

Adult social care assessments

Am I entitled to a new assessment?

The law says that adults who “appear” to need support have a right to a needs assessment.

This means that any adult who appears to need care and support, including because of a disability, should receive a needs assessment from the local authority if they ask for one.

How quickly should I get a needs assessment?

If the local authority decides that you meet the threshold for a needs assessment, they must carry it out over an ‘**appropriate and reasonable**’ timescale, taking into account how urgent your needs are.

This means there is no set timeframe for them completing your assessment, but it is generally thought that **4-6 weeks** is a reasonable timescale. The local authority cannot delay the assessment unreasonably. The Ombudsman has determined that an 8-month delay is an ‘excessive amount of time for people to wait for an assessment to establish their needs’¹

The local authority should give an approximate timescale for completing the assessment and keep you updated.

If you have urgent needs, the local authority must consider putting interim or urgent services in place whilst waiting for a full assessment.

Who should carry out my assessment?

The law says that to carry out the assessment a social worker or trained assessor should usually visit you at home to discuss your needs and take full details of the support you may need.

¹ [23 000 078 - Local Government and Social Care Ombudsman](https://www.local.gov.uk/23-000-078)



If the assessor does not know much about your particular condition, for example autism or learning disability, they must speak to someone who is an expert in your condition to find out more about it and how it may affect you so that they are able to carry out your assessment properly.

If you are deafblind, a specialist assessor with training and expertise in the needs of people who are deafblind must carry out your assessment.

Can I get support at my assessment?

The law says that if a person may have ‘substantial difficulty’ taking part in an assessment then they should have an advocate or an ‘appropriate person’ to support them.

An “appropriate person” is often a family member. The appropriate person must be available to attend the assessment and must understand the care and support process well enough to be able to support you through the assessment.

An appropriate person cannot be a paid carer or member of staff.

If you have difficulty with understanding information, remembering information, weighing up information (e.g. saying what the advantages and disadvantages are) or telling people what your views are then you should have an appropriate person or an independent advocate to support you in your assessment.

For more information on independent advocacy, please see our factsheet on advocacy in the assessment and care planning process.

What will my assessment cover?

Your needs assessment must first look at all of your needs.

How much money you have, whether you have a family member or carer who supports you, or whether you will be eligible for support from the local authority is not relevant at this stage.

In order to be considered eligible for social care, you need to show that you are unable to achieve two or more of the outcomes laid out in the Care Act 2014. You must show that this has a 'significant impact' on your wellbeing.

Your assessment should include a record of your wishes and feelings about your care and support, and what you want to achieve in your life.

There is no set layout or structure for a needs assessment, but your local authority must look at all the main outcomes that are important to people. These are:

- Feeding yourself
- Keeping yourself clean
- Going to the toilet
- Keeping yourself appropriately dressed
- Being able to make use of your home safely
- Keeping your home clean and tidy
- Developing and maintaining relationships with friends and family
- Accessing and taking part in work, training, education or volunteering
- Making use of facilities or services in your local community, including public transport, and recreational facilities or services
- Caring for a child (if this is relevant for you).