



Care needs assessment in Scotland

What is a care needs assessment?

If you need care and support to live safely and comfortably at home you can ask your local council's social work department at <https://www.cosla.gov.uk/councils> to carry out a care needs assessment. In Highland this is the responsibility of NHS Highland. They will look at how you manage day-to-day activities and assess how the council may be able to support you; this could include a combination of equipment, adaptations to your home and care. They may also let you know about other local services that can help you with things like shopping, befriending, looking after your garden or getting out and about.

The council will ask some questions to find out how urgent your care needs are. There can be quite a long time to wait for an assessment so let them know if your needs are urgent.

What happens during my assessment?

A health or care professional such as an Occupational Therapist (OT) will usually visit you at home to discuss your needs and see how you are managing. Sometimes other professionals who are experts in your disability will be involved too. Many people are also assessed when they are discharged from hospital.

If you wish a family member, friend, or an advocate can be with you during the assessment.

If you have a carer they have a separate right to support from the council too.

What support might I get?

Depending on the assessment of your needs, you may be entitled to support from carers, aids or equipment, respite breaks or adaptations.

If the support you needs counts as "free personal and nursing care" this is free and not means tested at all. The council will carry out a means test to see what you would need to pay towards the cost of other services, such as help with housework or shopping.

Local councils have limited resources and are unable to help everyone. They all have eligibility criteria to identify people with the greatest need but even if you do not meet these criteria for receiving assistance, the Social Work team will signpost you to other organisations who may be able to help.



What happens after an assessment?

Under the rules about “Self Directed Support” you should have a choice about how any care is provided. Your choices include having the council arranging your care, arranging your care yourself with a personal budget, or a combination of the two. You should have a written copy of your care needs assessment, and this should be reviewed if your circumstances change.

If you do not agree with the way the assessment was carried out, or with the council's decision you can follow the social work complaints procedure.

You can find more information about care needs assessments here

<https://www.citizensadvice.org.uk/scotland/family/help-for-adults-in-the-community-s/social-care-and-support-s/>

Where can I find out more?

You can find detailed information about your care rights from

Care Information Scotland

<https://www.careinfoscotland.scot/> or call 0800 011 3200

Age Scotland

<https://www.agescotland.org.uk/> or call 0800 12 44 222

Age Scotland has detailed information about your care rights here

<https://www.agescotland.org.uk/information-advice/information-guides/care-support>

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