

ADULT CARE SERVICES



Community Care

Assessment
Arrangements

What is community care?



Community care is about supporting you in your own home and enabling you to be as independent as possible, or where this is not possible, to receive the care you need for everyday living. There are many different kinds of help available for adults with disabilities and older people.

What to do if you need help

If you, your relative or friend needs help, then just let us know. You can easily contact us in the following ways:

- By letter
- By telephoning Adult Social Care Direct at Gateshead Council on 0191 433 7033
- By emailing Adult Social Direct on:
adultsocialcaredirect@gateshead.gov.uk
- By faxing 0191 433 2334

Our opening times are listed at the back of this leaflet.

Our staff will listen to you carefully and will ask questions about the difficulties that you, your relative or friend are having. At this point our staff will explain what options are available to you. These may include:

- Use of free universal services provided by the council, such as leisure, libraries and arts.

- Telling you about another organisations that can help, such as the Citizen's Advice Bureau and free services provided by the voluntary sector.
- Offering information that can resolve your issue quickly
- Arranging for a member of the social work team to visit you that day if you need help urgently or where there is serious risk.
- Providing information of government departments and agencies, eg. Department of Work and Pensions, the NHS, the voluntary and service sectors and charitable bodies.

If you don't need help straight away then with your agreement we will refer you to a community team to organise a full assessment of your needs.



What is an assessment?



An assessment is a way of looking at all of the things you are able to manage for yourself, and also at all the things which you may be having difficulty with, for example, getting yourself dressed.

An assessing officer will visit you, usually at home, and sometimes on several occasions, to gather all the information they need to understand how best to help you. We aim to complete your assessment within 28 days. If you have a carer, they can be part of the assessment or can ask to have an assessment of their own needs carried out separately.

Whenever we need to, we ask specialist workers to help us with the assessment. This may include: doctors; specialist nurses; domiciliary care workers; sensory support workers and rehabilitation workers.

As part of your assessment we may identify that some small pieces of equipment will help to meet your needs. If this is the case then your assessing officer will be happy to refer you to the Gateshead Equipment Service who can offer support and assistance to access equipment to meet your needs.

If you have worries or concerns about living on your own we may refer you to a council service called Care Call. This service can provide special equipment such as wristbands and pendant alarms that can help you 24/7, 365 days of the year. A leaflet is available about this service, but you can also ask your assessing worker about this and any charges associated with this service.

Following the assessment



The assessment will identify:

Level of risk

We need to assess the level of risk of you losing your independence. This may be 'critical', 'substantial', 'moderate' or 'low'. The council currently only delivers services to meet critical and substantial levels of need.

Your eligible needs

As part of the government's guidance, 'Fair Access to Care', we use a checklist to determine whether your level of risk and needs are eligible for a service. This means that those people who are most vulnerable and most in need receive help. A leaflet about 'Fair Access to Care', is available from local council offices or ask your assessing officer.



If you are assessed as having critical or substantial needs, and a financial assessment identifies that you are unable to pay from your own money, the council will pay for the following goods and services:

- eating and drinking (help if you struggle to use cutlery or want advice on cooking a nutritious meal);
- toileting;
- washing or bathing;
- dressing;
- oral care;
- caring for skin, hair and nails (except chiropody);
- re-ablement and enablement;
- telecare and other technologies that reduce dependence;
- access to activities and skill development which can help reduce social isolation, promote well-being and give you more independence, choice and control;
- cleaning and domestic tasks as part of a care package;
- laundry as part of a care package;
- accessing shopping services;
- services for carers that enable them to continue in a caring role, e.g. respite care.

The council will not pay for the following goods and services:

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| ● loans, credit cards and hire purchase; |
| ● food, drink, tobacco and alcohol; |
| ● educational costs; |
| ● clothing; |
| ● furniture; |
| ● housing costs; |
| ● health related therapies e.g. hydrotherapy, aromatherapy; |
| ● household costs e.g. TV licenses, Council Tax, utility bills, mortgage payments, internet costs; |
| ● transport: but we will take into account if DLA (mobility component) and transport concessions are meeting your needs; |
| ● holidays - apart from any additional costs incurred as the result of a disability, this will be assessed on a case by case basis. |

Where your needs are not eligible

It could be that some of the needs identified in your assessment have a low or moderate risk of you losing your independence and so we would not offer you a service. Your assessing officer can give you information about where you may be able to get help in your local community.

Your support plan

When you and your assessing officer feel the assessment is complete, a support plan will be produced. A copy of this will be given to you and your carer as well as to anyone else involved in caring for you (with your agreement).

Direct payments and personal budgets

If you are entitled to services, you are also entitled to a direct payment or personal budget. This means you receive money to arrange and pay for your own services. Your assessing officer will discuss this with you, ask them about the the following leaflets: Self directed support, charging and eligibility for services. All are available on the Gateshead Council website.

Reviews

A meeting called a review will be held to check things are running smoothly. You, and if appropriate, your carer(s) will be invited to be part of this review to give opinions on the support you are getting. A relative, friend or advocate would be very welcome to attend with you.

Because situations at home change, the care arranged for you may also need to change. Your assessing officer will explain how you can alert us to these changes.

Assessment of the needs of carers

When you are offered an assessment of your needs, a relative or friend who cares for you is entitled to ask for their needs to be taken into account. This can be done at your assessment or separately.

Your carer's needs will be taken into account when preparing a support plan which is acceptable to you both.

Support and advice for carers is available from:
Gateshead Carers Association who have a free carers advice line **0800 328 9241**, open Mon to Fri 10am-3pm.



How much will I have to pay?



You do not have to pay to see a social worker / assessing officer, to have an assessment or to receive advice. There are however, charges for other services.

If you would like to know more information about any of these charges, there is a separate leaflet about charges, which is available at any of the council offices.

Some of these charges may vary according to individual circumstances. Your social worker / assessing officer will explain these to you.

If we assess you as needing a residential or nursing home place, and you need help with the fees, we shall assist you with this. A leaflet is available about charges.

Forms and Files

The information you give us is treated as confidential and only shared with people who will be involved in your care. All the information is kept in accordance with the Data Protection Act 1998. By law, you have a right to ask to see most of the information held. To do this, you should write to the information rights officer at Gateshead Council who will arrange an appointment to discuss the process.

How to contact us



To compliment, criticise or complain please write to us at:

**Customer Services Manager
Gateshead Council
Civic Centre
Gateshead NE8 1HH**

For further help and
advice please contact:
0191 433 2692

You can call **Adult Social Care Direct** on: **0191 433 7033**
between 8:45am - 5pm Monday to Thursday
and 8:45am - 4:30pm on Fridays

You can also email:

adultsocialcaredirect@gateshead.gov.uk

How to make a compliment or a complaint

If you are unhappy with your assessment, support plan, or the services you receive, it may help to discuss the problem with your assessing officer first.

If he or she is not able to deal with the problem to your satisfaction, you may use the formal complaints procedure. There is a leaflet called 'What are your views about the service we provide?', which will be sent with your outcome letter or support plan or you can get it from any council office.

All comments on our services are very useful, and help us to plan for the future. So if you do have any comments, compliments or criticisms, please let us know.

Different Formats

If you would prefer this leaflet in large print, Braille or on audiotape/CD please contact the communications team at Gateshead Council on 0191 433 3444.



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