

Information sheet C3 – Your entitlement to care and support

If disability or illness or related issues are causing you problems in any area of life that matters to you, we will try to help you find solutions to this. However our budgets are limited, so there are guidelines on what needs we will meet by paying for care and support services.

There are national "eligibility criteria" which set out the needs that councils *must* meet by law. In Northumberland, we also meet some additional needs. This information sheet explains both the national rules and the County Council's local policies. When we carry out a "needs assessment", we will use these rules and policies to decide which of your needs are eligible for publicly-funded care and support. Information Sheets C1 and C2 explain more about how we carry out needs assessments.

The information in this sheet is primarily about care and support services funded by the County Council. However we have agreed with Northumberland Clinical Commissioning Group that the same principles will apply when making decisions about NHS Continuing Health Care. (Information Sheet C11 has further information about this.)

■ What you are entitled to

The national "eligibility criteria" list outcomes which we must offer you help to achieve if you would otherwise be unable to do so, and if this would have a significant impact on your well-being. Information Sheet C0 explains what is meant by wellbeing.

The national rules say that we only have to provide support if you need help to achieve *two* of the outcomes in the list below. However in Northumberland we will provide support even if you need help with only one outcome on this list, if there would otherwise be a significant impact on your wellbeing:

- Eating and drinking adequately for your health
- Maintaining your personal hygiene
- Managing your toilet needs
- Getting dressed and wearing appropriate clothes
- Using your home safely (for instance being able to move around safely)
- Keeping your home habitable – for instance clean enough and well enough maintained to avoid risks to your health
- Maintaining your family and personal relationships, and improving your social life if you need help to do that
- Working or volunteering, or doing training or educational courses (if being able to do these matters to you)
- Getting to places you need to in the local community, and being able to use local services that you need. (This includes being able to use any transport that you need; it can also include being able to take part in leisure activities, for instance if you need to get out more because you are depressed.)
- Carrying out any caring responsibilities you may have for children

■ What we *won't* pay for

We pay for care and support services to meet needs which have a significant impact on your wellbeing. What has a significant impact on you is an individual matter, and we will listen to you before making any decision about that – but, for example:

- You might be able to manage satisfactorily without being able to get around every part of your home.
- You might not be able to keep your house as clean as you used to before you had health problems – but we are unlikely to pay for cleaning unless there are significant risks to your health, though we can advise you about cleaning services.
- If you need help to take a bath or a shower, we might only pay for this help once a week, unless there are special reasons why you need it more often.
- We will only pay for transport or helpers so you can get to leisure activities if you really need that – for instance we may want first to discuss with you what other opportunities you may have to get out of the house. If we do pay for help, it will usually only be to make sure your disability or illness doesn't prevent you from taking part; we would not usually pay entry fees or membership subscriptions.
- Help with work, education or training usually comes from other public bodies rather than from health or social services. We are only likely to fund specific extra help that you need – we don't usually fund course fees or support in the workplace, though we can advise you about other sources of funding.

■ Help to keep you safe from risks

You may need help to keep you safe from unpredictable risks, rather than help with one of the specific tasks or activities listed in this sheet. For instance if you get confused, or have mental health issues, or have an unpredictable health condition, you may be able to do everything on the list, but sometimes be in danger, or put others at risk. If there is a significant risk which can't be managed in other ways, we will fund help to keep you (and other people) safe.

When we discuss with you what support you need, we will take into account the situations in which the risk arises. If you could reduce the risk by changing the way you organise your life, and if we think you can do that without having to give up any activities which are vital for you, we may ask you to do that. When we decide what activities are vital for you, we will take into account whether they are necessary in order to achieve any of the outcomes listed on the first page of this information sheet, and whether giving up an activity would have a significant impact on your wellbeing.

We will also discuss with you whether you prefer to continue to take some risks as a positive choice, if the alternative would be a less independent lifestyle.

■ What if I get help from a family member or a friend?

When we assess your needs, we will consider all the help that you need, whether you are asking us to fund it, or planning to get it from a family member or friend (a "carer"). If we agree that you are eligible for support, you will be entitled to ask us to arrange it if your carer becomes unable to continue, or chooses not to, whether temporarily or permanently.