

Useful questions to consider

Feelings: How do you feel about your caring role? Do you feel you have adequate support?

Health: Has your physical or mental health been affected as a result of the caring role?

Time: How many hours a week do you care? Do you have any time to yourself? Have you enough time to be involved in other activities?

Relationships: Do you have enough time for other family members or friends? Do you have an opportunity to socialize?

Unplanned events or emergencies: Do you have a plan in place should an unexpected event occur such as you become sick or involved in an accident?

Housing: Are the living arrangements adequate? Do you have the right equipment? Do you live with them, or close by?

Work: Are you struggling to maintain a job as well as your caring role?

The future: Are you concerned about the future?

You are eligible for a Carer's Assessment if you are looking after someone who has been assessed as needing services from the Trust, even if they do not wish to avail of those services.

Ask your key worker if they will assess your needs.

If you do not have a key worker, ask your GP for a referral to Social Services to have an Assessment of your needs.

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Carer's Assessment

Information Leaflet



Carer's Assessment

You are a **Carer** if you regularly provide or intend to provide a substantial amount of care for a friend or relative. Whilst the Southern Trust has the responsibility of offering you a Carer's Assessment, it is your legal entitlement to request that an Assessment of your needs be carried out.

If the person you care for is assessed as needing services from the Trust then you are also eligible to have a Carer's Assessment of your needs, even if that person does not avail of their services.

What is a Carer's Assessment?

A Carer's Assessment is a shared understanding between you and your key worker as to your caring role or responsibilities. It will take account of your circumstances, needs and views.

The Assessment is not a test of your financial situation, it is a conversation for you to focus on how caring impacts on you and your lifestyle and the information discussed can be compiled over a number of visits. You may wish to talk in confidence to the person carrying out the Assessment, without the person you are caring for being present. The person who conducts the Assessment will give you the opportunity to speak frankly about your own feelings and difficulties.

What is the purpose of the Assessment?

A Carer's Assessment will ensure that there is a shared understanding between you and your key worker. It will

- Ensure that you are recognised and feel that you are valued in your caring role.
- Identify any help or support you might need.
- Assess if you are eligible to avail of respite services.
- Provide you with information of local support services, such as—Carer's Support groups and benefits.
- Explore whether you want to stay in work or return to work and how to make this happen.

Preparing for a Carer's Assessment

Talk to the person you care for. Try to agree that you will both ask for Assessments. If he or she refuses a needs Assessment, you can still request a Carer's Assessment for yourself.

Ask for a copy of the Assessment beforehand so you can have time to look at the questions that will be asked of you, and to prepare your responses.

Keep a record of what you do from day to day.

Consider the impact caring has on all aspects of your life and your family's lives, and ways this can be made easier for you.

How do I get a Carer's Assessment?

You can ask any healthcare staff member to make a referral to the most appropriate key worker for your situation, who will then arrange to carry out your Carer's Assessment.

- Social Worker
- GP
- Community Nurse
- Mental Health Nurse
- District Nurse/Health Visitor
- Key Worker
- Care Manager
- Allied Health Professional, for example a Physiotherapist, Podiatrist, Speech and Language Therapist or Occupational Therapist
- Carer's Co-ordinator

What should you expect after having a Carers Assessment?

You should

- Feel that your contribution is recognised as important in the care of your relative or friend.
- Feel better informed about what support is available to you when you need it.
- Feel more confident speaking to staff about your caring role.
- Be more aware of the services being provided to help you continue in your caring role.
- Be given a copy of the Assessment for your own records.