

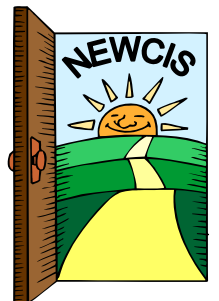
Help for Carers



...a guide to services and carers needs assessments



CYNGOR
Sir Ddinbych
Denbighshire
COUNTY COUNCIL



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“I am a carer for my father-in-law, Dennis Senior, who has health problems. I’m also a full time mum, and find it difficult to manage sometimes. I know Dennis’s needs have been looked into, but is there anything available for me that will help me to carry on being his carer?”



Ellen, 40

Ellen is a member of Ceri’s Family - Denbighshire’s virtual family

Who is a carer?

Carers are people who look after family members or friends who need care, help or support. You don’t have to live with the person you care for to be a carer. Carers can be:

- ♦ adults caring for other adults
- ♦ parents caring for ill or disabled children, or
- ♦ young carers who care for another family member.

Social services and the North East Wales Carers Information Service (**NEWCIS**) can provide information and support on a range of issues for carers. They can also put you in touch with other organisations that support carers. Their contact details are on page 8 of this leaflet.

What help is available?

Even if you only provide a small amount of care, there is support available from a large number of organisations. Many of these provide support and advice relating to specific conditions. They also offer services like:

- ♦ support groups
- ♦ the chance to meet other carers
- ♦ advice about benefits and financial matters
- ♦ training opportunities, and
- ♦ social events.

You may also be eligible for an assessment of your needs as a carer. This is called a **carers needs assessment**.

What is a carers needs assessment?

A carers needs assessment looks at what you need to help you look after the person you are caring for. It is **not** an assessment of your ability to provide care.

It could give you the chance to think about what help you need in order to make your role as a carer easier for you.

There may be specific services which could help if you provide regular and substantial care and support to someone with a long term illness or disability.

How do I know if I can have a carers needs assessment?

You can have a carers needs assessment if you provide **regular and substantial unpaid care** for someone who has long term health or social care needs. You can also have an assessment if you are intending to look after someone with long term health or social care needs, for example if they are due to come out of hospital.

Parent carers

Carers needs assessments are also offered to parents who have children under the age of 18 years who are known to children's services. Assessments are offered on request or when carers issues are identified during discussion with the family. In particularly complex cases, children's services will undertake a carers needs assessment as part of the child's assessment. You can request a carers needs assessment from your child's social worker.

Young carers

Carers who are under the age of 18 are generally referred to as **young carers** and are also entitled to an assessment.

Denbighshire children and families' services have a responsibility to assess the needs of young carers, but support is also available from **Action for Children**, a voluntary organisation which provides support to young carers from the age of 5 to 18 years. For more information contact the **first contact team** (their contact details are on page 8) or **Action for Children** on 01745 350555.

Does the person I care for have to be receiving help from social services or a community mental health team?

No. Your needs as a carer will be assessed in your own right even if the person you care for chooses not to receive any help from social services or a community mental health team.

Who will carry out the assessment?

The assessment will be carried out by a social worker, or, if you are caring for someone with a mental health condition, by a community psychiatric nurse. However, you can choose to have your assessment carried out by an **independent carer assessor**. These assessors work with NEWCIS, and are not employed by social services or health services.

Will I be charged for having an assessment?

There is no charge for the assessment. You won't need to give any information about your personal finances, and your benefits won't be affected.

Help for the person you are caring for

You may want to talk to a social worker or community psychiatric nurse (CPN) about any services they may be able to provide for the person that you care for. Services that social services may be able to provide include:

- ♦ help with practical tasks, including personal care
- ♦ disability equipment or adaptations to the home, and
- ♦ a break or time away from home - there is a variety of care they may be able to offer so that you or the person you care for can have a break for a day or longer.

Social services or a CPN will need to assess the needs of the person you care for. You may be asked to take part in these discussions.

As part of the assessment social services will consider whether the person you care for is eligible for a service.

Social services have criteria for who will be eligible for services. The criteria are based on giving priority to people with the highest level of need or those who are at risk.

What kind of things will we talk about?

You will have the opportunity to discuss how you are feeling and how your caring role affects your life, including your health, social life, emotional needs, interests and work.

You can also discuss:

- ♦ how things are at home,
- ♦ dealing with every day tasks
- ♦ the future,
- ♦ practical help,
- ♦ breaks from caring, and
- ♦ dealing with emergencies.

Before the meeting you should think about things that would help you cope with your caring role and what you would find helpful.

When and where can the assessment take place?

The assessment can be carried out at different stages; for example:

- ♦ when you first take on a caring role, or
- ♦ at a later date when your caring circumstances change.

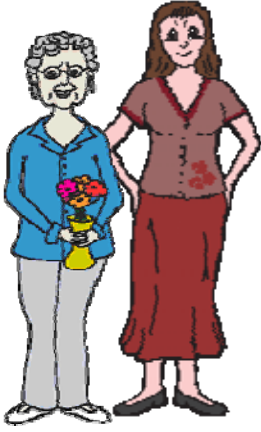
You can choose when and where the assessment is carried out. It will usually take between 1 - 2 hours.



Is the person I care for going to be present during the assessment?

Not usually, but they can be present if you would like.

Who else will be there?



Usually there is just you and the person carrying out the carers needs assessment, but you can choose to have someone else there to support you.

What will happen after the assessment?

Once the assessment has been completed, a written plan of what might help will be agreed with you. You will be given a copy of the plan to keep.

What happens to the information held about me?

Any information held about you comes under the Data Protection Act. This means that strict guidelines are followed about how your information is kept and processed. Your information will be treated confidentially and your details will be held safely and securely.

Social Services also have to follow rules if they want to share information about you with other people, like the health service, for example. They will only do this with your permission, except in extreme cases.

You have the right to see any information social services holds about you, and you can ask to see your case file at any time. Contact the first contact team if you would like to know more about our **access to files policy**.

Where can I get information and support?

Arranging a carers needs assessment

If you or the person you care for has a social worker or a community psychiatric nurse, you can ask them, or contact the **first contact team** who work with social services.

They are available at these times:

Monday to Thursday	8.30am - 5.00pm
Friday	8.30am - 4.30pm

You can write or call in to see them at:

First Contact Team
64 Brighton Road
Rhyl
LL18 3HN

or

First Contact Team
County Hall
Wynnstay Road
Ruthin
LL15 1YN

Phone	01824 712900
Fax	01824 712888
Text	07917 597993
Email	firstcontactteam@denbighshire.gov.uk
Website	www.denbighshire.gov.uk

NEWCIS

In addition to **social services**, giving information and support to carers is the role of NEWCIS. They can help you to contact other organisations who provide advice and support for carers.

Phone	0845 603 3187
Email	denbighshire@newcis.org.uk