

What is a Carers' Assessment?

A Carers' Assessment is an assessment of needs for a person who cares for someone with a disability. It is a process to look at what the carer needs to help them support a cared for person, and meet their own needs and have a reasonable quality of life.

What is the definition of a carer?

Someone who is not paid to care and who is not caring as part of a volunteer placement.

Who is eligible for a Carers' Assessment?

Any carer who provides or intends to provide a substantial amount of care on a regular basis.

What is meant by a substantial amount ?

There is no defined time, but this may be a mix of hours and areas of care such as personal hygiene, shopping, lifting, emotional support or other aspects of daily life

What happens during the assessment?

The social worker should explore the support and services needed to help the carer look after the person they care for. Social services can give help and support directly to the carer, or give help directly to the person they care for. A panel makes the final decision. The assessment should take place within a reasonable time or immediately in urgent cases.

What does this achieve?

When social services decide what help and services to provide they have to take into account the results of both the carer's assessment and the community care assessment of the person they care for. They will summarise this in a care plan for the cared for person – a copy will be given to both the carer and cared for person

Social services cannot refuse to meet a need they have identified solely on the basis that they do not have the money or other resources

The cared for person can refuse help from social services. This may leave the carer with very little or no support. If this is the case, it is important that the local authority should consider other areas of support which may ease some of the pressures of caring.

Examples may be help with cleaning or washing, taxi fares to work or hospital appointments. A mobile phone could help to keep in touch and give peace of mind. These are examples of carers' services which will be provided to the carer rather than the person cared for.