

# Assessment of care needs

For the majority of adults and children who become seizure free on medication, this information may not be relevant. Help from social work is usually only required where epilepsy is complex and/or if the adult or child has other health conditions/disabilities.

This factsheet covers information on how you can access help and financial support from social work if you or someone you care for may need additional support or adaptations to their home.

## *Community care or Section 23 assessments*

A **community care assessment** will assess the needs of an adult. This is also sometimes called a 'single shared assessment' or 'joint needs assessment'.

A **Section 23 assessment** assesses the needs of children.

## *How do I request an assessment?*

Phone your local social work department and ask for an assessment. Your local council's website will give you the number for your social work department. You can also ask someone else such as your GP, a health visitor, a friend or family member, or a housing officer to phone on your behalf.

## How soon will I get an assessment?

The assessment should be carried out within a reasonable time, depending on your circumstances. Your social work department will need to inform you of the reason for any delays.

If you need support urgently, you may get an assessment and support straightaway. This could for example be if you live on your own and currently have no carer but need help with basic tasks such as getting in and out of bed or taking your medication.

If you need help with accessing an assessment, contact your local Citizens Advice Bureau.

## What happens during the assessment?

The purpose of the assessment is to make sure you or someone you care for gets the help and support to live life as independently as possible. A care professional will help you identify needs and how these can be best met.

This could be:

- an adaptation to your home such as replacing the bath with a shower or wet room, installing an epilepsy alarm, or providing specialist equipment
- daily visits to help with basic tasks such as getting washed and dressed
- help with chores around the house like cleaning and preparing meals
- help with accessing recreational and occupational activities
- a short-term break

A named person such as a social worker or occupational therapist will usually visit your home and will be your main point of contact in the assessment process. They will not only assess your needs or the needs and wishes of someone you care for, but also look at how the whole family is affected. The assessment should also look at how the person copes with daily tasks such as eating and sleeping, getting to school or work.

The care professional should be sensitive to your family's religious and cultural needs as well as anything which is important to you as a family and make this part of their assessment.

They may want to speak to your doctor or other medical professional and may want to involve other care professionals with different areas of expertise. Before any information is shared with other professionals, you will be asked for permission to do so.

You can ask a friend, family member, carer or advocate to be present during the assessment. Make a list of questions and points to discuss before the assessment. This will ensure that you have covered everything you want to be taken into account.

## What happens next?

You will be given a named contact for further queries and information on how to ask for a review in case your care needs have changed since the assessment.

Your social work department will put together a [personal support plan](#) based on the assessment. The plan will tell you how much it will cost, and how to pay for it. Each local authority has their own policy on what services are paid for and what services should be provided for free.

Depending on your income or savings, you may have to pay some or all of the costs yourself, or you may be allocated an amount of money, called an [individual budget](#).

## Self-directed support

Self-directed Support (SDS) allows you to choose how support is provided to you or someone you care for by giving you more flexibility and choice over your individual budget.

You can decide how you want to manage your individual budget:

- you can request [direct payments](#) from your individual budget, which you then use to buy your own support and services. This gives you more control over who works with you and how;

- you can ask for an [Individual Service Fund](#), which means you can choose the support you would like, but your local authority or an agency is in charge of the budget and can make arrangements on your behalf;
- you can leave it all to your local authority to find the right support for you or someone you care for and to arrange this support;
- or you could opt for a combination of all three options mentioned above.

You can get help with self-directed support. To find someone check out [Self Directed Support Scotland](#).

### *Further help and financial support*

Your local Citizens Advice Bureau can give you more information on your local authority's charging policies.

Some trusts and charities may also be able to provide a grant to help with financing some of the support not funded by your local authority. Check out Turn2us [www.turn2us.org.uk](http://www.turn2us.org.uk) or the [Family Fund](#) for more information.

### *Unhappy with the outcome of the assessment?*

If you feel that your needs or the needs of someone you care for have not been met, ask your local social work department for a review. If you are still unhappy, you can make an official complaint to the council. Your local Citizens Advice Bureau will be able to support you with a complaint and any further steps you can take such as complaining to the [Scottish Public Services Ombudsman](#).

### *Carer's Assessment*

If you are an unpaid carer, you can ask for a separate carer's assessment looking at your own needs. You can ask for a carer's assessment even if the person you care for has not requested a community care or section 23 assessment. Find out more from the [Carers Trust](#), [Carers UK](#) or your local Citizens Advice Bureau.

## Contact us

If you want to talk to someone about anything mentioned in this factsheet, are looking for further support or information about epilepsy, please contact our confidential freephone Helpline on 0808 800 2200. We are here for you.

**Our resources are always free. If you would like to support our work please text FACTS to 70085 to donate £3. Texts cost £3 plus one standard rate message.**



[www.epilepsyscotland.org.uk](http://www.epilepsyscotland.org.uk)

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