another language, or format such as large print, easy read, braille or audio, please phone 0300 123 6701.

## 2. What is a carer's assessment?

A carer's assessment is used to find out about your needs and can help us to understand the best way to support you to maintain your own health and wellbeing whilst balancing caring with other aspects of your life, for example employment and other family responsibilities. An assessment is **not** about your capability to care but it is to look at ways in which we can best support you in your caring role.

If you provide care for an adult you have a legal right to a carer's assessment to plan the help that you need. This can happen even if the person you care for refuses to have a care and support assessment of their own.

You also have a right to an assessment if you **intend** to look after someone. For example: if a friend or relative is in hospital and you expect to look after them when they are discharged.

## 3. How a carer's assessment can help you

During the assessment we will ask you questions about yourself. Remember no-one knows more about you than you do - you are the expert about yourself.

An assessment of carer's needs is an opportunity to:

- talk and reflect on your own needs as a carer
- share your experience of caring and to recognise your role as a carer
- be given information, advice and help
- identify and discuss any difficulties you may have

You may already have a good idea of what kind of help you need to make your caring role easier. If you are unsure, the carer's assessment will give you a chance to think about this and talk through the options of support.

## **4. Who will carry out your assessment?**

Your Carer's Assessment can be a separate assessment or can take place at the same time that the person you care for has their Social Care Assessment. Should you wish to have your own separate assessment this can be carried out by the Lancashire Carers Service or a Local Authority Social Worker.

You should confirm your preference at the time of booking your Carer's Assessment so that the appropriate arrangements can be put in place.

## **5. Preparing for your assessment**

To help you prepare for your assessment you may wish to think about the following:

- having a friend or family member to be with you during your assessment
- where you would like the assessment to take place
- writing down in advance all the help you provide on a day to day basis covering your caring tasks, as sometimes it is easy to forget how much you do. Don't forget to include anything you have to do overnight as well as during the day, and any prompting that you do as well as hands on care!
- your personal profile ('say it once') that you may wish to give to the assessor beforehand
- If there is anything else, in your caring role, that you would like your assessor to know

### **5.1. Communication needs**

Before the assessment takes place, you may wish to think about what your communication needs are and your preferred communication style. Please consider the following questions and if you answer yes to either then you will need to let the person carrying out the assessment know so that prior arrangements can be made;

- Do you need an interpreter (e.g. British Sign Language interpreter or English is not your first language)?

- Is an independent advocate needed to assist you with the assessment? (*Your assessor can arrange for you to have an independent advocate to help you at the assessment if you do not have a friend or family member who is able to help you*).

Carers can qualify for an advocate under the Care Act. You can get further information on getting help from the County Council's Advocacy Service on **03300 022 200**.

## **6. Assessing your needs**

This guide will help you think about your caring role and what it means to you. This may include particular concerns or things you would like to know more about. You may find it hard to think what is involved in caring, as you see it as part of everyday life.

### **6.1. What questions will I be asked?**

Below are some of the questions you may be asked during your assessment. The prompts for each question are for you to think about how you may answer each section of the assessment. You may find it helpful to think about what your life is like now, and how it could be improved. You don't need to fill it in or show it to anyone. It's just to give you some ideas about the things which may be discussed at the assessment.

The checklist may not cover everything, as each caring role is unique.

#### **i. Background**

This section is for you to talk about your current situation. This may be who you live with, your family and other relationships. Whether there are any children involved in the caring role. What sort of things do you do for the person you care for? How often? How long does it take?

- Household tasks, e.g. shopping, cooking, cleaning, laundry?
- Personal care, e.g. assistance to wash, bath, feed, use the toilet?
- Help with medical care, e.g. equipment, medication, co-ordinating appointments, ensuring therapy routines (such as physio exercises) are followed?
- Paperwork, e.g. dealing with mail, bills, money?

- Mobility, transfers and lifting, e.g. do you assist with physically moving and handling/lifting the person you care for? Are there any aids or adaptations (e.g. raised chairs/beds, hoists) in the home to help? Would you like any training to support moving and handling tasks?
- Getting around – walking, pushing a wheelchair, in the car, transporting to appointments?
- Environment, e.g. is the house suitable for the physical needs of the person you care for?
- Providing emotional support? Helping them to express their views?
- Emergency care – are you at the end of the phone? Or a keyholder?

In this section you will also be asked whether you care for more than one person, whether you feel able to continue to care and what support networks you currently have in place.

The following areas will help to identify where you have needs that are a result of your caring role:

#### **ii. Physical Health**

- Do you have any health problems?
- Do you get headaches? or backaches?
- How easy do you find it to attend health appointments for yourself, e.g. doctor, optician, hospital?
- Does your GP know you are a carer?
- Are you yourself disabled in any way? i.e. chronic illness, deaf/hard of hearing

#### **iii. Emotional Wellbeing**

- How do you feel within yourself?
- Do you get a full night's sleep?
- Are you feeling anxious or stressed?
- Do you have someone you can turn to if you have a problem?
- Are you feeling low or worried?
- Do you have any other mental health concerns (both for you or the person you care for)?

