

## Guide to Carrying out an Assessment of Your Needs

Understanding a person's needs and the best way to support them can be quite complex. The Council's self-assessment is designed so you can describe your situation and what you require in a way that is easy to follow. By following the guidance to complete your assessment, you will be fully in control of how your needs are presented to the Council.

The purpose of your care and support arrangements is to bring about a level of well-being that is right for you. The Government has set out the various elements that make for well-being. They are listed at the end of this document.

### Section a – your needs

#### Briefly say what your situation is and how you want it to change

It is important to stand back from your daily routine and reflect on how your life is and how you want it to be different.

Please do not get into detail at this point. It's important to have a 'big picture' view of how your life is now and how you want your life to be. Also, please do not mention any further services or supports you require in this section.

#### Example

I am in my seventies and live with my husband. I had a stroke a few years ago that has left me paralysed down one side. I used to run the household but now I depend on my husband for virtually everything. This makes us both very unhappy and we argue a lot. Also I used to have an active social life, but now I feel trapped indoors. I want to find a way to reduce the burden on my husband so we get along better, and also to have some kind of life outside my home

## What are your health conditions or impairments and how do they affect your mental or physical functioning

The word 'impairment' means any physical or mental health limitation. The Care Act Statutory Guidance states that the adult's needs should arise from or be related to a physical or mental impairment or illness. This could include physical, mental, sensory, learning or cognitive disabilities or illnesses, substance misuse or brain injury.

Please cover the following for each health condition or impairment;

- How serious it is
- How it affects your physically and/or mental functioning
- Whether it fluctuates over time
- What, if any, health treatment you are having
- How long you have had it and what you think is likely to happen in the future

## What difficulties do you have that relate to these conditions or impairments?

A *difficulty* is anything that is challenging or impossible for you that relates to the physical or mental health impairment you have described above.

- It must be specific to you.
- It must also say what the *cause* of the difficulty is.

Please state all of the difficulties that your conditions and impairments lead to. It is important to include all needs you are currently managing yourself or you are getting help to meet. When planning for your further care and support, it is very important to know the full picture.

### Example

I have had arthritis of the spine for 10 years. It is very painful nearly all the time, and some days it is exceptionally so. Stiffness and pain makes getting around indoors and outdoors difficult and lifting of anything heavy is beyond me. The doctor tells me it won't get better and controls the pain as well as possible with medication. The medication has limited effect.

### Examples

- I cannot get up the stairs because it is too painful.
- I cannot get up the stairs because I am too fearful of falling.
- I cannot get into employment because no employer will make the adjustments I require
- I have lost my friendship circle because I am embarrassed about my appearance
- It takes me two hours to get dressed in the morning because my hands don't work as they should

## **SECTION B – WHAT IS ALREADY HAPPENING**

### **What do you do yourself to manage your own difficulties?**

Support plans work best when they complement and build on your own efforts. It is important to be clear and specific about what you do. It should relate back to the difficulties you set out earlier.

The Care Act has specified particular outcomes which may require the support of the Council. These are:

- a) managing and maintaining nutrition
- b) maintaining personal hygiene
- c) managing toilet needs
- d) being appropriately clothed
- e) maintaining a habitable home environment
- f) being able to make use of the home safely
- g) developing and maintaining family or other personal relationships
- h) accessing and engaging in work, training, education or volunteering
- i) making use of necessary facilities or services in the local community including public transport and recreational facilities or services
- j) carrying out any caring responsibilities the adult has for a child

However, you may have other issues that are not described in the list that you believe also require support to manage your needs.

#### **Examples**

I can get up and down the stairs if I do it on all fours

I have learned how to do my shopping on the internet

I have got my son to bring my grandchildren here once a week so I can see them

It takes me all morning, but I can get the hoovering done if I do it a few minutes at a time and rest in between

## What care and support are you currently receiving from family, friends, your community and other agencies?

Please describe everything others are currently doing for you relating back to the difficulties you have already indicated.

