

A guide to assessments of carers' needs

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Who is a carer?

The term 'carer' may be unfamiliar to you and it may seem strange to be described as one.

We use the term 'carer' to describe anyone who looks after someone or feels responsible for someone who cannot manage at home without some support. This may be because of illness, disability, mental ill health, learning disabilities and problems with drug and alcohol misuse. Carers provide this care and support on an unpaid basis.

Caring for someone, for whatever reason, can be rewarding but, at times, it can also be difficult. You are not alone; in the last census more than 39,000 people in Wiltshire said they provide unpaid care.

Your rights as a carer

As a carer you have the right to have your views taken into account when the person you care for is being assessed. If you provide a "substantial" amount of care on a regular basis you are entitled to have a separate assessment of your needs. This is called an assessment of carers needs. You can ask for your own assessment at any time, even if the person you care for does not want an assessment or services.

Your assessment will be completed by someone from the Department of Community Services, Carer Support Wiltshire or you can opt for a self assessment form.

If the person you care for has mental health needs, services will be delivered by the Community Mental Health Teams (CMHT) through the Care Programme Approach.

Carers and Disabled Children Act 2000

This Act gives you the right to a separate assessment of your needs if you are providing, or intend to provide, a substantial amount of care on a regular basis.

Usually the person you care for will be having, or have had, an assessment of their needs under the 1990 NHS & Community Care Act and ideally this is the best way of helping you both. The services provided to the person you care for will often help to support you by providing some of the care you have been giving.

If the person you care for refuses to have an assessment, you can still ask for an assessment of your needs.

Carers (Equal Opportunities) Act 2004

This Act ensures that carers are able to take up opportunities that people without caring responsibilities often take for granted. When an assessment of carers needs is being completed with you, your needs will be taken into account

- to continue working or return to work
and/or
- to access or continue to access education, training or leisure activities

Am I entitled to an assessment?

The law says that you are eligible for an assessment if:

- you provide, or are about to provide, substantial and regular support to someone who needs care.

Also, if

- your circumstances, or those of the person you care for, change
and
- the person you care for is someone for whom the Department of Community Services or the Community Mental Health team (CMHT) may provide services.

What is an assessment of carers' needs?

An assessment of carers 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 and advice
- identify and discuss any difficulties you may have
- make contingency plans if you are ill or cannot continue in your caring role.

An assessment is not about your capability to care but it will look at ways in which we can best help you in your caring role.

This support can help you to continue with your caring responsibilities, maintain your own health and well-being or help you when you can no longer care.

It is your choice whether you have a separate assessment of your needs or a joint assessment with the person you care for. A joint assessment is when your views and needs are taken into account when the person you care for is being assessed.

You do not have to have an assessment of your needs as a carer. If you choose not to have an assessment, it does not stop the person you care for from receiving services.

What kind of questions will be asked?

To help us understand your caring role and agree how best we can support you, we will ask you about:

- **Your caring role** – how much time is taken up; do you feel you have a choice to care; which aspects do you find particularly difficult; do you understand the condition of the person you care for?
- **Having a break from caring** – do you have any leisure time for yourself or time with friends; when did you last have time for yourself?
- **Your emotional and physical health** – are you well; are you doing any caring tasks that put you at risk, for example lifting someone; do you get a full night's sleep; are you feeling anxious or stressed?
- **Relationships** – if you are a parent, do your caring responsibilities make parenting harder; how is your relationship with the person you care for?
- **Caring for your home/accommodation** – are you finding it difficult to maintain your home and look after the person you care for; do you do all of the housework; would adaptations/ equipment help?
- **Finances** – are they a problem?
- **Work/Education and Training** – do you want to stay in work or return to work; are you worried that you might have to give up education or training because of your caring role?
- **Support** – what help do you get at the moment – is it enough?
- **Other responsibilities** – what other responsibilities do you have, for example, are you a parent/carer for another person; is balancing these responsibilities causing you difficulties?
- **The future** – how do you see the future; what is likely to affect your ability to care long term?
- **Emergencies/alternative arrangements** – 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?

These are just examples of the type of questions you may be asked during an assessment. You may not wish to answer all of them, but it is helpful to think about them.

Preparing for the assessment

Caring for a person can have times of great reward and at other times can be very demanding. An assessment of carers' needs is your time to discuss your own needs and concerns about the care you are providing. The focus of the interview will be on yourself, not the person you are caring for.

Each person's situation is unique. To make best use of the time available, it may be helpful for you to spend a few minutes before the assessment to think about your caring role. This will help you to identify what the main difficulties are for yourself and possibly other family members.

How can I get an assessment of carers' needs?

If the person you look after is currently having an assessment, you should speak to their care manager and ask for an assessment of your own needs.

Otherwise, contact the Department of Community Services Customer Advisers on 0300 456 0111 or your local Community Mental Health team (details at the end of this booklet) and explain that you would like to have an assessment of carers needs.

