



**DementiaUK**

Helping families face dementia



## **The Carer's Assessment**

## What is the Carer's Assessment?

If you provide care to a friend or family member with dementia, you are entitled to have a Carer's Assessment. While this is your right, you may have to be quite forthright in requesting the assessment takes place. If you need any support on how to request this assessment from your council, please call the Admiral Nurse Dementia Helpline on 0800 888 6678.

The Carer's Assessment is a process where your Local Authority or Local Council Social Services assess your individual needs as a carer.

The Assessment will look at the impact that caring for a person with dementia is having upon you, and will then identify the type and level of support that you need to be able to carry out your role as a carer.

This could include some respite care for the person with dementia, so that you have some time to yourself; or some training in safe ways to help a person with dementia move around, or some help coming to your home.



The Carer's Assessment was established as part of the Care Act 2014, which sets out the legal rights of people with caring responsibilities to receive an assessment, and then receive support dependent upon their needs.

## How to get a Carer's Assessment

You can ask your GP or another medical professional, such as a nurse, to refer you. Or you can directly contact your Local Authority social services to request the assessment.

The person with caring responsibilities must give their consent to undergo the Assessment. This is worth noting if you are asking on behalf of a friend or family member.

A social worker will contact you to set up an appointment for the Assessment to take place. They will also send you a form to fill in in advance, or to fill in with their assistance at the appointment.

## What will happen at the Assessment?

The social worker will usually visit you at home, so they can see the challenges you face. They will ask you about the pattern of your day, and what caring responsibilities you may have throughout the night; for instance, whether the person you care for gets up during the night, affecting how much sleep you both get.

The social worker will ask you about the practicalities of caring for the person with dementia, such as getting them washed and dressed, managing the cooking and helping them to eat and drink, getting them in and out of bed etc. The more specific you are able to be about these tasks, the better the results of the Assessment will be.

They will look around your home to see if you would benefit from any adaptations or aids, such as those that help a person to use the shower or the toilet, or get in and out of bed.

They will ask you whether you get any time to yourself, to visit friends or simply spend some time away from the person with dementia. It might not seem important to talk about whether you get any time for leisure activities or fun, but time to ourselves is key to keeping happy and healthy, and we cannot look after anyone else if we are not well ourselves.

From all of these questions, the social worker will prepare a Carer's Support Plan, with suggestions for ways to help ease some of the challenges you might be facing.

## The Carer's Support Plan

Your Support Plan might:

- recommend any adaptations or aids to help you in your caring role
- suggest ways to help you make time for yourself, for instance, to get to the shops or visit a hairdresser. This can start with suggestions for arranging for someone to pop in through to arranging for respite care to enable short regular breaks, or more permanent residential or nursing care

You will be asked for your opinion so the Support Plan reflects your views. It is designed to find ways to give you some quality of life, so that your caring role does not overwhelm every other part of your life.

Please be aware that any changes in routine may have to be introduced slowly and carefully, to allow the person with dementia to feel comfortable, especially if introducing a new carer for some of the time.

Often, a Carer's Assessment can be done at the same time as an assessment for the person with dementia, as these assessments have



some crossover. However, doing them separately allows more time to focus on your individual needs. Speak to the social worker carrying out your assessment to find out which is suitable for you.

## **Funding and Eligibility**

Once you have received your Support Plan, a financial assessment will need to be carried out to determine how your Support Plan will be funded. This will be carried out by your Local Authority and you are entitled to this assessment.

You might be eligible for funding for your Support Plan from your Local Authority. This will be means tested; in other words, this will be based upon whether you are able to afford to pay for your care.

If you are found to be eligible for funding, your Local Authority will provide you with this funding in one of three ways:

- as a ‘personal budget’ which the Local Authority will calculate and pass on to the services providing your care, which can be either Local Authority services or private home care providers
- a ‘direct payment’ which will be paid directly to you, to purchase services from private home care providers
- a combination of the two ways above

The level of care available may differ in parts of the UK. It is similar in England and Wales, but different in Scotland and Ireland.

## Why is the Carer’s Assessment important?

A tailored support plan can:

- give you more quality of life, stopping you from potentially becoming anxious, depressed or physically unwell
- help give you time to recharge and energise so you are able to continue caring
- help you to look after the person with dementia for as long as you want to

## Sources of support

- Carers UK **0808 808 7777** [www.carersuk.org](http://www.carersuk.org)
- Gov.uk [www.gov.uk/carers-uk](http://www.gov.uk/carers-uk)
- NHS Choices [www.nhs.uk](http://www.nhs.uk)
- The Carers Trust **0844 800 4361** [www.carers.org](http://www.carers.org)



The information in this booklet is written and reviewed by dementia specialist Admiral Nurses.

We are always looking to improve our resources, to provide the most relevant support for families living with dementia. If you have feedback about any of our leaflets, please email **[feedback@dementiauk.org](mailto:feedback@dementiauk.org)**

We receive no government funding and rely on voluntary donations, including gifts in Wills. For more information on how to support Dementia UK, please visit **[www.dementiauk.org/donate](http://www.dementiauk.org/donate)** or call **0300 365 5500**.

Publication date: October 2018

Review date: October 2020

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If you're caring for someone with dementia or if you have any other concerns or questions, call or email our Admiral Nurses for specialist support and advice.

Call **0800 888 6678** or email **[helpline@dementiauk.org](mailto:helpline@dementiauk.org)**

Open Monday – Friday, 9am – 9pm

Saturday and Sunday, 9am – 5pm

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