Sometimes people offer support more on the basis of what they are able to offer rather than what you actually need. If any of your support is like this, please include it to ensure the picture is complete.

### Examples

- My daughter does all of my housework and shopping, but actually with a bit of support I could do this myself.
- The Church has a befriending service and someone visits me once a month
- The Nurse visits weekly to test my blood sugar levels, but this means I have to wait in and I would rather learn how to do this myself

## How well is this working for you and each of the people providing the support?

The first two parts of this section are simply about what is happening. It is also important to know how it feels for you and for the people who are supporting you.

This can sometimes get into very sensitive areas. For example, if you are unhappy with what people are doing for you. Please be as forthright and honest as you can. This might mean you have to have discussions

with the people involved to find out more about what they think and feel.

### Examples

- My family have rallied around and its great – its brought us all closer together
- Our marriage is suffering badly – we get by, but there is a great deal of friction. I hate depending on my husband as much as he hates having to care for me.
- My daughter does everything, but with looking after her own family, she is on her knees. I don't think she can carry on much longer.

For family and friends who are providing care and see themselves as a carer, it may be appropriate for them to have a separate assessment of their own needs as a carer. Having a carer's assessment can help them think through any needs which result from their role as a carer. Meeting these needs may both support them and help them to sustain their role as a carer. You can find more information about carer's needs assessments at

[http://www.towerhamlets.gov.uk/lqnl/health\\_social\\_care/carers/adult\\_carers.aspx](http://www.towerhamlets.gov.uk/lqnl/health_social_care/carers/adult_carers.aspx)

## How is this impacting on your ‘wellbeing’?

Reflect on each of the areas, which the Government has set out as constituting wellbeing (see list at the end of this document).

Are there any other areas which you think that we should be aware of?

## SECTION C – WHAT NEEDS TO HAPPEN

### Which of your needs are not currently being met or met well, and how is this affecting you?

The first part of this section is the basis of how your support arrangements need to change. It will include any needs you describe in section A that are not being addressed at all, and also any that are being addressed but not well, or in a way that is not sustainable as in section B.

It is important to set out not just what each of the needs are, but how each one is affecting your life. It's important to know how important the need is to you. Also the Council has to consider its responsibilities and priorities in relation to your needs.

Your description of how the need affects you must be specific to you and the elements of wellbeing as defined within the Care Act

#### Examples

- I can never leave the house which leaves me feeling isolated and depressed
- I can't get up the stairs which means I have to sleep in my chair downstairs and use a commode. I don't get a good night's sleep which means I am always tired and using the commode is humiliating.
- Relying on my husband for personal care is damaging our relationship. I worry it might not survive much longer.

## **What would need to happen so that you, family, friends and community meet as many of these needs as is appropriate and reasonable?**

The Council believes that needs for care and support should firstly come from the efforts of yourself and those around you, but only up to the point it is reasonable and appropriate for all concerned. The Council should only complement, and never undermine, these efforts. This section therefore should set out the very best that you and those around you can do to meet the needs from the previous section.

This may involve making contact with people who are not mentioned in section B and therefore not contributing, but who might reasonably be approached to do so. It is sometimes helpful to make a list of all the people and organisations (for example your religious group) in your network who might have something to offer.

### **Examples**

- Although my daughter lives a long way from here, she will relieve my husband of shopping by doing it on the internet and getting delivery here. My son will then buy me the device needed and teach me how to do it myself.
- We will talk to our children about the fact we are getting on and its now time they helped us. They will do it, but it will be emotionally difficult for them.
- The Church has agreed to provide a driver so I can get to a weekly service

## What council funded services are required to meet your needs and what will they achieve?

If any needs remain after the previous section, these will be the ones that may require Council support or services. Please identify what Council support / services you think will best meet these needs. Please also say what you want each service to achieve. This is called the *outcome*.