Who will complete the assessment of carers' needs with you?

You can choose who can help you with the assessment, a Customer Co-ordinator or Social Worker from the local Adult Social Care team or Community Mental Health team or a specialist trained support worker from Carer Support Wiltshire will come to your home to assist. It often helps to have assistance with this because they may help you recognise possible needs you had not thought of. It may also help in discussing appropriate advice and/or services for you and the person you care for. You may also opt to complete a self assessment questionnaire yourself.

What is a Care Programme Approach?

If the person you care for is in touch with mental health services they will be assessed under the Care Programme Approach (CPA). There are two CPA levels, **Standard CPA** or **Enhanced CPA** and they are based on the different levels of need and support that are required.

If you are providing, or intending to provide regular and substantial care you are still entitled to an assessment of carers needs and this will be completed by a care co-ordinator in the CMHT.

What happens after the assessment of carers needs?

When your assessment is completed, we will discuss with you the help needed. This could be help given to you or, if they agree, the person you care for. When everything is agreed, we will give you a copy of the care plan. The care plan should include plans for what help might be needed in an emergency, for example, if you became ill.

We will take into account your views and wishes, but we cannot guarantee to provide all the services that you request. This is because we have eligibility criteria and we have to help people in the greatest need first and according to our resources.

We will always assess people's needs to see if they are eligible for our help. If you are not eligible for services, we can still provide information and advice and help to link you with other organisations which can support you in your caring role.

Someone will review your care plan with you each year, or earlier if your circumstances change, to make sure that what was agreed is still helpful to you.

Remember, if you feel at any stage that your needs (or those of the person you are providing care for) have changed you can ask for a re-assessment or a review. We can then look again at the help you may need. Please get in touch with your care manager or the Department of Community Services Customer Advisors or CMHT office. Contact details can be found at the end of this booklet.

Will I have to pay?

You will not be asked to pay towards the cost of any services which you receive as a carer. If the person you care for has additional services to enable you to have a break from your caring role, those services fall within Wiltshire's charging policy and the cared for person will be financially assessed to see if they need to make a financial contribution towards the charge.

What help can the Department of Community Services offer me?

Services for the person you care for:

You may be able to get help for the person you care for but only if they agree to it and they meet our eligibility criteria.

Examples of the type of help available include:

- personal or practical care at home
- direct payments to enable them to buy their own care
- adaptations and equipment in the home
- respite care
- day care services/activities

If the person you care for is provided with services, they will have a financial assessment and may be charged.

Services to support you in your caring role

If you meet our eligibility criteria support that we may be able to give you include:

- substitute care (such as sitting service)
- help with particular tasks or equipment to help you care
- advice and support in your role as a carer
- short breaks / holiday grants
- direct payments to enable you to buy in the support you need.

If you do not meet our eligibility criteria we will give you information on the Carer Support Agencies who can provide you with support and information.

See our leaflet: '**Eligibility Criteria for Adult & Community Services**'.

You may be interested in joining our **Carers Emergency Card Scheme** which will identify you as a carer in the event of an accident or emergency. Carers in the emergency card scheme are entitled to hold a Wiltshire Passport card which will enable carers to access small discounts from participating businesses in the county.

We also have **Carers Voice** which is an opportunity for you to have a say in planning and developing services to carers through answering surveys that will be sent to you once or twice a year.

Further details are at the back of this booklet.

Where else can I go for advice or support?

If your own health is suffering either emotionally or physically because of your caring responsibilities, don't be afraid to discuss this with your GP. If you want your GP to know that you are a carer, make sure you ask them to include you on their carers' register.

Carer Support Wiltshire provides free and confidential information, advice and support for carers. They produce Carer Information Packs, newsletters and give you the opportunity to join a local carer support group and meet other carers if you wish. They can also signpost you to other helpful resources.

Contact details can be found at the end of this booklet.

What if I'm not happy with the assessment or services I'm receiving?

If you have a problem or a concern, first try to discuss this with your care manager or social worker.

If this does not resolve the problem, then we do have a complaints procedure. Ask for a copy of our leaflet: '**Compliments, Comments and Complaints**'

Available at www.wiltshire.gov.uk
or call 0300 4560 0100
or email customercare@wiltshire.gov.uk

Some helpful contacts for carers

Department of Community Services contacts:

Customer advisers - Tel: 0300 456 0111

Emergency Duty Service provides a social work service outside office hours, at night, weekends and Bank Holidays: Tel: 0845 60 70 888

Carers Emergency Card Scheme will identify you as a carer in the event of an accident or emergency. It is a small card that you carry with you and will tell the finder of the card that you are a carer and that there is someone at home who may be in urgent need of attention. Tel: 0800 066 5068

Carers Voice is a chance for you to become involved in the planning and delivery of services to support carers in Wiltshire. Tel: 0800 066 5068

