

For further information on health and social care please contact Gateway to care on 01484 414933, or in person at:

Gateway to care

30 Market Street, Huddersfield, HD1 2HG

Cleckheaton Town Hall

Bradford Road, Cleckheaton, BD19 3RH

The Walsh Building

Town Hall Way, Dewsbury WF12 8EQ

Gateway to care

Batley Resource Centre, 90 Commercial Street, Batley, WF17 5DS

You can also email gatewaytocare@kirklees.gov.uk or visit our website at www.kirklees.gov.uk

Information in other formats

Kirklees Adult Services is committed to ensuring that its communication is clear, plain and available to everyone. This can be made available in languages other than English, audio CD, audiotape and Braille. Please telephone 01484 225274.

Kirklees Adult Services

Identifying carers needs -

helping you to understand carers assessments



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Introduction

Carers play an important role, helping people to stay independent in their own homes.

Health and Adult Services want to support carers in their role by helping them to maintain their own health and well-being by having a life outside caring.

Being a carer should not mean that a person is unable to take up opportunities that those without caring responsibilities take for granted.

This booklet has been produced for people caring for someone aged 18 or over. It is a quick guide to carers assessments in Kirklees. For further information or advice about Carers Assessments please see the 'Useful Information' section at the end of this booklet.

Who is a carer?

A carer is someone who looks after family, partners, friends or neighbours in need of help because they are ill, frail or have a disability. This includes carers of people with substance or alcohol addiction.

The care they provide is unpaid – this means that they may, or may not, receive carers allowance, but they are not employed as a carer and do not provide care as a volunteer for a voluntary organisation.

It is important that people don't confuse carers with paid staff who work in social care, as this can mean that people may not see themselves as a carer and do not get the help they need.

Every caring situation is different and not all carers are the same. For example, some carers may provide a few hours support a week, while others may care full-time. Carers can be of any age. Some carers of older people may be older themselves and some carers may have a disability.

Young carers

Carers under the age of 18 are called young carers. Many young carers have a wide range of caring responsibilities, such as household jobs, personal care and giving emotional support to the person they care for.

Young carers should not be expected to take on the same levels of caring responsibilities as adults – so when a community care assessment takes place the local authority must make sure support is put in place to stop a young carer carrying out unreasonable caring responsibilities.

Young carers who have a lot of caring responsibilities could be seen as children in need. Under the Children's Act 1989, they would have an assessment to make sure their futures are not affected by these responsibilities.

There are however some exceptional situations where it is in the best interests of a carer, who is aged 16 or 17 years old, to be supported to carry out a caring role for some time. For example, if a parent is terminally ill.

Kirklees Young Carers Project offers confidential help and support to young carers aged 8 to 18 years, including a break from caring, outings and access to services.

Connexions Partnership can also help with any issues of concern including careers, learning, health, housing, rights, relationships and finances. Young people can receive the service through Kirklees Connexions or Connexions Direct.

For contact details, please see the Useful Information section at the end of this booklet.

Who can have a carers assessment?

You have the right to a carers assessment if you are aged 16 or over and provide, or intend to provide, a lot of care regularly for another person, aged 18 years or over, and this person is someone for whom the local authority may provide or arrange the provision of community care services.

You have this right even if the person you care for has decided not to have a community care assessment or to receive services following a community care assessment.

Sometimes the person being cared for has more than one carer, each giving a high level of support. In this case each carer could request a carers assessment.

As a carer you can ask for a carers assessment (or reassessment) at any time during your caring role.

People with parental responsibility for a disabled child, can also have a carers assessment if they provide or intend to provide, a substantial amount of care on a regular basis. This assessment normally forms part of the child and family assessment.

What is a carers assessment?

A carers assessment is an opportunity for you to tell health and Adult Services what would make caring easier for you and help you to have a life of your own.

A carers assessment is carried out at the request of the carer, usually by a health or social care worker. This worker will meet with you to talk about your caring role and the help you need, to make caring easier for you.

You could complete a carers assessment by yourself or with the help of a friend. This would be followed up by an appointment with a member of staff from health or Adult Services, unless you request otherwise.

Your carers assessment will focus on what you feel are the best outcomes for you, to help you to carry on caring (if this is what you choose to do) and maintain your own health and well-being, by having a life outside of your caring role.



What is an outcome?

An outcome is the impact of help received on your life. As every caring situation is different, the best outcome for you will depend on the impact your caring role has on your life.

Outcomes are different from services. For example, an outcome could be for you to “get a good night’s sleep” and the service provided to help you to do this could be someone sitting with the person you care for during the night, or the person you care for going into respite care.

If you say what outcomes are important to you it is more likely that you will get the right services for you. For example, if you need a break. What do you want from the break? Is it to watch TV undisturbed, have a bath in peace, or go fishing once a week?

