



SURREY
COUNTY COUNCIL

Carers Needs Assessment

A Preparation Guide for Carers



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.

The guide may help you to think about how your caring role affects you, prior to your assessment. You may want to tell us about any concerns you have and how caring for your loved one impacts you and your own life. Thinking about your role as a carer may bring up questions that you would like answered or you might find it hard to think what is involved in caring, especially as it may be part of everyday life.

How a carer's assessment can help you

A Carers Needs Assessment is simply a conversation that helps us to understand the best way to support you in your caring role and in your life outside of caring. It's an opportunity to:

- ♦ 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 in your caring role and in other aspects of your daily living.
- ♦ Support you by understanding what matters to you and any aspirations you have.
- ♦ Explain what past or current hobbies, skills or interests you have that you would like to return to or start.
- ♦ Discover what, if anything, gets in the way of you pursuing your personal aspirations?

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

Preparing for your assessment

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

- Has the experience changed the way you view yourself?
- Has the way you view life changed (e.g. what you see as important)?
- Have there been any positive benefits?
- What have you learned since taking on a caring role?
- How do you feel you have been able to help the person you care for?
- What are you pleased or proud about having achieved?
- Thinking about your relative or friend, what have they achieved that you are proud of?
- What would be helpful in your life?
- Do you need practical or financial support?
- What, if any, emotional support do you need?
- Where do you go to get the help you need?

Top Tip

- It may help you to keep a daily diary for a fortnight, covering your caring tasks and how they impact on you, as sometimes it is easy to forget how much you do.

Prior to your carers needs assessment please speak to your adult social care worker who can help you to arrange the following: -

- Having a friend, family member or advocate with you during your assessment
- Ensuring any communication aids, translators or other aids and adaptations you require are available
- Arrange short discussions with regular breaks during the assessment
- Discuss where you would like the assessment to take place? In your home or away from home? It can be anywhere, indoors, or out, weather permitting
- Discuss any worries around who is present at the meeting? e.g., assurance regarding confidentiality and wishing to be alone during the assessment.
- Do you need to plan replacement care or a sitter to look after the person you care for whilst we have an assessment discussion with you?

During the assessment

What questions will I be asked?

We will try to avoid asking lots of questions and instead have a conversation with you about your life and what is important to you. The following areas will be part of our conversation and it may help you to have a think and reflect on how things are for you and what support you feel would help you both as a carer and within your wider life and needs.

About you

We will talk with you about:

- Your current situation
- The impact of providing necessary care to another adult on your own physical and mental health, on your daily life and wellbeing – think about how you are feeling
- Who you care for and what support you have from others in your role as a carer?
- How are things different now you are a 'carer'?
- What effect has your experience had on other areas of your life and has your relationship with your relative or friend changed?
- What has been the effect on other family members – partner, children, siblings, grandchildren, grandparents?
- What is important to you and anything you would like to pursue to enrich your life outside of your caring role.
- Who is in your network such as family members or friends/relationships?

- Who and what is important to you?
- What are the good things in your life at present and what is working well right now?

Your Health

- Do you have any health issues or recurring problems?
- How easy do you find it to go to health appointments for yourself, e.g., doctor, optician, dentist, hospital?
- Do you have to move or lift the person you care for?
- Do you have any aids or adaptations to help you? (e.g., raised chairs/bed, hoists)
- Are you yourself disabled in any way or do you have an illness or condition? i.e., chronic illness, deaf/hard of hearing, asthma?

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 and the person you care for?)

Medication

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

Your strengths, wellbeing, and priorities

- What are your own personal strengths, your skills, abilities, and past experiences that you may be able to draw on.
- What you like most about your daily life at the current time, something that makes you feel happy, free, or empowered?
- What you can achieve on a good day/what makes it a good day/ what would need to happen to have more good days?
- Any other wider support networks or friendships that support you now or might be able to support you?
- Things/strategies that have worked well for you in the past and might help now?
- Do you get a chance to have a break from your caring role?

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?
- Would you like support to access either education or employment?
- Do you have the opportunity to pursue leisure activities?

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?
- Do you also look after the space outside your home?
- Are you able to carry out tasks such as shopping, banking etc.?

Personal Care

- Are you able to maintain your own personal care?
- Are you able to take bathroom breaks when you need to?

Meals and Nutrition

- Are you able to eat regular meals?
- Do you prepare meals?

Environment

- Do you and the person you care for live together or apart?
- Is your home suitable for the physical needs of the person you care for?
- Is your home 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 near your home? Near the home of the person you care for?
- Are there any hazards or health and safety risks?
- How secure is your home or the home of the person you care for?

Mobility and Transfers

- Do you assist with physically moving and handling the person you care for?
- Are there any physical aides in the home to help?
- Would you like any training to support with moving and handling tasks?
- Do you transport the person you care for to other places, e.g., hospital appointments?
- Do you transfer the person you care for in a wheelchair?
- Do you have any difficulties related to the pushing or the operation of a wheelchair?

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 is the Court of Protection involved?
- Are you receiving any financial support or benefits?
- Are you aware of disability benefits and possible council tax disregards?

Safety & Contingency Planning (Carer's back-up plans)

- Any risks you or we have identified and together we can look at some actions to remove or reduce them and keep you and the person you care for safe.
- What do you need as a Carer in the short term/immediately if a crisis/emergency occurs and you were not able to provide care and support? e.g., if you were suddenly taken ill.
- What would you like to happen in the medium term e.g. if you had to stay over in hospital for a week or longer?
- In the long term if you were not able to continue in your caring role?
- What can you do to keep yourself safe and well and who can help you do this?
- Do you currently have an emergency plan in place?
- How do you see the future; what is likely to affect your ability to care long term?
- Do you know if you are included in the crisis contingency plan of the person you care for, if they have one? Do you know what this expects of you?

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.

What happens next?

Are you eligible to receive full support from adult social care?

Once your assessment is completed, the local authority will use the information you have provided to determine if you are eligible to receive services. Your assessor should give you an idea of how long this will take. Regardless of whether you are deemed eligible, there will be various types of support that you can access.

If eligible, here are some types of support that you may be able to access:

- Direct Payments to purchase your own support or to help you maintain your own health.
- Breaks from caring.
- Training to assist you in your caring role eg moving and handling

(If you are dissatisfied with the assessment outcome, you can appeal against the decision through the Adult Services customer complaints procedure).

Support plan

If the outcome of your assessment is that you are eligible to receive services, you will have your own support plan developed. The plan will need to be agreed between you and the assessor and you will be given an indication of how long it will take to receive your completed plan. The plan will outline any actions and outcomes that were recorded in your assessment. It will also show if you are due to have any services in place and a schedule of when you will receive these.

Reviews

If you receive a support plan you will be contacted 6-8 weeks to arrange a review to check how things are progressing and that there are no initial issues. Your support plan will then be reviewed annually. If you have 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.

*** All of the information you give us will be kept confidential unless you have given us permission to share. You will be offered a “consent to share” form at your assessment which you can then discuss with your assessor.**

Consent to share personal data. We will ask for your permission to share the information we hold about you with other people and organisations that support you now or may do so in the future.

If you are not eligible for adult social care support

There is still a wide range of support available. We will provide you with an action plan which details a plan for you to access other services for support that we will have discussed during your assessment.

This will include information and advice relevant to you as a carer including full details of those available as universal services.

To find out more about all universal services available to Carers, visit our web pages <https://www.surreycc.gov.uk/adults/care-and-support/carers>

Plus register with Action for Carers Surrey on 0303 040 1234 or email CarerSupport@actionforcarers.org.uk for advice and information.