

Social Services: Care and Support Assessments for Adults

Introduction

Social care means personal and practical help and support to enable people in need or at risk to live independently and safely within their own homes and communities.

Swansea Council works in partnership with ABMU Health Board and many independent and third sector organisations to ensure that a range of information, advice, support and services is available for people with different levels of need.

As resources are limited, Social Services can only provide care and support services to people who have the highest level of need.

We use assessments to find out what needs someone has, what sort of support will be most helpful and whether someone is eligible for support from Social Services.

This factsheet explains more about the assessment process.

Our legal duties

From April 2016 our legal duties relating to the provision of social care are set out in the Social Services and Well-being (Wales) Act 2014.

Part 2 of the Act requires us to provide information and advice about the support available locally. Preventative services and supportive communities can help people be less isolated and more resilient to problems when they arise. By making people aware of the range of options for meeting their care and support needs early on, fewer people will need to rely on long-term care services.

Under Part 3 of the Act the Local Authority has a duty to offer an assessment to:

- any adult where it appears to that authority the adult may have needs for care and support

- any carer where it appears to that authority that the carer may have needs for support

When you contact us

When you first contact us, or someone else contacts us on your behalf, one of our trained staff will ask a number of questions to find out more about your situation and what outcome you want to achieve to improve your wellbeing. This is the first stage of the assessment process. For some people it is all they need.

Many people's social care needs can be met by services and activities that are provided in the local community. We can give you information about groups or organisations that would be able to help you or, if you prefer, we can make a referral to a support organisation on your behalf. The right information and advice at the right time often delays people's need for formal care services and can prevent the need altogether.

If it appears that you have needs for care and support beyond this we will offer you a more detailed assessment to work out what help you need and what kind of support would be most helpful for you. This assessment enables us to work out whether you have needs which are eligible for support from Social Services.

In an emergency we can take urgent action to meet your immediate needs.

What happens during an assessment for care and support?

A trained member of staff will have a conversation with you and, if appropriate, your family and any other relevant people to enable us to understand your situation better. We will then work out together what outcomes you need to achieve. 'Outcome' means what should change for the better in

your life if the support we provide or suggest to you works as it should.

The assessment is also the way we work out whether a care and support plan is needed in order to meet your needs.

The focus of the assessment is you, and we will ensure that you are an equal partner in all discussions and any decisions that are made. You should feel free to ask questions and tell us if there is anything you don't understand.

Although we'll need to talk about the difficulties you're experiencing, it's also very important that we find out about your strengths, what you can do for yourself and understand what matters to you.

We can then look with you at ways to overcome the difficulties that are preventing you achieving the outcomes that matter to you.

During the assessment the person who carries it out will need to look at:

- Your personal circumstances
- The outcomes that you need to achieve
- What barriers there are to you achieving these outcomes
- What risks there are to you, or to anyone else, if these outcomes are not achieved
- Your strengths and capabilities

We will consider all possible ways to meet your needs and achieve your personal outcomes, and make sure that you understand the options available and what these mean for you.

The person who carries out your assessment will be able to co-ordinate arrangements for your support on behalf of a number of organisations who will work together. These may include your local council, local health services, community services and voluntary-sector organisations.

Some people will need an additional specialist assessment, but this should not mean there is any delay in providing general support where this is required.

Can anyone else be with you at your assessment?

Yes. If you want or need to have someone – family, friend or someone from your wider support network - with you at the assessment to support you and help you to have your say, we welcome this.

If you feel you need someone to speak for you but you don't have anyone to ask please let us know. We will be able to help you find someone called an advocate who can ensure that your views are properly expressed and taken into account.

If you have a carer

If you have a carer – a relative or friend who provides you with unpaid help - we will also want to talk to them about what help they are able and willing to give. An assessment must take into account whether your carer is able and willing to provide care now or to do so in the future.

Your carer also has the right to a separate assessment of their own needs. Our factsheet *Support for Carers of Adults and Carer's Needs Assessments* gives more information on this.

What happens next?

Having an assessment does not always mean that we go on to provide a service for you. There may be better ways to achieve the outcomes you need. For example this could be by

- giving you the right information and advice
- referring you to a preventative service provided by another organisation
- helping you to find ways to meet your own needs, perhaps with the assistance of family or friends.

Some people need short-term support to enable them to return to independent living after an illness or period of instability. We often refer to this as 'reablement'. We work in partnership with health service colleagues to provide an integrated service that will support you to become more independent,

either alone or with the support of others, and more involved with your local community.

How do we work out who is eligible for Social Services support?