Wiltshire Passport carers in the Emergency Card Scheme are eligible to carry a Wiltshire Passport discount and incentive card, where they can access small discounts from participating businesses and organisations in the county. Full details are available on the Wiltshire Council web site. www.wiltshire.gov.uk/wiltshirepassport Tel: 0800 066 5068

Community Mental Health Teams

CMHT (adults of working age)
Red Gables
Hilperton Road
Trowbridge BA14 7JE
Tel: 01225 354354

CMHT (older adults)
Charter House
Seymour Road
Trowbridge BA14 8LS
Tel: 01225 356400

CMHT (adults of working age)
Shearwater Lodge
The Avenue
Warminster BA12 9AA
Tel: 01985 220033

CMHT (older adults)
Shearwater Lodge
The Avenue
Warminster BA12 9AA
Tel: 01985 220030

CMHT (adults and older adults)
Green Lane Hospital
Devizes SN10 5DS
Tel main switchboard: 01380 731200

CMHT (adults and older adults)
Grovely, Fountain Way, Wilton Road
Salisbury SP2 7EP
Tel main switchboard: 01722 820100

Information to help carers is available on the Avon and Wiltshire Mental Health partnership trust website: www.awp.nhs.uk

Carer support organisation:

Carer Support Wiltshire
Independent Living Centre, St George's Road
Semington
TROWBRIDGE BA14 6JQ
Tel: 01380 871690 or freephone 0800 181 4118
Email: info@csww.co.uk
Web: www.carersinwiltshire.co.uk

Alzheimer support organisation North and South Wiltshire:

Alzheimer's Society
Unit 3, The Works
The Butts
CHIPPENHAM
SN15 3JT
Tel: 01249 443469
Email: alznwilts@lineone.net
Web: www.alzheimers.org.uk

Alzheimer's Society
29A Brown Street
SALISBURY
SP1 2AS
Tel: 01722 326236
E-mail: info@salisbury-alzheimers.org.uk
Web: www.alzheimer.org.uk

Alzheimer's Support Organisation West and East Wiltshire:

Alzheimer's Support Head Office
Park House
1 Park Road
TROWBRIDGE
BA14 8AQ
Tel: 01225 776481 (24hr answer phone)
E-mail: office@alzheimerswiltshire.org.uk
Web: www.alzheimerswiltshire.org.uk

Alzheimer's Support
5 Sidmouth Street
DEVIZES
SN10 1LD
Tel: 01380 739055

Young carers

Youth Action Wiltshire
Wyndhams, St Josephs Place
DEVIZES
SN10 1DD
Tel: 01380 720671
Email: enquiries@youthactionwiltshire.org

Web: www.youthactionwiltshire.org

Useful contacts

Carers UK The Voice of Carers provides information and support for carers
Carers Line: 080 8808 7777
Email: info@carersuk.org
Web: www.carersuk.org

The Princess Royal Trust for Carers provides information and support for carers.
Tel: 0844 800 4361
Email: info@carers.org
Web: www.carers.org

Carers Direct provides information, advice and support for carers.

Tel: 0808 802 02 02
Email: carersdirect@nhschoices.nhs.uk Web: www.nhs.uk/carersdirect

More information on help and support for carers is available on the Wiltshire Council website:
www.wiltshire.gov.uk

Information about Wiltshire Council services can be made available on request in other languages including BSL and formats such as large print and audio.

Please contact the council by telephone 0300 456 0100, by textphone 01225 712500, or email customerservices@wiltshire.gov.uk

يمكن، عند الطلب، الحصول على معلومات حول خدمات مجلس بلدية ويلتشرير وذلك بأشكال (معلومات بخط عريض أو سماعية) ولغات مختلفة. الرجاء الاتصال بمجلس البلدية على الرقم ٠٣٠٠٤٥٦٠١٠٠ أو من خلال الاتصال النصي (تيكست فون) على الرقم ٧١٢٥٠٠ (٠١٢٢٥) أو بالبريد الإلكتروني على العنوان التالي: customerservices@wiltshire.gov.uk

如果有需要我們可以使用其他形式（例如：大字體版本或者錄音帶）或其他語言版本向您提供有關威爾特郡政務會各項服務的資訊，敬請與政務會聯繫，電話：0300 456 0100，文本電話：(01225) 712500，或者發電子郵件至：customerservices@wiltshire.gov.uk

Na życzenie udostępniamy informacje na temat usług oferowanych przez władze samorządowe hrabstwa Wiltshire (Wiltshire Council) w innych formatach (takich jak dużym drukiem lub w wersji audio) i w innych językach. Prosimy skontaktować się z władzami samorządowymi pod numerem telefonu 0300 456 0100 lub telefonu tekstowego (01225) 712500 bądź za pośrednictwem poczty elektronicznej na adres: customerservices@wiltshire.gov.uk

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