



BEDFORD
BOROUGH COUNCIL

Support for Carers



Adults and Community Services

Support for carers

Bedford Borough Council recognises and values the work done by informal carers. If you are a carer we want you to know about the advice and support that's available for you. Your health and well being is important and so is having a life outside your caring role. You may be entitled to receive payment from the benefit system. We are here to help and advise you so that you can continue giving care while taking into account your own needs in such areas as employment, training, education and leisure.

Who is a carer?

A carer is anyone who, on an unpaid basis, is caring for someone who is frail or who has an illness or disability.

Carers are people who look after relatives or friends who because of an illness or disability can't manage at home without help. Many people don't see themselves as carers, they might be parents, children, partners, friends or neighbours. A carer can be any age and come from any background or community.

As a carer, it's easy to forget about your own needs because you're so busy caring for someone else. But it is important to look after yourself. Caring can be very rewarding, but it also makes demands on your time, your health, your emotions and can be very tiring. So, taking an occasional break from caring is essential – it gives you the chance to recharge your batteries.

How can we help?

We recognise that carers play a vital role in looking after vulnerable people, and we aim to help you to continue caring for as long as you feel able to do so. We can help and support you and the person you care for.

How do you get help?

If the person you care for already has a social care worker helping them, this person will offer you a carer's assessment. If the person you care for does not have a social care worker, you can contact us using the contact details at the end of this leaflet to arrange a convenient date and time for a meeting. Parent carers of disabled children are assessed under the family assessment (Children Act 1989) and the assessment looks at the family as a whole unit to consider appropriate services for the child and support for the parents (carers).

What is an assessment?

An assessment is an opportunity for you to tell us about any difficulties you may be having in looking after yourself or in remaining independent in the community. We want to hear your views on how you are managing, what you can and cannot do and what help you feel you need.

An assessment is based on individual needs. A social worker will visit you to talk to you and the person you care for about the help you need. It's your opportunity to tell us about the things that could make caring easier for you.

We use the Government's 'Fair Access to Care Services' guidelines to help us to decide if you are entitled to care services. Unfortunately, if you are assessed as 'low' or 'moderate' need or risk, you will not qualify for services.

However, we may be able to offer you advice and some other help, or put you in touch with other organisations who may be able to help.

When the person you care for is having their assessment (or a review of their needs), as their carer you are entitled to an

assessment of your own needs as well. The 'Carers' Recognition and Services Act 1995' and 'Carers and Disabled Children Act 2000' both say that we must offer you this.

If you want, we can do your carer's assessment at the same time as the one for the person you care for. But if you need to discuss your needs more openly (or in private), we can do a separate assessment. If the person you care for doesn't want to have an assessment of their needs but you still feel that you would like help, you are still entitled to an assessment in your own right.

What is a carer's assessment?

Any person (adult or child) who provides or intends to provide a substantial amount of care on a regular basis is entitled to a carer's assessment. The assessment is free - it is not about judging the way you are caring for someone. You can talk about your needs in confidence, away from the person you care for, if you wish. The assessment will look at how you are affected by the demands and the level of care that you give - the impact of being a carer on your own life and if there is any way we can support you.

Support for you

This includes information and advice about things like:

- short-breaks or social activities;
- emotional support – counselling and support groups;
- help to get your voice heard (advocacy);
- education and training opportunities;
- complementary therapies, such as aromatherapy.

Support for the person you care for

This includes:

- support at home, such as help with personal care;
- providing small pieces of equipment to help with routine household tasks, or arranging adaptations to their home;
- respite care in residential or nursing homes;
- going to day centres; and
- employment schemes.

What happens if your needs change?

If your needs or circumstances change, it's important that we look again at the services we provide. It may mean that you need more help, or not as much. Your social worker will arrange a review every year.

How much do services cost?

We are required to financially assess whether you have to pay any contribution towards the costs of services. This financial assessment takes into account your income, savings and outgoings. The amount of contribution will depend on your financial circumstances and ability to pay. If you have more than £23,250 in savings (not including the value of the property you live in), we will expect you to pay the full cost of services.

Useful local contacts

Carers in Bedfordshire **0300 111 1919**

Emotional and practical support for Adult Carers, Parent Carers, Young Adult Carers 16-25, Young & Sibling Carers, Mental Health Carers, Military Veteran Carers and Former Carers.

Alzheimers Society **01234 327380**

Support for carers of people with Dementia.

Disability Resource Centre **01582 470900**

Information, advice and guidance for those caring for people with a physical disability.

Stroke Association **0845 303 3100**

Information, training and support for carers of people affected by strokes.

Directgov is the website of the UK government for its citizens, providing information and online services for the public all in one place. Please use the link below for information for carers on:

- A guide to financial support for carers
- Direct payments for carers
- Council Tax reductions for carers
- Paying for council services for carers
- Carers Allowance
- Caring and your pension
- Direct payments for disabled children.



**[www.direct.gov.uk/en/CaringForSomeone/
MoneyMatters/index.htm](http://www.direct.gov.uk/en/CaringForSomeone/MoneyMatters/index.htm)**

Safeguarding adults

Abuse is mistreatment by any other person that violates your human and civil rights. Bedford Borough Council is committed to safeguarding vulnerable adults from abuse (SOVA). If you are being abused or suspect that someone you know may be the victim of abuse contact Adults and Community Services. Your concerns will be taken seriously and will receive prompt attention

Having your say

We would like you to tell us how you think Bedford Borough Council's Adults and Community Services have worked for you and what you think of our services. Our staff will ask for your views throughout your contact with us.

To give us feedback on the service you have received, please contact your relevant social work team or write to us at the address on the back page.

Bedford Borough Council's Adults and Community Services are independently regulated by the Care Quality Commission (CQC). If you want to discuss our service(s) with them they can be contacted at:

 **03000 616161**  **enquiries@cqc.org.uk**

 **Care Quality Commission**
Citygate
Gallowgate
Newcastle upon Tyne
NE1 4PA



Finding out more

If you would like further copies, a large-print copy or information about us and our services, please telephone or write to us at our address below.

Për Informacion

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Per Informazione

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Informacja

Za Informacije

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General Enquiries

 01234 267422

 **Adults and Community Services**
Bedford Borough Council
Borough Hall
Cauldwell Street
Bedford
MK42 9AP

 care@bedford.gov.uk

**Ask for leaflet
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