You can find information about types of services on the [Community Catalogue](#). However, your thinking should not be restricted to any set list of services. You may need something very particular to meet your needs, but which still calls for council funding if it is to be met. The Council will seek the most cost effective way to meet your needs, and so it is important to keep an open mind about what might work best. The only points to bear in mind are that whatever is purchased must be lawful, and it must not be something that the health service should provide.

It is important to say what you think is required along with how much will be required. Also add any other information you think is important, such as the timing of any visits.

It is also important for you to say whether you want to manage whatever money the Council agrees as a cash sum – called a Direct Payment – or if you want the Council to deal with the financial side. Some services,

though, can only be purchased with a Direct Payment. This is explained at

[http://www.towerhamlets.gov.uk/lgnl/health\\_social\\_care/disabilities/children\\_with\\_disabilities/direct\\_payments.aspx](http://www.towerhamlets.gov.uk/lgnl/health_social_care/disabilities/children_with_disabilities/direct_payments.aspx).

### Examples

- I would like support to get washed and dressed each morning at about 7 30. It will take an hour as I am very slow to move. This will set me up for the day as well as remove the tension between me and my husband.
- I need a Personal Assistant to meet all the needs I have identified. This will give me the flexibility in relation to timing of the support I need as my needs change. I would need 25 hours a week (15 hours for personal care and 5 to get to work and 5 to meet social needs). This will give me the life I want to live, which includes being able to work and have a social life, not just survive.
- The best way to overcome my isolation would be a laptop and learn how to use Skype. I have seen how people do this, and with my family all over the country, that will keep me in touch with them all.

## FOR COUNCIL COMPLETION

### **Does this self-assessment provide sufficient information to enable the Council to assess eligibility as set out in the Care Act?**

A Council practitioner will look at your assessment and decide if it provides sufficient information to assess eligibility and bring about a level of well-being that is right for you. This will be considered using the National Eligibility Criteria as set out within the Care Act and looking at the Council's wider responsibilities. It will also take into account how significant the impact is on your wellbeing. The Council also has a responsibility to look at the most cost effective way of supporting you. Cost effectiveness does not mean cutting corners or in any way compromising on meeting your needs.

If the practitioner thinks your assessment provides all of the information required as listed above, it will pass on to the next stage. If the practitioner thinks some more work is needed, they will be in touch with you to tell you what needs to happen and arrange for it to take place.

### **WHAT HAPPENS NEXT**

If your assessment provides all of the information required, the practitioner will summarise your assessment in a *Statement of Issues*. As part of this, they will also make decisions about which of the issues identified are eligible for support. Once it has been confirmed that you are eligible for support, the practitioner will then discuss with you how best this support can be provided. This could involve talking to family, friends about how the need could be met or considering options available within the community. Wherever possible the Council will aim to support you to manage your own care and health.

If the Council has decided that an issue does not meet the National Eligibility Criteria, the practitioner will give you advice about how best to manage. These needs will remain on your record, and will be reviewed from time to time.

Once these decisions have been made, the practitioner will put together a Support Plan. This will set out all your needs and all the support you will be receiving.



## WHAT IS MEANT BY WELL-BEING

The following are the elements of well-being set out by the Care Act

- personal dignity (including treatment of the individual with respect)
- physical and mental health and emotional well-being
- protection from abuse and neglect
- control by the individual over day-to-day life (including over care and support, or support, provided to the individual and the way in which it is provided)
- participation in work, education, training or recreation
- social and economic well-being
- domestic, family and personal relationships
- suitability of living accommodation
- the individual's contribution to society

## SPECIFIED OUTCOMES AS DEFINED WITHIN THE CARE ACT

The Care Act has specified particular outcomes which may require the support of the Council. These are:

- managing and maintaining nutrition
- maintaining personal hygiene
- managing toilet needs
- being appropriately clothed
- maintaining a habitable home environment
- being able to make use of the home safely
- developing and maintaining family or other personal relationships
- accessing and engaging in work, training, education or volunteering
- making use of necessary facilities or services in the local community including public transport and recreational facilities or services
- carrying out any caring responsibilities the adult has for a child

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