

Community Care & Support Planning F.A.Q.s

What are the Care Act Eligibility Areas?

- (a) managing and maintaining nutrition;
- (b) maintaining personal hygiene;
- (c) managing toilet needs;
- (d) being appropriately clothed;
- (e) being able to make use of the adult's home safely;
- (f) maintaining a habitable home environment;
- (g) developing and maintaining family or other personal relationships;
- (h) accessing and engaging in work, training, education or volunteering;
- (i) making use of necessary facilities or services in the local community including public transport, and recreational facilities or services; and
- (j) carrying out any caring responsibilities the adult has for a child

Who would have a Care & Support Plan?

Someone who has been assessed as being eligible to receive services and a Personal Budget from Social Services would be required to create a Care & Support Plan, which sets out how they would use their Personal Budget to meet their care needs. A Carer's Support Plan is created following an assessment of the needs of any informal carer.

What is a Care and Support Plan?

A Care & Support Plan is a document setting out how someone will use their Personal Budget to manage their difficulties and improve their situation. It would include details of the choices made regarding who will provide support, when it will happen, how it will be delivered and any costs. It is usually written by the Local Authority in consultation with you, but people can write their own Plan as long as it contains the key areas which enable the Local Authority to agree it and release the Personal Budget.

What should a Care & Support Plan include?

The Plan should include details of your care needs which have been assessed and meet the National Eligibility Criteria for community care services. This would include those needs which are being met by someone else such as an informal carer. The Plan should provide details of how you would like your support provided and ensure it's in a way which feels beneficial to you and your individual lifestyle and preference. The Plan will also need to set out the costs of your chosen services and support.

What sort of help is available to complete a Support Plan?

The support plan can be completed with help from a family member or friend, a or a Social Worker or Health Care Professional. An Independent Advocate may become involved in supporting someone who lacks capacity to make decisions themselves and has no-one else to act on their behalf.

How can I find out what services and support are available for me to buy?

A Local Authority is responsible for helping you think about your options and what services and support might be available for meeting your needs, including using a Direct Payment to buy services and support yourself. You can also receive help to advertise and employ a Personal Assistant if you wanted to consider this option.

Can the Local Authority arrange my care services rather than buying them myself?

Yes, if a Direct Payment is not something you wished to have, the Local Authority continues to have a duty to ensure your care needs are met and put in services and support which they commission themselves. You

can choose to have part of your budget paid to you as a Direct Payment and some kept with the Local Authority for them to provide some of the support.

How much choice do I have with the services and support I want to buy?

The Care Act 2014 guidance promotes the importance of beginning with the assumption that the individual is best placed to judge their own well-being and their wishes, feelings and beliefs and have control with their day to day life including how support is provided to them. As such, your support arrangements should be arranged in a way which can accommodate your views towards your personal dignity, physical and mental health and emotional well-being, engaging in work or training opportunities, your domestic and family relationships and your contribution to society.

Are there any restrictions with how I choose to spend my budget?

Your options may be limited if you choose to use a very expensive service which results in you need more money when a less expensive one will act just as well in meeting your needs.

Who Agrees my Care & Support Plan?

You or someone representing you would need to sign the Plan and the Local Authority would need to check that the Plan will be appropriate in managing your care needs and not put you at further risk. It will need to be agreed by them before your Personal Budget can be released.

Support Plan Minimum Requirements:

- **Transparency** - you should be assisted to understand how your personal budget is calculated and the reason for the final amount.
- **Timely** - ensuring your indicative figure is given quickly to enable the care planning process to get underway once your needs are identified.
- **Sufficient to meet your eligible needs** - a local authority should not have 'arbitrary ceilings' to personal budgets that result in you, for example, being forced to move into care.

The Care & Support Plan should flow from the Assessment. Planned services and support arrangements should aim to meet the objectives of the plan and include contingency arrangements when planned support can't take place. The plan should set out the details of the arrangements and the cost of these.

Meeting Needs:

Following a needs assessment and subsequent determination of eligible need the Local Authority has a duty under Section 18 of the Care Act to meet the eligible needs when:

- a. The person is ordinarily resident in the Local Authority area; or
- b. The person is present in the Local Authority area and of no settled residence; and
- c. The person consents to the Local Authority meeting their needs; or
- d. Where the person lacks capacity a Best Interests decision is made that the Local Authority should meet the needs.

Local Authorities are required to meet all eligible needs identified in an assessment. An eligible need to maintain the home and access transport to use community facilities are equally required to be met to the same extent as a meeting a need to maintain personal care.

Setting limitations on what a local authority is prepared to fund in particular cases or imposing a financial limit on the total weekly cost of home care services that can be put into any one household are unlawful, in that they would amount to a fettering of the health or social services duty to meet an assessed need.

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