

Preparing for a carer's assessment

Who is a carer?

A carer is someone who cares for a friend or family member who, due to illness, disability, a mental health condition or an addiction, cannot cope without their support. They are not paid for the support they give.

An unpaid carer is not the same as a care worker and may or may not receive Carers Allowance. A Carer Assessment is not related to Carers Allowance.

Who can Carers Oxfordshire help?

People aged 18 or over who are caring, unpaid, for one or more people, an adult, child (or both) who is a resident in Oxfordshire.

If you are a carer, aged under 18, or there is a young person who helps you support someone, please contact Oxfordshire County Council on 0345 050 7666 and ask for young carer support.

What is a carer assessment?

A carer assessment builds a picture of the impact the caring role has on the carer e.g. if caring affects the carer's ability to achieve the everyday things that are important to them, and any effects on their wellbeing. It will help to identify if they need support and why. The assessment will last at least one hour.

What is wellbeing?

Wellbeing is a person's physical, mental, and emotional state. This means how they are 'in themselves, how well they feel they are coping with everyday life and how hopeful and confident they are about achieving their personal goals.

How can I do carer's assessment?

Online - You can do a self-assessment online. It puts you fully in control and you can do it at any time of the day. To access the online carer's assessment, please visit www.oxfordshire.gov.uk/residents/social-and-health-care/carers-assessment.

Supported - If you are unable to do the self-assessment, we can support you to complete one. Please fill in a contact form on our website: www.carersoxfordshire.org.uk or call 01235 424715 and one of our team will be in touch.

(If you have already made contact with us, one of our team will call you to make arrangements).

Combined - If the person you care for is having their own assessment, you might consider having your carer's assessment completed alongside them, but you and the person you care for must both agree. Talk to people who are assessing the person you care for to see if this is appropriate.

You can complete a carer assessment once a year or sooner if your circumstances have changed.

Taking part

If you feel you would like someone to be with you during your assessment, ask a friend or family member to be with you.

If you have a condition that means you need someone to help you e.g if you have difficulty communicating or remembering, you use sign language, translation or advocacy you can ask someone you know who can help or if this is not possible we can arrange an independent advocate to help. If you are subject to a safeguarding enquiry or review, we will arrange for an independent advocate to support you. An independent advocate is not a friend or family member. Please let us know before your carer's assessment so that we can make arrangements.

Independent advocates are provided by Oxfordshire County Council.

Please let us know if you have any questions

Call us on our CarersLine: 01235 424715

Visit our website: www.carersoxfordshire.org.uk

What will happen during my carer assessment

If you are completing a self-assessment online you will complete the questions and provide any information yourself.

In preparation for your self-assessment, it is useful to give yourself some time to think about how caring affects you. It's also important to start thinking about any help that would make a difference to you as a carer.

If we are supporting you you will be fully involved in your assessment. We will support you to be able to express your wishes and feelings, weigh up options and make decisions about what is important to you.

The assessment will help us to consider:

- your caring role and how it affects your life and wellbeing,
- your health – physical, mental and emotional,
- your feelings and choices about caring,
- your strengths and capabilities now and in the future,
- if there are things you would like to achieve (your outcomes) and any support that may be necessary to help you achieve them.

We have listed some questions that will be asked to help you prepare:

- How do you help the person you care for including physical and emotional support.
- Do you have other responsibilities alongside caring including any children, parents, or other family?
- Does anyone else help you or provide support?

You will be asked about the things you do alongside caring and how you manage them such as:

- Are you or you would like to be, in work or education, volunteering, or training?
- How you cope day-to-day with upkeep of your home, eating healthily and your finances?
- Are there things that you are, or would like to be involved in within your community, such as groups, and hobbies.
- How you are or would like to have relationships with friends and family.
- Housing e.g how adequate and safe your home situation is?

We will help you to consider the things that matter to you and what you would like to do.

We'll explore things that you have tried and identify how the things you want to do can be best achieved using a range of options and opportunities. You will be able to consider ways in which you feel you could achieve these things as much as possible.

We will record parts of the conversation we have with you.

What will happen Next?

We will make a decision on your eligibility for support, which will include looking at:

1. Are your needs the result of you providing necessary care?
Which means looking at what you do and if the person you care for could do the things you do themselves.
2. Does your caring role have an effect on you? including:
is your physical or mental health at risk of getting worse?
are you unable to look after other children or provide care to another person?
are you unable to achieve any of the things you feel are important to you?
3. Is there, or is there likely to be, a significant impact on your wellbeing?
If you think the effect on you is noticeable or important, this could count as significant you are best placed to judge your wellbeing.

We will inform you of the decision of eligibility and discuss any support:

If you do not have eligible needs, we will give you advice about how to prevent developing needs in the future and any free community support that might help you.

If you do have eligible needs, then your needs must be met. We consider the information from our conversation with you about what you feel you would like to do, determine any help you need and from who. We will determine if Carers Oxfordshire can provide support and any other options that can meet your needs (with your permission).

Carers Oxfordshire will work with you to create a support plan. Your support plan will list the things you need help with, why you need support, what it is and how it will help. We will not make any decisions about support without you.

It may be that the best way to meet your needs is to consider provision of care and support directly to the person that you care for, in this case we will make a referral to the appropriate local authority service (with your and their permission).

You will receive a copy of your assessment and plan from, Oxfordshire County Council, If you wish, you can opt out of this by letting us know.

After your assessment we will contact you to talk about how things are going and to ensure any support we agreed is helping.

Please let us know if you have any questions

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