Another example is if you need more contact with people of your own age, this might mean that you want to go to college, meet friends for lunch, or join a gym.

So thinking about the outcomes that are important to you is an important part of the carers assessment process.

The carers assessment process

A carers assessment is not a test and it should not assume that you want to carry on giving the amount of care that you do now. It should be as useful and complete as possible, but must also avoid unnecessary questions.

Identifying carers needs has three parts, a carers pre-assessment (included in this leaflet), a carers specialist assessment and a carers reassessment.

1 The carers pre-assessment

This is included in this leaflet and it is usually carried out by carers themselves or any person who works with carers. It can:

- help you see if you need a carers specialist assessment
- act as a useful first step towards discussion between an assessor and a carer
- act as a useful tool for those carers who choose not to have a specialist carers assessment

A carers pre-assessment only needs to be completed before a specialist carers assessment where you choose to do so.

2 The carers specialist assessment

This is a more in-depth assessment of your needs usually carried out by a health or social care professional. It is your opportunity to tell health or Adult Services about the kind of things that could make caring easier for you and help you to have a life outside your caring role. It can result in more services to the person you care for and services to you as a carer.

It is up to you how fully a carers assessment is carried out. Information can be added at a later date or at a future re-assessment.

Carers can choose if the specialist assessment is carried out with the person they care for (as a joint assessment) or carried out alone with a professional (as a separate assessment).

- **A joint carers assessment** is usually carried out at the same time as the person you are caring for is having an assessment for community care services. However, there are times when a joint assessment is not suitable. For example, if you care for someone with mental health problems, who is supported under the care programme approach, you should have your own assessment and care plan.
- **A separate carers assessment** is your opportunity to talk in private about your caring role and what you want to happen. Sometimes, you may not feel it is right to discuss your caring role in front of the person you look after. You can decide where and when you would like the assessment to take place and whether you would like a friend to support you, or someone to speak on your behalf.

Whether you have a joint or separate carers assessment, the aim is to get enough information to decide:

- what help you need to carry on caring and look after yourself, by having a life outside your caring
- if you are able to get support
- whether your needs can be met by Adult Services, health, or other service providers.

3 The carers re-assessment

This is a review of your last carers assessment and is usually carried out once a year.

It is a specific requirement of standard 6 of the Mental Health National Service Framework that all carers of people supported under the care programme approach have an assessment and care plan reviewed annually.

Your carers support plan will have the date of your next planned reassessment but you can request a reassessment at any time should your circumstances change.

Do I need, or want, a carers assessment?

Having a carers assessment can be an emotional experience, as it is your time to think about your own needs and talk about any concerns that you have about your caring role.

A carers pre-assessment is included in this booklet and can help you to decide if you need a carers specialist assessment.

After completing the pre-assessment, if you are still unsure if you need, or want, a carers specialist assessment you might find it useful to discuss your situation further with:

- the social worker or care co-ordinator of the person you care for
- a carers support officer at Kirklees Council Carers Gateway
- a mental health carers support officer
- a specialist worker such as the Family Drugs Service or Asian carers worker.

For contact details, please see the Useful Information section at the end of this booklet.

Benefits of having a carers assessment

Following a carers assessment services may be provided to you or the person you care for.

However, being assessed does not mean that you will automatically receive a service.

Even if, after having a carers assessment, no services are provided the process may help you to:

- feel valued
- gain peace of mind from knowing who to contact for help in the future
- gain information on how to get other support available
- get a sense of shared responsibility between yourself and services
- gain confidence to take up services and support.

How to request a carers assessment

You can request a carers assessment by contacting:

- Kirklees Council Carers Gateway
- the social worker or care co-ordinator of the person you care for.

For contact details, please see the Useful Information section at the end of this booklet.

You may be asked a few initial questions about why you feel you need a carers assessment, so please give as much information as possible to help people decide how urgent your situation is.

Getting ready for your carers assessment

Once you have requested a carers assessment, you will need to think about:

- whether you want a separate assessment, or joint assessment, with the person you care for
- whether you want someone else to be there, for example, a friend, advocate or support worker
- where you want the assessment to take place – in your own home or in another suitable location.

It would also be useful for you to think through some of the things you would like to talk to a worker about – the carers pre-assessment can help you to do this by asking questions such as:

- do you have difficulty keeping up with daily tasks such as housework or gardening?
- do you do any caring tasks that could cause you physical harm or injury?
- do you feel that your caring role affects other relationships, such as that with friends or family?

These questions should help you think about the outcomes you want to see from your carers assessment. For example:

- do you want to feel less tired?
- do you want to get a good night's sleep?
- do you want to return to employment?
- do you want to spend more time with your children?
- do you want to socialise more?

The next step is to think about how you think these outcomes can be achieved. For example, if you want to socialise more, do you think this can best be achieved by someone spending time with the person you care for so that you can go out and meet friends or join a support group of like-minded people, or take up a leisure activity?

