

# Getting help from Adult Services Departments - *Factsheet*

**Dementia web**   
Information resource for carers, professionals and you

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# Getting help from Adult Services Departments

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If you are an adult who needs help with your day to day living, you are entitled to receive that help from the local authority where you live. Local authority adult services departments (previously called Social Services Departments) have a legal duty to provide support for people who have significant difficulties in leading their lives safely and independently, and for their family carers.

## Who is eligible for help from Adult Services Departments?

The first step is to find out if you are eligible to receive help. This is usually done by discussing your situation with a member of staff in the local authority. The information you give will be matched against national eligibility criteria to see if you qualify for help. This link takes you to the eligibility criteria so that you can see for yourself who qualifies [Guidance on Eligibility Criteria for Adult Social Care, 25 Feb 2010](#)

If you are not eligible for help initially, you should be provided with information about other sources of support, such as, voluntary sector organisations, support groups, housing departments and so on, and also be advised about contacting the department again if your circumstances change.

People undertaking regular care of a person who has difficulties can also have a Carer's Assessment in their own right.

## What happens if I am eligible?

If it appears that you will be eligible, the next step will be to look at your situation in more depth as part of a 'community care assessment'. This will normally be with a care manager, social worker, occupational therapist or other staff member.

The assessment will look at what difficulties you are experiencing; what types of things are causing problems for you and/ or your carers; what needs to happen to improve your situation; what outcomes you are wanting to achieve etc.

You may complete an assessment yourself in which case it will be called a self-assessment. You can be helped to do this by involving your family, friends or the support of a voluntary organisation. Assessing your needs may also mean that information will be needed from other people such as doctors.

Following the assessment you will be informed of whether you are definitely eligible for help and what sort of help this might be.

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## What sort of help might be available?

The main aim of Adult Services Departments is to help you meet all your personal care needs and to continue your activities of daily living as safely and independently as possible.

There is a wide range of services available that might be appropriate for you, including:

- Regular support from a home care / domiciliary service to help you get up, wash and dress, make meals, go to bed etc.
- Day centres which can provide you with company and/or to give a carer a break.
- Regular periods of care (respite care) in a care home.
- Adaptations to your home to help you to access the facilities in your home such as bathroom, toilet.
- Equipment such as mobility aids, bath boards, shower chairs, and more technical equipment such as personal alarms, door entry systems, activity monitors and so on ( often termed 'assistive technology').
- Regular supply of ready to eat meals or shopping delivery.
- Support to learn new skills or to maintain the skills and independence you already have such as accompanying you to get your shopping.
- A place in a Care Home if you need care around the clock and it can not be provided in your home.

Adult Services should always aim to work in partnership with other local organisations such as health, housing and the voluntary sector so they should also be able to access other help if it is agreed that you need it.

Following a Carer's Assessment, the support provided should be specifically to meet the carer's needs and might include funding to take a holiday, to do some training, or to undertake a leisure pursuit.

# Getting help from Adult Services Departments

## Your Care Plan

Once your needs have been established and the help you need agreed, you will be given a written Care Plan (or Support Plan) that details all the care / support that will be provided and who will provide it. You will also be advised how much you will be charged for these services, and you may also be told how much the local authority can give you so that you can organise your care yourself.

## Charges for care

Assessments are not charged for but most services provided are subject to a financial assessment of the person receiving them. More information is available in our factsheets 'Staying at Home and Funding your Care' and 'Moving to a Care Home and Funding your Care'. You may be assessed as having to pay the full amount for the care you receive.

Certain people are exempt from charges, for instance when services are provided to someone who has previously been formally detained under the Mental Health Act.

In some circumstances funding may also be available from other sources, for instance, to help with adapting your home, under the Disabled Facilities Grants. Most grants are, however, means tested. Benefits such as Attendance Allowance can also help, and this is available to everyone who needs personal assistance regardless of their income and savings.

## Organising your care

There is now a variety of options:

- The local authority can specify the services you need and a 'care manager' (social care practitioner) will arrange all your support, contacting services and agencies to find an appropriate provider, making a contract with them, arranging payment, and monitoring that they are providing you with a good service.
- You can be provided with money to make all the arrangements for a service yourself. This is called a Direct Payment (DP). You can use a Direct Payment to employ staff / personal assistants instead of using a service provider. Most authorities fund support agencies to help people with using Direct Payments.
- More recently, a wider range of options is being introduced called "Personal Budgets" which could provide you with an allocation of money based on your total needs so that you can decide how you wish to arrange your support. You can ask for others to help manage this allocation, and can continue to ask for help from the care manager in part or wholly.

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## What happens if my needs change?

Once your care / support has been arranged the Adult Services will undertake a review of the arrangements at least once a year, to check that everything is working well for you. However if anything changes between reviews you will be told who to contact so that your situation can be re-assessed.

## Who to contact?

Previously known as Social Services Departments, many Adults Services Departments are now known by different names such as Community Services, Social Care Services, and so on. You should be able to contact the local authority that you pay your council tax to and ask for the department that provides social care for adults. This will get you linked to the right place.

Guideposts Trust provides specialist information and care services for people with dementia and their carers. [www.dementiaweb.org.uk](http://www.dementiaweb.org.uk)

Contact the Helpline number: **0845 1204048** available Monday to Friday office hours, answer service at other times or by email at [info@dementiaweb.org.uk](mailto:info@dementiaweb.org.uk)

## Dementia Information Service for Carers

Helpline Number **0845 4379901**

Call in normal office hours. Answer phone at other times.

Email: [info@dementiawebwarwickshire.org.uk](mailto:info@dementiawebwarwickshire.org.uk)

Web: [www.dementiawebwarwickshire.org.uk](http://www.dementiawebwarwickshire.org.uk)

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