

Factsheet G3: Carer's Assessment



In England, millions of people provide unpaid care or support for an adult family member, partner, friend or neighbour, either in their own home or somewhere else. Caring for someone covers lots of different things, like helping with washing, dressing or eating, ensuring medication is being taken correctly, taking someone to appointments or being a companion when they are anxious or lonely.

The Care Act 2014 came into effect on 1st April 2015 and it changed the way care and support is provided in England. If you are aged 18 or over and the person you care for is an adult (18+), you may be able to get more help to look after your own wellbeing and carry on caring. The type of support you need is determined through a Carer's Assessment.

What is a Carer's Assessment?

A Carer's Assessment can help you find support to make your life or caring role easier. It's not about judging the care that you provide, but focuses on your physical, mental and emotional wellbeing. It is separate to a needs assessment that looks at what support the person with care needs requires, like equipment or help at home.

The assessment is about understanding how caring affects your life and finding ways to help you continue doing the things that are important to you and your family. It should cover your caring role, feelings about caring, how caring affects your work, leisure, education, wider family and relationships. It should also include a discussion about an 'In Case of Emergency Plan' (see our Factsheet G11a).

You can request a Carer's Assessment at any time and ask for another if your caring situation changes. Contact your local council responsible for social care to request an assessment, like Hertfordshire County Council for Hertfordshire residents. You can find your local council responsible for adult social care at www.nhs.uk/service-search/other-health-services/local-authority-adult-social-care/

The assessment is free and councils should not charge carers for any support provided to them. An assessment may be carried out face to face, online or over the phone, at a time and place that is convenient for you.

As a result of an assessment, you may be eligible for support from your local council with an adult care service. This could be advice, practical help with tasks such as gardening, counselling, or respite opportunities. You may be awarded a Direct Payment so that you can source support to meet your assessed needs.

You can have a Carer's Assessment even if the person you care for doesn't get any help from the council and you don't need their permission. If you share the care of your family member, partner or friend with someone else, each individual who provides unpaid care will be entitled to their own Carer's Assessment.

How do I get an assessment?

A Carer's Assessment is completed by a social worker or trained professional. If you care for an **adult with a physical disability** in Hertfordshire, you can ask for a Carer's Assessment by contacting Hertfordshire County Council's Adult Care Services (ACS) on 0300 123 4042 or via the Hertfordshire County Council website:

www.hertfordshire.gov.uk/services/adult-social-services/care-and-carers/arranging-and-paying-for-care/self-referral-form/ask-for-social-care-help.aspx

If you have been refused help prior to 2015, ask for an assessment again, as the criteria for getting help are different under the 2014 Care Act.

In Hertfordshire, Carers Assessments for **carers of someone with a mental health problem** are carried out by Hertfordshire Partnership University NHS Foundation Trust (HPFT) please contact them on 0800 644 4101 to request an assessment. More information about their process is available at

www.hpft.nhs.uk/media/7482/carers-handbook-6th-edition-may-2024.pdf

If you are caring for a disabled child under 18 or are a young carer under 18 years of age you have similar rights to assessment and support but they are covered by the 2014 Children and Families Act. If you are in Hertfordshire, please contact Hertfordshire's 0-25 Service, by calling 0300 123 4043 to discuss your caring circumstances.

How to prepare for the Carer's Assessment

Collect all the relevant information you'll need such as your NHS number and GP's contact details.

Consider whether you want anyone at the assessment with you and if this is the person you look after, if you will be able to speak freely about any difficulties you have? If you feel you won't open up, think about arranging someone to stay with the person you support, if they need someone, or ask the council if you don't have anyone.

Make a list of the different ways you provide support, such as offering emotional support, managing finances, helping someone with practical activities such as shopping or with personal needs such as using the bathroom. It's worth keeping a diary of everything you do for one or two weeks before the assessment, so you don't forget to mention anything.

Some things you may want to think about:

- Do you get enough sleep or is it disturbed by your caring role?
- How is your health affected by your caring role?
- Do you get any time for yourself?
- Are your other family and friendship relationships affected?
- Do you have any financial concerns?
- Are you finding it difficult to juggle work and caring?
- Is the person you care for getting enough help?
- What sort of services might help you?
- Does the person you care for have difficulty moving about in the home?

More things to think about when preparing for a Carer's Assessment:

- Would aids or adaptations to your home make life easier for you and the person you look after?
- What are your interests? Do you want to pursue leisure interests but feel you can't because of your caring role?
- How many hours a week do you provide care? Include **all** the time you spend with the person you care for and the tasks you do for them.
- How would you deal with emergencies and unplanned events? Do you know who to contact in an emergency?
- Is this a review assessment? How has your situation changed and what new challenges are you facing?

After an assessment

- You should be given a written copy of the Carer's Assessment after it has been completed, this should summarise your discussions and give details of your individual support plan. Only sign the document if you are happy that this an accurate summary of your discussions and the plan agreed.
- If you're not eligible for support, you should be given information and advice on where you can go for help.
- If you have any concerns regarding the assessment process from Adult Care Services, or the outcomes, do contact them to discuss further on 0300 123 4042.

More information

The following websites contain further information about the Carer's Assessment and the Carers Act 2014:

Carers UK: www.carersuk.org/help-and-advice/ and www.carersuk.org/help-and-advice/practical-support/carer-s-assessment/

Hertfordshire County Council: How carers can get help and assistance at www.hertfordshire.gov.uk/services/adult-social-services/carers/how-to-get-help.aspx#carersassessment

For parents / carers in Hertfordshire caring for a child aged up to 25 with a special educational needs and/or disability (SEND)

www.hertfordshire.gov.uk/microsites/local-offer/services-for-parents-carers-and-families/get-a-carers-assessment.aspx

*The information contained on this sheet is correct at the time of issue.
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