During your carers assessment

Some carers may clearly be able to say from the beginning what they want to happen to make their lives easier. Others may take time, as this may be the first opportunity they have had to focus on their own needs. This is why it can help, before your assessment, to complete a carers pre-assessment and think about what you feel will reduce the impact of caring on your life.

This is your assessment, about the outcomes you want to see, so don't be afraid to speak up about what you feel will help and is best for you.

We know that some sections of the assessment may be hard for carers to talk about. It is up to you to decide which sections in the assessment are helpful to you and how in-depth the assessment is. You can always add information at a later date.

Your carers assessment will always include consideration of whether you work, or wish to work and whether you carry out, or wish to carry out, any education, training or leisure activity

During your carers assessment you might also find it useful to complete a 'Care you provide' sheet. This will help you to think about those jobs that you are happy to continue with, those you feel you need help with, and those you no longer want, or feel able to do.

If you decide to complete this sheet, please remember that it is not just about physical tasks; it is also about the emotional or supervisory support you provide. For example, you may spend time anxiously waiting for, or trying to prevent, the next crisis.

After your carers assessment

Remember that being assessed does not mean that you will automatically receive a service. If you are eligible services may be provided to you or the person you care for. If you are not eligible you may be able to access other services for support, for example, within the voluntary sector.

For more information about eligibility criteria for carers please contact Kirklees Council Carers Gateway for a copy of the **Carers Eligibility leaflet**

The carers support service has been set up to minimise the impact that caring has on a carer's life to help them to continue caring and have a life of their own. This will be done by providing individual and flexible support to achieve the outcomes of their carers assessment.

Support from the carers support service can be in the form of a voucher, a direct payment or a one-off payment. For more information please contact Kirklees Council Carers Gateway.

For contact details, please see the Useful Information section at the end of this booklet.

Carers support plan

We will write agreed actions and outcomes from your carers assessment into your carers support plan.

You will be given a copy of both your carers assessment and support plan.

Remember your carers support plan will say the date of your next planned reassessment however you can ask for a reassessment at any time if your circumstances change.

Charges

You will not be charged for having a carers assessment and at present, in Kirklees, carers services are not charged for, as the council recognises and values the contribution that carers make.

Complaints, comments and compliments

We want to make sure our services are of the quality you expect, but we know that sometimes we make mistakes. We welcome your comments so we can try to put things right. Your comments can also help us plan the way services are delivered in the future

If you have any comments to make about your carers assessment, or the services you have been getting as a result of it, whether good or bad, please let us know by telephoning 01484 225116 or 01484 225115, or e-mail sscu@kirklees.gov.uk

Identifying carers needs

Pre-assessment

Please tick your answer

No / Yes / Not sure

Information – Do you:

1. Want to know about your rights as a carer?
2. Want to go on Kirklees Carers Gateway mailing list to receive their free newsletter?
3. Want information about a Carers Emergency Card?
4. Want to get in touch with other carers in a similar situation to yourself?
5. Want information about carers groups and activities that you can get involved in?

Do you and the person you care for want to know more about:

6. Their illness/disability and how it can be managed?
7. Their medication/treatment?
8. The names, contact numbers and job titles of the people involved in supporting them
9. Different types of aids/equipment available and how you might get them?
10. Different types of support services available and how you might get them?
11. What benefits are available and if you are eligible –for example carers allowance?

If you have answered 'Yes' or 'Not Sure' to any of the questions 1 to 11 we suggest you contact one of the following and ask for their help in getting the information you need:

- Carers Gateway (all carers)
- Mental health carers support officer (carers of adults with mental health needs)
- Family Drugs Service (carers of people with substance/alcohol addiction)

For contact details, please see the Useful Information section at the end of this booklet.

Please tick your answer

No / Yes / Not sure

Care you provide – Do you:

12. Feel unable to do all that is required of you as a carer?
13. Feel that you need help with some of your tasks as a carer?
14. Feel unsupported by services in health, adult services or the voluntary sector?
15. Feel unsupported by friends, family or neighbours?
16. Have difficulty keeping up with daily tasks for example housework, gardening, shopping?
17. Have difficulty managing new responsibilities as a result of your caring role for example cooking or paying bills?

**Identifying carers needs
Pre-assessment**

Please tick your answer
No / Yes / Not sure

Finances – Do you:

18. Worry about money?

Your physical health and mental well being – Do you:

19. Feel that you need help to look after your own health?
20. Need help so that you can get a good night's sleep?

Risks and training – Do you:

21. Do any caring tasks that could cause you physical harm or injury?
22. Have difficulty coping with the behaviour and/or attitude of the person you care for?

Housing – Do you:

23. Need help regarding equipment or changes to the home where the cared for person lives?
24. Have difficulty travelling to the home of the person you care for?
25. Feel unable to look after the property you live in?
26. Think that you need re-housing?

