



Carers Self Assessment Preparation Guide

This guide is designed to help you get the best out of your Carers Self-Assessment. It has been developed through a partnership between The Princess Royal Trust Carers Centre and Bristol Adult Community Care (*formerly Social Services*).

In this guide you will find information and advice on:

- 1) What is an Assessment – do I qualify?
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What is an assessment – do I qualify?

“A carer is someone who looks after a relative, partner, or friend who could not manage without their support for reasons of age, physical or learning disability or illness, including mental illness.”

Many people associate assessment with a test of their ability to do something. Some carers fear that an assessment will be a test of their ability to care. However, in Bristol a Carer's Assessment - *including* a Carer's Self-Assessment - is a way of collecting information about the carer to help Adult Community Care to decide what services they can provide. It can also help them to understand how they might support you to maintain your own health and balance caring with other aspects of your life, for example employment and other family responsibilities.

If you provide '*substantial and regular*' care for an adult you have a legal right to a carers assessment to plan the help that you need. This can happen even if the person you care for refuses

help.

You also have a right to an assessment if you **intend** to look after someone. For example: if a friend or relative is in hospital and you expect to look after them when they are discharged.

Self-Assessment:

A Carer's Self-Assessment is a new, quicker way of getting your assessment completed. You will not have to join a waiting list for an appointment to see a social worker for a face-to-face assessment. If you choose to self-assess you will be supported to fill in your own assessment form on a computer. The form will then be electronically sent to Bristol Adult Community Care (*formerly Social Services*) to be prioritised in the usual way. You can also choose to complete a paper assessment. In both cases after Care Direct receive your completed form, you will be contacted within 5 days to be told what the next stage will be.

Self-Assessment is **not** designed to replace a face-to-face meeting which is still an option for all carers, especially those who choose not to or who are unable to use the self-assessment process. However, it does offer you the opportunity, time and space away from the person you care for to record difficult issues with close relationships as well as a faster way to get assessed.

The Princess Royal Trust Carers Centre will be providing carers with support to prepare and to complete a Self-Assessment. This guide has been written to help you think about what you want from the assessment process, as it is important that you are able to make an informed choice about the level of caring responsibility you take on, both now and in the future.

To give an example: the self-assessment form asks if you want to take on a caring role or continue caring and also whether you are able and willing to carry out the tasks involved.

For instance, you may find it hard to move someone in a wheelchair due to your own health problems or you may suffer from stress in coping with the challenging behaviour of the person you care for. You still care about the person you look after, but you may no longer be able to care for them in the same way.

Who will support me with Self-Assessment?

Please don't worry if you feel you don't have the necessary computer skills, The Carers Centre will be providing surgery times when you can come in and have one-to-one support to complete your assessment. We will try and make a time that is convenient to you, including offering Saturday appointments.

If your first language is not English we can provide interpreters to assist you with your Carers Self-Assessment, however, Bristol Adult Community Care can only make the Self-Assessment form available in English for the first months so you may want to consider if a face-to-face assessment is a better choice.

To see the Self-Assessment form or to start the self assessment process yourself log onto: www.bccadultcare.org.uk/carers

This Guide is also available online at: www.carers-sg.org.uk

How do I use this guide?

Some carers may want to read through this guide and then go straight into the Self-Assessment. If you have asked for the guide to be sent to you, you may want time to read it through first and then have the opportunity to ask questions. Whatever queries or concerns you have The Carers Centre can provide you with advice and information. Contact us on: 0117 965 2200. Monday – Saturday 10am – 1pm

Preparation Checklist:

This guide will help you think about your caring role and what it means to you. This may include particular concerns or things you would like to know more about. You may find it hard to think what is involved in caring, as you see it as part of everyday life.

Using the following **checklist** can help you to prepare by ticking the boxes that are relevant to your caring situation. You can then use them to refer back to when you come to complete the form. You will also find diary pages as an aid to record your daily activities and/or record your feelings.

CHECKLIST

Housing

Do you and the person you care for live together or apart?
Is this arrangement satisfactory? If not, think about what changes are needed?