To make decisions about who is eligible for managed care and support, we use the Care and Support (Eligibility) (Wales) Regulations 2015.

In all cases, it is the need(s) that someone has, rather than the person, that are assessed against eligibility criteria.

There are four conditions that have to be met.

1. The need arises from your physical or mental ill-health, age, disability, dependence on alcohol or drugs, or similar circumstances.
2. The need relates to one or more of the following outcomes:
 - ability to carry out self-care or domestic routines
 - ability to communicate
 - protection from abuse or neglect
 - involvement in work, education, learning or leisure activities
 - maintenance or development of family or other significant personal relationships
 - development and maintenance of social relationships and involvement in the community
 - fulfilment of caring responsibilities for a child
3. The need is such that you are not able to meet that need either alone **or** with the care and support of others who are willing to provide such care and support **or** with the assistances of services in the community.
4. You are unlikely to achieve one or more of your personal outcomes unless the local authority provides or arranges care and support to meet the need or enables it to be met by making a direct payment.

Your Care and Support Plan

If the assessment indicates that your needs are eligible for support or services from Social Services we will talk to you about the options for support that may be available and draw up a Care and Support Plan with you. The Care and Support Plan says how your needs are going to be met and what outcomes this support is trying to achieve. You will get a copy of this to keep.

We will regularly review your Care and Support Plan with you to check that it is still meeting your needs, and to see if your needs have changed. This may mean that you get more of a particular service, a different service, less of a service, or no service at all.

If your needs or circumstances change, you can ask us for a new assessment.

If you are not happy with our decision

If you (or your representative) are not happy about:

- a decision not to carry out an assessment of need **or**
- the outcome of any assessment

you can request a review of that decision to be carried out by the relevant Team Manager. This review will be carried out within 10 working days and you will be advised of the outcome.

If you (or your representative) are still unhappy with the Team Manager's response you may request a reassessment. This will be carried out by a senior practitioner within the team or by a member of another team if that is considered more appropriate. This reassessment will normally be carried out within 10 working days of the request being received, and you will be advised of the outcome.

If you remain dissatisfied we will consider providing an independent reassessment using an appropriate professional from outside the service.

If you do not wish to have an independent reassessment, you have the right to pursue a complaint through the formal complaints procedure. (See final page.)

Do you have to pay anything?

There is no charge for the assessment or for giving you advice and information.

We and our third sector partners charge for some of the services we provide. For some services, everyone who receives that service pays the same amount. For certain types of service (including long-term care at home and residential care) our charges are based on how much money you have, and we would need to do a **financial assessment** to work out how much you should pay.

We will tell you about any charges you will have to pay before you start receiving any services.

If you prefer to arrange your own support

If you are eligible for social care support, you may prefer to arrange your services yourself, using money that we give you, rather than have Social Services do this for you. This is called a **Direct Payment**. You have the right to request this option. There is more information in our factsheet *Managing your Support with Direct Payments*.

How to contact Social Services

Most people should get in touch with our Common Access Point for Health and Social Care
☎ 01792 636519

Text phone: 07796 275412

Email: cap@swansea.gov.uk

Online referral form:

www.swansea.gov.uk/online-referral

For people with mental health problems:

We have three area teams. Contact the team for the area where you live.

West Swansea

☎ 01792 517800

Central Swansea

☎ 01792 517853

North Swansea

☎ 01792 841435

There is also information including copies of the factsheets mentioned in this document on our website www.swansea.gov.uk/socialcare

Swansea Social Services and personal information

Swansea Council is the data controller for the personal information you provide to us. Your information will be used in the exercise of our official authority and will not be used for any other purpose. We will not share your data with third parties unless we are required or permitted to do so by law. Data protection law describes the legal basis for our processing your data as necessary for the performance of a public task (Social Services and Well-being (Wales) Act 2014).

For further information about how Swansea Council uses your personal data, including your rights as a data subject, please see our corporate privacy notice on our website www.swansea.gov.uk/privacy

We can give you more information about how we handle personal information. Phone 01792 636902 for a factsheet.

Comments and complaints

We welcome any comments about our services – good or bad. We are interested to hear how we could do things better, and we like to know when we are doing well.

If you are unhappy with the services you receive, we encourage you to make a comment or complaint. Full details are given in the factsheet *Making a comment, complaint or compliment about Social Services*.

For more advice or information about making a complaint, you can contact our Complaints Officers on 01792 637345 or email complaints@swansea.gov.uk.

This information is also available in Welsh and in alternative formats, such as large print, on audio CD, in Braille, or electronically. Please phone 01792 636902 for copies.