Identifying carers needs

Pre-assessment

Please tick
your answer

No / Yes / Not sure

Your physical health and mental well being – Do you:

27. Feel unappreciated as a carer?
28. Sometimes feel stressed, anxious or depressed?
29. Have difficulty accepting the illness/ disability of the person you care for?
30. Need help to express your needs and/or circumstances?
31. Need someone to talk to about the pressures of caring?
32. Worry about the future?
33. Want to stop caring?

Other roles and responsibilities – Do you:

34. Feel that your caring role affects other relationships such as that with friends or family?

Getting a break and leisure activities – Do you:

35. Need help to get a break from your caring role?
36. Need help to undertake leisure or social activities?

Education and employment – Do you:

37. Find it difficult juggling caring and working?

Identifying carers needs

Pre-assessment

Please tick
your answer

No / Yes / Not sure

38. Find it difficult juggling caring and studying?
39. Need help to undertake work or education?

Emergency plan – Do you:

40. Need help to develop a plan of what to do in an emergency or crisis?

If you have answered 'Yes' or 'Not Sure' to any of the questions 12 to 40 you might want to consider having a carers assessment.

Remember – you can request a carers assessment by contacting:

- the social worker or care co-ordinator of the person you are caring for
- Kirklees Carers Gateway
- Gateway to care

For contact details please see Useful Information section on the following pages.



Do you know?

The 2001 Census showed there are:

- six million carers in the UK
- forty thousand carers in Kirklees, 69% provide 1 to 19 hours of care a week and 20% provide 50 or more hours of care a week
- 80% of carers are of working age, 1,200 are aged 17 years or under.

Useful information

Information and advice

Kirklees Council Carers Gateway and the ACE (Action for carers and employment) Project

Telephone: 01484 226050

E-mail: carers.gateway@kirklees.gov.uk

Website: www.kirklees.gov.uk/carers

Kirklees Council Carers Gateway provide all carers with information and advice, including:

- a useful contacts leaflet for carers with over 50 useful telephone numbers
- a free newsletter
- informal drop-ins in both north and south Kirklees
- a resource room for carers to use free of charge. Includes a library of useful information in different formats and languages and a computer for carers to access the internet

Mental health carers support officers

North Kirklees 01924 326598

Asian Carer support 01924 477033

South Kirklees 01484 353493 Making Space – including Asian carer support

Family drugs service

Telephone 01484 353353

E-mail: tom.brailsford@lifelinekirklees.org.uk

Kirklees Young Carers Project

Offers young carers support, advice and a break from caring

Telephone: 01924 492183

E-mail: claire.sidebottom@northorpehall.com

Kirklees Connexions

Telephone: 01484 226800

E-mail: careers@ckcareers.org.uk

Gateway to care – advice and information about social care services.

Telephone 01484 414933

E-mail: gatewaytocare@kirklees.gov.uk

Or visit our website at www.kirklees.gov.uk and click on the **Adult Services Quicklink** to the enquiry form.

Emergencies – outside office hours only. To contact Adult Services in an emergency, telephone 01924 326489

Leaflets and guides

Practice Guide: Implementing the Carers (Equal Opportunities) Act 2004

Social Care Institute for Excellence (SCIE) – available from www.scie.org.uk/publications

Department of Health leaflets and publications such as:

- **A Practitioners Guide to Carers Assessments** under the Carers and Disabled Children Act 2000
- **How to get help looking after someone** - A carers guide to carers assessments
- **A Commitment to Carers** - Department of health and National Schizophrenia Fellowship leaflet for carers of people with mental health problems

Are available from:

The Government website for carers – ‘Caring about Carers’ www.carers.gov.uk

Department of Health publications
PO Box 777, London SE1 6XH

E-mail doh@prologistics.uk.com

Telephone 08701 555 455

Websites and Helplines

Kirklees Council website: www.kirklees.gov.uk and click on the Health and Social Care Quicklink

Government website for carers: www.carers.gov.uk

Carers UK: www.carersonline.org.uk

Carers advice line telephone 0808 808 7777 or

Minicom 020 7251 8969

The Princess Royal Trust for Carers: www.carers.org

For information telephone 020 7480 7788

Connexions Direct:

www.connexions-direct.com

Confidential help and advice for young people.

Open 8am to 2pm, 7 days a week and 365 days a year.

Telephone 080800 13219 or text 077664 13219

Details about local organisations:

www.kirklees.gov.uk/community/localorgs/localorgs.asp



Research by Carers UK has shown that:

- the value of unpaid support that carers provide has reached £87 billion a year
- the average carer is saving the nation over £15,260 a year
- three out of five people will become carers at some time in their lives
- 96% of carers worry about what to do in an emergency
- six out of ten carers give up work to care.