

## Carers Assessments

Carers Assessments have been around for over 20 years. But many carers don't understand their rights around Carers Assessments. This factsheet has been written to help explain your rights as a carer. But who is a carer?



## Carers Rights Under the Care Act 2014

The Care Act 2014 changes the definition of a carer to “an adult who provides or intends to provide care for another adult (an “adult needing care”). This does not apply to paid carers while at work or those doing voluntary work for an organisation.

Young carers and parent carers are not covered by the Care Act 2014 except when they change over from children's services to adult services: until then their needs are supported by the Children and Families Act 2014.

## So What Happens?

When a Needs Assessment is carried out on the adult needing care, the local authority **must** also provide a Carer's Assessment if you appear to need one. You may also request a Carer's Assessment at this time, and it must be carried out. All assessments must be carried out within “an appropriate and reasonable timescale.” This is not specified, but the Local Government Ombudsman sets guidance at about 4-6 weeks.

## The Assessment

The assessment must not consider finances at all at this stage. It should look at your caring role, how you feel about it and any difficulties you're facing. It should also look at what you would like to do when not providing care – such as go to meetings, religious activities, swimming, or even getting a job. The assessment must also make sure you want to carry on caring: you have a choice.

The Carer's Assessment must look at how support might help you to improve your life – for example, get a break from caring, or to stay in work, etc.

If the Carer's Assessment shows that you are eligible for, and need, support services, you must be given a Carers Support Plan. This may refer to services that can help without the need for additional social care support, or suggest a change to the Support Plan for the person you care for. This may be additional support, or timing the support to suit your needs.

If there is no other way to meet your needs, the authority must provide a Personal Budget that meets the needs identified by the plan. This budget must first be offered as a Direct Payment, but you can choose to receive services by alternative methods, as with service users.

If the carer does not have eligible needs, they **must** be given information and advice, which should include details of local support agencies. This might also mean being told about training courses, for example.

### **Funding and Charging**

Once the assessment is complete, eligibility is decided and the support services identified in a Carers Support Plan, there may be a financial assessment to look at how much you may need to pay towards their services. This is because the Care Act 2014 introduces the idea of charging for carers services.

At the moment, both Leicester City Council and Leicestershire County Council have decided not to introduce charges during 2016/17, but this is regularly reviewed. Until then, you cannot be charged for a service that is for you – but if it changes a service for the person you care for, it may increase their charges.

### **More information**

Whilst every effort is made to ensure that the information in this document is accurate, it summarises many pages of legislation and guidance, and can only be used for general guidance. Please also remember that the law is always changing. If you have any questions, or would like more specific guidance and information, please contact us at the Carers Centre on 0116 2510999 or email [enquiries@claspthecarerscentre.org.uk](mailto:enquiries@claspthecarerscentre.org.uk)

### **Help**

If you need help from social care services, please contact:

- **(Leicester City)** 0116 4541004 – Adults and Children’s services. Please state which you need when you speak to someone.
- **(Leicestershire)** 0116 3050004 – Adults Services
- **(Leicestershire)** 0116 3050005 – Children’s Services
- **(Rutland)** 01572 722577 – Adults and Children’s services. Please state which you need when you speak to someone.

### **Out of Hours**

If you have an emergency situation outside of normal working hours:

### **Children’s Services**

- **(Leicester)** 0116 4541004
- **(Leicestershire and Rutland)** 0116 3050005

**Adult’s Services (all areas):** 0116 2551606