Does the person you care for have difficulty moving about in the home? (e.g. can they climb the stairs or bathe on their own?)

Would aids or adaptations to your home may make it easier for you and the person you look after?

Health

Does the person you care for have any health problems you find hard to deal with?

Are you getting enough sleep?

Do you have any health problems? Are you stressed, anxious or depressed?

Have you told your GP you are a carer?

GP's are required to keep a register of carers and may be able to offer things like annual health checks/preferential appointment times/signpost to more support and information. Therefore it is important that you tell your GP you care for someone.

Work

Are you struggling to combine employment and caring?

Have you had to reduce your hours of work?

Would you like to return to paid employment?

Other interests

Do you want to do any training or further education?

Do you want to pursue any leisure interests but can't because of your caring role?

Do you want to attend a place of worship and/or other regular religious and cultural activities?

Feelings

Do you feel you don't have a choice about providing care?

You may feel that you can't carry on at all, or only if you reduce the amount that you do. Use the diary to write these feelings down.

What would you most like to change about your situation?

Relationships

Is caring affecting your relationship with the person you look after, family and friends?

If you are a parent, is caring making this role harder? Do you feel you have time for your children?

Dealing with emergencies and unplanned events

Do you need help in planning what happens if you suddenly become ill or have an emergency?

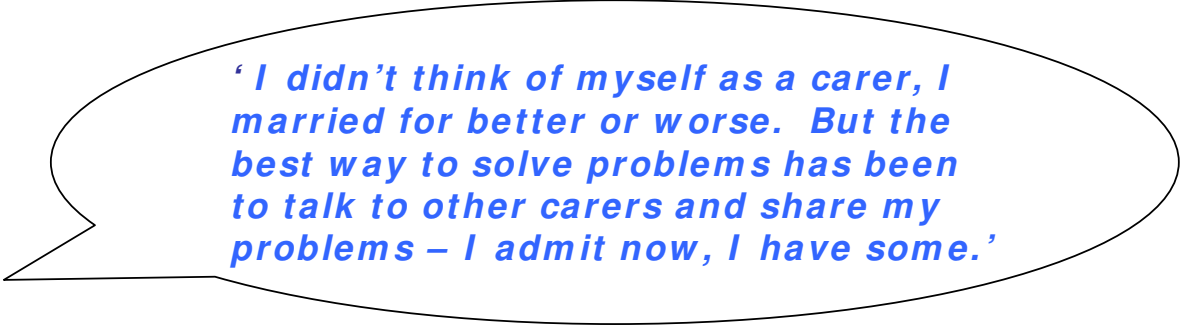
Would you like more information about The Carers
Emergency Card scheme from the Carers Centre?

The future

Do you have particular concerns about the future for you and
the person you care for?

This checklist may not cover everything, as each caring role is
unique. Consider keeping a diary for a week or maybe longer to
help you prepare. Don't forget to include anything you have to do
overnight as well as during the day. We have included some diary
pages in the next section to help you.

Where can I get more advice and information?



*' I didn't think of myself as a carer, I
married for better or worse. But the
best way to solve problems has been
to talk to other carers and share my
problems – I admit now, I have some.'*

The Princess Royal Trust Carers Centre has information and
contact details for all the organisations that support carers in
Bristol. It provides a helpline for carers which offers emotional
support and information, including practical help to sort out
benefits, services and problems. The Carers Centre also runs
carers' groups, courses and activities, which are free to all carers
in Bristol. The Carers Centre works with carers from all minority
ethnic community groups.

For more information contact:

The Princess Royal Trust Carers Centre
Vassall Centre
Gill Avenue
Bristol, BS16 2QQ

Carersline: 0117 9652200, Monday – Saturday 10am – 1pm
Email: carersl@carers-bs.org.uk
Website: www.carers-bs.org.uk

The Carers Centre also produces a quarterly newsletter that contains information about services and news affecting carers both locally and nationally, and it is a way of making and keeping contact with other carers. It includes a diary of events and is free to all carers.

To start your self assessment go to:
www.bristol-city.gov.uk/carers