

# Oxleas

**NHS**

## Carers' assessment

For all community and mental health services

*Improving lives*

[oxleas.nhs.uk](http://oxleas.nhs.uk)



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## **Am I a carer?**

A carer is someone of any age who provides unpaid practical and emotional support to someone with ill health or disability on an unpaid basis. The term 'carer' is used to describe relatives, partners and friends; not care workers such as nurses or home helps who are paid for this work.

As a carer you may be a relative, partner, friend or neighbour. You may be a young person providing support to a parent or another individual. You may live with the person you care for or you may provide support from a distance. You may not think of yourself as a carer.

## **What is a carers' assessment?**

Supporting someone with an illness can be challenging, and we would like to support you as much as possible. It is important that we hear about your experiences, and a carer's assessment is a way for us to discuss your situation and see whether there are ways that we can help you.

A carers' assessment will not judge your ability to support the person you care for, and it will not negatively affect the service that they receive. It is simply an opportunity for you to consider your own health and wellbeing.

## **What will an assessment cover?**

At a carers' assessment you will discuss your experiences as a carer and any difficulties that you may have. It will consider your:

- need for practical, emotional and financial support
- need for information
- need for time off
- desire to work or pursue leisure activities
- own health and wellbeing
- crisis/contingency planning.

A carers' assessment is also a good opportunity to discuss specific carer support you may feel you need, for example you might like to attend a carers support group or be put in touch with your local carers centre.

As part of the assessment, a carers' assessment form will be filled out. A copy of this should be given to you for your records. The form will record what was discussed and what support will be given. Carers' assessments should be reviewed annually to ensure that they remain relevant to your needs.

The person you care for does not need to be involved in the carer's assessment and does not need to know that it has taken place.

### **Do I need to prepare for an assessment?**

It is not necessary to prepare for an assessment; however some people like to think about their caring role beforehand so that they have an idea of the issues they want to discuss. You may wish to think about the following.

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- Is your health affected by your caring role?
  - Have you been able to maintain the same quality of life as you had before you began caring?
  - Are you able to maintain friendships and socialise?
  - Are you able to get out and about and take breaks from your caring role?
  - Do you feel able to manage work and caring?
  - Is there any information you need to help you care?
  - Do you know what to do in a crisis?
  - Is there anything that would help you in your caring role?

You may want to have someone to support you at your assessment, eg a relative, friend or advocate. Please inform the assessor in advance if someone will be supporting you.

### **How do I get an assessment?**

Members of the health teams will carry out a carers' assessment. In most cases this will be done by the care coordinator/ care manager as they are already familiar with your situation. You can request to be assessed by someone independent and do not need to give a reason. In some instances, carers' assessments are carried out by social services, and your care coordinator will need to request an assessment on your behalf.

If you would like an assessment you should speak to the care coordinator/care manager of the person you care for. You can also speak to your local carers services who may be able to help you arrange an assessment.

### **Carers' Support (Bexley)**

T: 020 8302 8011

[www.carerssupport.org](http://www.carerssupport.org)

### **Mind in Bexley**

Carers Support Coordinator

T: 020 8303 5816 opt 7

### **Carers Bromley**

T: 01689 898 289

Freephone helpline: 0800 015 7700

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

### **Greenwich Carers Centre**

T: 0300 300 2233

[www.greenwichcarerscentre.org](http://www.greenwichcarerscentre.org)

### **Your opinion matters**

We are committed to providing the highest standards of care, so we welcome your views on the services we provide.

If you would like to comment, make a suggestion or make a complaint, please speak to the person you normally see or ask to speak to the team manager. You may also like to speak to our Patient Advice and Liaison Service (PALS) on 0800 917 7159.

## Confidentiality

All our staff are required to abide by a strict code of conduct on confidentiality. We will only share information with those who need to know in order to provide good quality care. Occasionally there may be exceptions to this, for example to support a clinical audit or to monitor the quality of care provided. We will usually discuss this with you beforehand.

## How to contact us

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