



DementiaUK
Helping families face dementia

The Carer's Assessment



What is the Carer's Assessment?

If you provide care for a family member or a friend with dementia and/or other health conditions, you are entitled to a Social Services Carer's Assessment.

The assessment looks at your needs as a carer and the impact of your caring responsibilities on your life, and identifies the support you need to carry out your role as a carer, for example:

- respite care for the person with dementia so that you have some time to yourself (also called carer's breaks)

- help from home carers
- training in how to look after the person you care for
- equipment to help you care for the person
- support with arranging flexible working
- mental health support for you

The Carer's Assessment is free, and anyone over 18 who has unpaid caring responsibilities can request one.

Carer's Assessments are similar in England and Wales, but different in Scotland and Northern Ireland – for details, please see Sources of support on p7.

Are you a carer?

You are a carer if you regularly look after someone who is ill, disabled or elderly, including family members.

You are considered a carer if you help the person with:

- washing and dressing
- getting out and about
- attending medical appointments
- taking medication
- household tasks like shopping, cleaning and laundry
- looking after their bills and finances
- providing company, or watching over them if they cannot be left alone



How to get a Carer's Assessment

Your GP or another medical professional, such as a nurse, can refer you for a Carer's Assessment, or you can request it directly from your local authority Social Services Department. You can find their details at [nhs.uk/service-search/other-services/Local-Authority-Adult-Social-Care/LocationSearch/1918](https://www.nhs.uk/service-search/other-services/Local-Authority-Adult-Social-Care/LocationSearch/1918)

A Social Worker will then contact you to set up an appointment for the assessment to take place.

The person with caring responsibilities must consent to the assessment so if you are applying on behalf of a friend or family member, they must give permission.

It is your legal right to receive a Carer's Assessment, but some people find they have to be quite forthright in requesting one. If you need any support with applying for an assessment, call our Helpline to speak to a specialist dementia nurse – see Sources of support on p7 for details.

Preparing for a Carer's Assessment

Social Services will send you a form to complete in advance, or to fill in with their assistance at the appointment.

You will need to provide:

- your contact details, including your email address
- your NHS number
- the name and address of your GP
- the name, address and NHS number (if possible) of the person you care for
- contact details of anyone who will be with you at the assessment

It is a good idea to write notes on how you help the person you care for, and the impact it has on your life, including your physical and mental health, work, relationships and free time.

It can be helpful to have someone with you during the assessment. This may be a friend or family member, or a paid or volunteer advocate who can help you make your views known.

What will happen at the Carer's Assessment?

The Carer's Assessment usually takes place face-to-face at home or at the home of the person you care for so the Social Worker can see the challenges you face. Some local authorities will do the assessment online or by phone. It usually lasts at least an hour.

The Social Worker will ask you about the practicalities of caring for the person with dementia, such as helping them wash and dress, cooking and helping them to eat and drink, getting them in and out of bed etc. Be as specific as possible so the Social Worker can identify what support you need.

They will also ask you about any caring responsibilities that you may have throughout the night – for instance, if the person you care for gets up during the night.

You should make sure you tell the assessor if there are other people who you care for, such as children or grandchildren, and if your caring responsibilities are having an impact on your relationships with other family members or friends.



The Social Worker will look around the home to see if you would benefit from any adaptations or aids, such as equipment to help the person with dementia to use the shower or get into and out of bed.

They will ask whether you get any time for leisure activities, socialising and holidays: time to yourself is key to keeping happy, healthy, and able to cope with your caring role.

The Carer's Support Plan

Following the Carer's Assessment, the Social Worker should agree the next steps with you, and share any relevant information they have

gathered with other health and social care professionals who are involved with you or the person you care for, eg a nurse or GP.

If the assessment has identified that you have eligible needs, the Social Worker will work with you to prepare a 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 example, arranging for someone to pop in and sit with the person you care for, or finding the person a place at a day centre
- make provisions for carer's breaks of a few hours, overnight, or longer – these could be one-off or regular
- connect you with peer support groups and one-to-one befrienders for emotional and practical support and to share experiences and ideas

You will be asked for your opinion on the Support Plan, so make sure it reflects your views.

Be aware that any changes in routine may have to be introduced slowly and carefully to enable the person with dementia to feel comfortable, especially if you are introducing a new carer.

Often, a Carer's Assessment can be done at the same time as a Needs Assessment, which identifies what support the person with dementia needs themselves, as these assessments have some crossover. However, it is better to do them separately so you have more time to focus on your individual needs. Speak to the Social Worker to find out whether the assessments can be done separately.

See Sources of support on p7 for details of the Needs Assessment.

Funding for your Carer's Support Plan

Once you have received your Carer's Support Plan, a financial assessment will need to be carried out to determine how your support needs will be funded. This will be undertaken by your local authority and you are entitled to this assessment whatever your financial situation.

Local authority funding to meet the recommendations of your Support Plan is means-tested, based upon whether you can afford to pay partly or fully for the support you need.

If you are eligible for funding, it will be provided in one of three ways:

- a 'personal budget', where the local authority will choose which services will provide care and support and pay for them directly – these could be local authority services or private providers
- a 'direct payment', which is money paid directly to you so you can choose how the care is provided, and by whom – the local authority will usually ask for evidence of how you have spent the money every three months
- a combination of the above

If you are not eligible for funding, the local authority should be able to give you free advice about other ways you can get support in your community.

Sources of support

If you have any questions about the Carer's Assessment or any other aspect of dementia, you can speak to a specialist Admiral Nurse on our Dementia Helpline. Call free on **0800 888 6678** (Monday-Friday 9am-9pm, Saturday and Sunday 9am-5pm, every day except 25th December) or email helpline@dementiauk.org

If you prefer, you can book a phone or video call with an Admiral Nurse at a time to suit you: please visit dementiauk.org/closer-to-home

Dementia UK information

Looking after yourself
as a carer

dementiauk.org/looking-after-yourself-when-you-care

Financial and legal sources
of support

dementiauk.org/sources-of-support-and-advice

Coping with feelings of guilt

dementiauk.org/coping-with-feelings-of-guilt

Other resources

Adult Carer Support
Plans (Scotland)

mygov.scot/becoming-a-carer/adult-carer-support-plan-and-young-carer-statement

Carer's Assessments
(Northern Ireland)

nidirect.gov.uk/articles/assessments-carers

NHS: Carer's Assessments

nhs.uk/conditions/social-care-and-support-guide/support-and-benefits-for-carers/carers-assessments/

Apply for a Needs Assessment

gov.uk/apply-needs-assessment-social-services

Carers Trust

Information and support for
unpaid carers

carers.org

Gov.uk: benefits and
financial support if you're
caring for someone

gov.uk/browse/benefits/help-for-carers

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

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For more information on how to support Dementia UK, please visit dementiauk.org/donate or call **0300 365 5500**.
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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

Open Monday-Friday, 9am-9pm
Saturday and Sunday, 9am-5pm



dementiauk.org • info@dementiauk.org

Dementia UK, 7th Floor, One Aldgate, London EC3N 1RE
Dementia UK is a registered charity in England and Wales (1039404) and Scotland (SC047429).