



The carer's assessment

A preparation guide for carers

This guide for adult carers is designed to help you get the best out of your Carers Assessment . It has been developed by carers in partnership with Bristol City Council.

What is an assessment?

It's about finding out about your needs and how we may be able to help. It is not a test of your ability to care. It can help us to understand how we might support you to maintain your own health, and balance caring with other aspects of your life, for example employment and other family responsibilities.

We will ask you questions about yourself. Remember no-one knows more about you than you do - you are the expert about yourself.

If you provide 'substantial and regular' care for an adult you have a legal right to a carers assessment to plan the help that you need. This can happen even if the person you care for refuses help.

You also have a right to an assessment if you **intend** to look after someone. For example: if a friend or relative is in hospital and you expect to look after them when they are discharged.

Two types of assessment

We offer two types of assessment:

- Self assessment where you complete a form yourself
- Face to face interview with a professional, eg a social worker.

A carers self assessment is ideal if you need information, advice and simple pieces of equipment. If your self assessment tells us that your needs are more complex we will contact you to arrange a face to face assessment of the complex areas. If you would like to complete a carers self assessment or find out more about it please go to our website **www.bristol.gov.uk/carers**. If you are not able to access the Internet or need help to complete the form the Princess Royal Trust Carers Centre can help.

The rest of this leaflet deals with face to face assessments. You do not have to complete a self assessment first. You have a right to a face to face assessment separately from the person you care for. You may choose to have a joint assessment if you would rather.

Face to face assessments – planning ahead

The person who will carry out the assessment will normally contact you to arrange a mutually convenient time and place. Let the assessor know if you want an interpreter, an advocate, or anyone else to support you.

Follow through the checklist below and make a note of any comments or questions you would like to raise with the assessor. During the assessment try to make sure you cover everything on your list. If you find the process tiring you can ask for a break. An assessment may take more than one meeting.

Preparation checklist:

This guide will help you think about your caring role and what it means to you. This may include particular concerns or things you would like to know more about. You may find it hard to think what is involved in caring, as you see it as part of everyday life.

Use the checklist to think about what your life is like now, and how it could be improved. You don't need to fill it in or show it to anyone. It's just to give you some ideas about the things which may be discussed at assessment.

The checklist may not cover everything, as each caring role is unique. Consider keeping a diary for a week or maybe longer to help you prepare. Don't forget to include anything you have to do overnight as well as during the day.

Checklist

1. Background information

What sort of things do you do for the person you care for?

How often? How long does it take?

Household tasks, eg shopping, cooking, cleaning, laundry? Personal care, eg assistance to wash, bath, feed, use the toilet?

Help with medical care, eg equipment, medication, co-ordinating appointments, ensuring therapy routines (such as physio exercises) are followed?

Paperwork, eg dealing with mail, bills, money?

Getting around – walking, pushing a wheelchair, in the car?

Providing emotional support? Helping them to express their views?

Emergency care – are you at the end of the phone? Or a keyholder?

2. Health and mental wellbeing

Do you have any health problems?

Are you stressed, anxious or depressed?

Do you get backache? Or headaches?

How easy do you find it to go to health appointments for yourself, eg doctor, dentist, optician, hospital?

Does your GP know you are a carer?

Do you have to move or lift the person you care for? Do you have any aids or adaptations to help you? (eg raised chairs / bed, a hoist)

Do you get enough sleep?

Do you sometimes get a break from caring?

Are you able to eat a healthy diet? and get enough exercise?

Are you able to leave the person you care for alone in the house?

Do you have any telecare equipment to help you? (eg pendant alarm, flood detector, bed occupancy sensor, door exit sensor)

Are you able to look after your own day to day needs?

3. Family responsibilities

Do you have any family commitments in addition to your caring role?

Is caring affecting your relationship with family? Or your friends? Or the person you look after?

If you are a parent, is caring making this role harder? Do you feel you have time for your children?

Do you feel you have to ask your children to support you in your caring role?

4. Support and leisure

Does anyone provide support in, or a break from, your caring role? (eg does the person you care for have home care, or go to a day centre or lunch club?)

Does another family member or friend sometimes provide care?

Do you want to pursue any leisure interests but can't because of your caring role?

5. Work / education / training

Are you struggling to combine employment and caring?

Have you had to reduce your hours of work?

Would you like to return to paid employment?

Do you want to do any training or further education?

6. Finance

Does caring cause you any financial hardship?

Would you like advice on benefits?

7. Risks

Does the person you care for sometimes show challenging behaviour?

Do you feel your housing and living conditions are suitable?

8. Culture and religion

Do you want to attend a place of worship and/ or other regular religious and cultural activities?

Do you have any specific religious or cultural needs?

9. Access to information and advice

How do you like to get information and advice? (eg leaflets, face to face, on the phone, Internet)

What is your preferred language?

Do you need large print?

Is there specific advice or information you need now?

10. Emergency planning

Do you need help in planning what happens if you suddenly become ill or have an emergency?

Would you like more information about the Carers Emergency Card scheme from the Carers Centre?

11. Your views about caring

Do you feel you don't have a choice about providing care?

You may feel that you can't carry on at all, or only if you reduce the amount that you do. What would you most like to change about your situation?

Do you have particular concerns about the future for you and the person you care for?

What happens next?

When your assessment has been completed your social worker will work with you to produce a 'Support Plan'. If you are eligible for support you will be offered the option of receiving a Direct Payment. This means that you can choose to receive a sum of money to enable you to purchase your own support. Your social worker will explain this to you.

Where can I get more advice and information?

Bristol Care Direct provides information about - and access to - social services, benefits and other resources for carers.

Care Direct

Tel: 0117 922 2700 (8.30am – 5pm Monday – Friday)

Fax: 0117 903 6688

Minicom: 0117 903 6689

Email: adult.care@bristol.gov.uk

Bristol City Council website:

www.bristol.gov.uk/carers

The Princess Royal Trust Carers Centre has information and contact details for all the organisations that support carers in Bristol. It provides a helpline for carers, and can help you complete a carers self assessment form.

The Princess Royal Trust Carers Centre

Vassall Centre, Gill Avenue, Bristol, BS16 2QQ

Carersline 0117 9652200, Monday – Saturday 10am – 1pm

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Email: carersl@carers-bs.org.uk

Website: www.carers-bs.org.uk

Complaints and compliments

1. If you are unhappy with the service you are receiving from us, talk to the person who carried out the assessment. They may be able to sort things out quickly and easily.
2. If this does not work for you a complaint may be made. Ask for leaflet ACC 47 Compliments, Comments, Complaints. All our offices have copies of this leaflet.
3. We try to resolve all complaints as effectively and as speedily as possible.
4. If you continue to be unhappy your complaint can be taken through the stages in the complaints procedure.
5. On many occasions people want to say thank you for the help they've been given. If you want to send compliments or an expression of appreciation for the service received, contact the person who carried out your assessment or write to the:

Complaints Manager, Adult Community Care
PO Box 30
Amelia Court
Pipe Lane
Bristol BS99 7NB

Tel: 0117 987 4222
Fax: 0117 903 7841
Text: 0781 050 6593
email: acccomplains@bristol.gov.uk



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