

Your rights to help if you are disabled

Who qualifies and how to apply

This booklet is about the help that people with disabilities can get.

Who is entitled to assistance from social services?

People who have permanent disabilities or long term conditions which affect their ability to carry out everyday activities are entitled to an assessment of their needs under the NHS and Community Care Act 1990 or the Chronically Sick and Disabled Persons Act 1970.

The Government expects social services to make sure that people who are most in need receive the greatest help.

Not everyone who has an assessment of his or her needs will receive a service. To help us work this out we use guidelines called eligibility criteria please see our leaflet - a guide to who qualifies for adult community care.

What does an assessment mean?

To make sure we find out the best way to help you, we need to carry out an assessment of your needs with you. assessment is the term use when we collect information and work out what help or support you need.

You may also want to involve someone who looks after you (your carer) or someone to speak for you. With your permission we may need to talk to staff from other organisations for example your doctor district nurse or health visitor.

If your needs are straight forward, the assessment will be too. If your needs are more complicated, your assessment will be more detailed.

What sort of things will I be asked?

- What difficulties you are facing
- What you think your needs are
- What help you have now
- What your daily activities are
- What help you think you need

Putting together a care plan

We agree with you a summary of your needs that we have both identified, and the things we want to achieve to help you. This is recorded on your care plan, which you are asked to sign if you are in agreement with it.

Who carries out the assessment?

This will vary according to what type of assistance you appear to need when you first contact social services. If your needs are for practical assistance with personal care, domestic daily living activities, social interaction or respite breaks for your carer, you will probably be allocated a social worker care manager.

If your need appears to be chiefly disability equipment, alterations to your environment or specialist rehabilitation advice, to help you remain independent and safe when carrying out your daily activities, you will probably be allocated an occupational therapy care manager.

What services can social services arrange?

This depends upon your needs and the resources that we have available. Services offered to you may include:

- Home care or personal assistance if you need help with managing daily living
- Equipment and advice about adaptations to your home to help you manage more easily and safely
- Daytime support, or help to take part in activities during the day
- Short term or permanent stay in a residential or nursing home
- Support and training if you have a sight problem
- If you are deaf or deaf blind, help to get an interpreter or other types of communication equipment and support.
- Information and advice about services provided by some voluntary organisations
- Provision of a disabled persons parking badge via the Blue Badge scheme

Can I have money to employ my own carers?

Yes you can. Social services are able to offer Direct Payments to some disabled adults and their carers who have been assessed as needing community care services, but who wish to make their own arrangements. (see our leaflet on Direct Payments for more information)

Will I have to pay for any services arranged by social services?

Disability equipment is provided free of charge.

Everybody must pay something towards the cost of their care in residential or nursing homes and for home care services, unless they are receiving care under section 117 of the Mental Health Act 1983.

The cost takes into account your personal income and savings, except the mobility part of disability living allowance. We follow statutory regulations when working out how much to ask people to pay.

Disabled facilities grants

If you need structural adaptations to your privately owned or rented accommodation, the occupational therapist care managers can provide advice about the type of adaptations that may best meet your needs.

If you are not able to pay for these yourselves, the occupational therapists can support your application to the housing department for a disabled facilities grant. You will be required to undergo a means test and may be asked to make a contribution towards the cost. If the cost exceeds the maximum grant available, you are usually expected to pay the difference yourself. If you are awarded a grant, you will be responsible for any ongoing repairs, maintenance or upkeep.

What are my rights if I have a complaint about social services?

Anyone who receives or has asked for services has a right to complain. This includes people who have been refused a service.

You can contact our customer advisor, social services on 01753 875770 or request our leaflet on 'How to make a complaint'.

Do people with a mental health problem or learning disability have any additional rights?

Yes. When someone with a mental health problem or learning disability has been compulsorily admitted to or detained in hospital under certain sections of the 1983 Mental Health Act, social services and the health service must ensure that he or she has appropriate care services following discharge from hospital.