**iv. Medication**

- Do you need to take medication and are you able to take it at the right times?

**v. Daily Living**

- Are you responsible for the maintenance of your home?
- Are you able to keep up with domestic duties, such as cooking, cleaning, washing?
- Are you able to carry out tasks such as shopping, banking etc.?

**vi. Personal Care**

- Are you able to maintain your own personal care?
- Are you able to attend appointments such as hairdressers, dentists?
- Are you able to take bathroom breaks?

**vii. Meals and Nutrition**

- Are you able to eat regular meals?
- Do you prepare meals/have the time to prepare meals?

**viii. Social Inclusion (social life & activities)**

- What did you do before you became a carer that you are no longer able to do?
- Are you able to keep up with hobbies?
- Can you maintain friendships and relationships outside your caring role?
- Do you get a chance to have a break from your caring role?

**ix. Environment**

- Do you and the person you care for live together or apart?
- Is the house suitable for the needs of all who live there?
- How easy is it to access the facilities you need in your community, such as the GP, the post office, shops and the pharmacy?
- Are you able to park at the property?
- Are there any hazards or health and safety risks?
- How secure is the property?

**x. Money Management**

*(This section may not be applicable but some carers may manage the finances for the person they care for).*

- Can the person you care for manage their own money?
- Do you assist with managing the finances of the person you care for?
- Is power of attorney in place or court of protection involved?
- Are you receiving any financial support or benefits?

**xi. Education, Employment & Leisure**

- Are you currently working or in training, or wanting to return to work?
- Have you had to leave work or reduce your hours because of your caring role?
- Is support required to access either education and/or employment?
- Do you have the opportunity to pursue leisure activities?

**xii. Contingency Planning (carer's back-up plans)**

- What would happen to the person you care for if you were to suddenly become ill; do you know who to contact in an emergency?
- What might signal that you can no longer cope/care?
- Have you thought of alternative care arrangements in the event of an emergency?
- Do you have plans in place for long term care?
- How do you see the future; what is likely to affect your ability to care long term?

## **7. After the assessment**

### **7.1. Assessment Summary**

When the assessment comes to an end you will have the opportunity to give a personal choice statement. This is an opportunity to add any additional information or to give a summary of what is most important to you. It may be something that has not been captured already within the assessment. It is an opportunity to discuss anything that may not yet have been addressed.



## **7.2. Eligibility Criteria**

Once your assessment is completed, the local authority will use the information you have provided to determine if you are eligible to receive a carer payment. Regardless of whether you are deemed eligible, there will be various types of support that you can access and your assessor will signpost you to this support.

Types of support that you may be able to access include:

- Information and advice relevant to you as a carer
- Contact with carer groups / peer support
- Receipt of a carer payment (to purchase your own support)
- Carer respite to support you to have breaks from your caring role
- Emotional support and one to one support

## **7.3. Support Planning**

If the outcome of your assessment is that you are eligible to receive a carer payment, you will be supported to create your own support plan which will agree how the support will be arranged, and how the payment will be used. The plan will outline any outcomes and actions that were recorded in your assessment and will focus on ensuring that your wider wellbeing is considered including the support you need to continue in your caring role.

If you are dissatisfied with the assessment outcome you can appeal against the decision through the normal Adult Services customer complaints procedure which can be found at:

<http://www.lancashire.gov.uk/health-and-social-care/adult-social-care/compliments-comments-complaints/>

or by email to: [complaintsandfeedback@lancashire.gov.uk](mailto:complaintsandfeedback@lancashire.gov.uk)

or by writing to:       Complaints and appeals team  
                              Legal and democratic services  
                              Christ Church Precinct  
                              County Hall  
                              Preston  
                              PR1 8XJ

#### **7.4. Carer Respite**

Your assessment may identify that you need a break from caring from time to time so you can look after your own health and wellbeing. This can be for just a few hours or more if you need a longer break. It can be provided to the person that you care for through support at home, day services, or a respite stay in a residential or nursing home.

We normally consider respite care as part of the 'cared for' person's services. As such, eligibility for funded respite provision is based on the needs of the person you are caring for.

If you need help, and the person you look after pays for their own care and support, our **Care Navigation Team** can advise you about arranging respite care.

#### **7.5. Assessment/Support Plan Reviews**

Your assessment/support plan will be reviewed annually. The Carers Service will attempt to contact you around the time that your assessment review is due but if you do not hear from them you can contact them on 0345 688 7113. If you have had an assessment and support plan produced alongside the person you care for then your review may coincide with the review for the person you care for.

## **8. Contact us**

To request a carer's assessment or a review of your carer's assessment please call the Lancashire Carers Service on: **0345 688 7113**.

For information about Lancashire County Council's services please get in touch:

You can telephone us on **0300 123 6720**

Email **[enquiries@lancashire.gov.uk](mailto:enquiries@lancashire.gov.uk)**

Visit **[www.lancashire.gov.uk](http://www.lancashire.gov.uk)**

(All of the information you give us will be kept confidential unless you have given us permission to share. You will be asked to complete a 'permission to share' form at your assessment).