Specialist health and social care services for people with mental health problems are assessed by the community mental health team. They are based at New Horizons, Pursers Court, Slough SL2 5BX and can be contacted on 01753 69050.

Can my carer ask for an assessment of their needs?

Yes. Carers are entitled to have their own needs considered under Section 2 of the Carers (Recognition of Service) Act 1995 and Section 1 of the Carers and Disabled Children Act, 2000. This will apply as long as they provide you with substantial care on a regular basis.

Carers have this right even if the person they are caring for does not wish to have an assessment or community care services provided.

Children and young people who provide care are also entitled to a carer's assessment. (Please refer to our carers leaflet for further information).

Should I be on the disability register?

Social services is required to keep a register of people who are physically disabled, partially sighted, blind or deaf as defined in Section 29 of the National Assistance Act 1948.

Being registered is voluntary, and your rights to help from the community care service do not depend upon being registered.

We use the register to help us:

- Plan services
- Consult disabled people when new services are planned

The information on the register is confidential.

You may find that some organisations will offer concessions and discounts to people who are registered.

If you have a sight impairment, being registered as blind may entitle you to additional benefits such as a reduction in some tax or reduced charge for a television license.

How do I become registered?

If you have a sight impairment, you must be assessed by your consultant ophthalmologist who then informs social services whether you could be registered as blind or partially sighted. A worker from the sensory needs service will contact you to discuss it and, if you wish, include you on the register.

If you have other disabilities and wish to be included on the register, you should contact the access team. The access team will ask how your disability affects you, consult with your doctor and if you meet the criteria for registration, we will include you on the register.

How do I contact social services?

If you think you need help from social services you can contact:

- The access team based at the Town Hall on 01753 690400. Mondays to Fridays 9am to 5pm or email communitycare@slough.gov.uk
- You can also find our social worker care managers at the main hospitals in Berkshire. These are Wexham Park, Upton and Heatherwood hospitals
- For visual impairment you can contact the visual impairment team based in Wellington House, Wellington Rd, Wokingham RG40 2QV on 0118 9445421. Duty times: 9am to 5pm Monday, Wednesday and Friday
- If you have a hearing impairment you can contact deaf service team based at Wellington House, Wellington Rd, Wokingham RG40 2QV on Tel: 0118 9445421, Minicom: 0118 9272202 or Fax: 0118 9272223. Duty times: 9am to 1pm on Monday, Wednesday & Friday

Useful contacts

- Age Concern Slough - Tel: 01753 822890
- Berkshire Disabled Information Network - Tel: 01344 755528
- Benefits agency - Tel: 01753 615600
- Benefits (one stop shop) - Tel: 01344 755528
- Disabled Living Foundation - Tel: 0118 987 2803
- Disabled Benefits Helpline - Tel: 0800 665544
- Listening Books - Tel: 0118 9872803
- NHS Direct - Tel: 0845 4647
- disAbility Forum For Slough - Tel: 01753 52 4176
- Royal National Institute for the Blind - Tel: 0345 669999
- Royal National Institute for the Deaf - Tel: 0870 605 0123
- Welfare Benefits Advice - Tel: 01753 875776
- Slough Borough Council website - www.slough.gov.uk
- Slough P.A.L.S. - Tel: 01753 635615
- Slough Carers Support - Tel: 01628 668413

How to contact us

You can contact the Community Care Services Department for advice and support, we are here to answer your calls from 9.00am to 5.00pm - Monday to Friday.

Please phone us on 01753 690400

You can email us at communitycare@slough.gov.uk or visit our website www.slough.gov.uk.

Emergency calls received on the above number outside normal hours will be passed to our special emergency social care service.

This leaflet can be made available on audio tape, in braille, large print and in other languages on request.

If you would like a copy of this document translated please ask an English speaking person to request this by calling 01753 690759. Alternatively please call Slough Translation and Interpreting Service on 01753 701157.

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