

This information sheet briefly explains what you can expect from Adult Social Care. It also helps you to understand some of the words we use to describe the things we do.

You can find much more detailed information in our other information sheets. We have provided references to relevant information sheets in this document.

The Care Act 2014

We follow the rules as set out in the Care Act 2014 which came into force in April 2015. The Care Act brings together lots of Government Acts that were written between 1948 and 2014 into one document. It has revised some areas, making them clearer, and introduced new requirements.

Wellbeing

A major element in the Care Act is a requirement to promote a person's wellbeing in relation to their disability or impairment. We must have your wellbeing at the heart of everything we do, whether you are talking with a call advisor, or a social care worker talking about your care needs or when we help you to write your care and support plan. What is wellbeing?

"Wellbeing" is a broad concept, and relates to a person's:

- personal dignity (including being treated with respect)
- physical and mental health, and emotional wellbeing
- protection from abuse and neglect
- control over day-to-day life (including how care and support is provided)
- participation in work, education, training or recreation
- social and economic wellbeing
- domestic, family and personal life
- suitability of living accommodation
- contribution to society

Information and advice

We must provide you with information and advice that will help you to maintain your wellbeing so that, where possible, you can choose and make your own arrangements for the things you need. This is whether you talk to us directly, read our information sheets or use our information and advice website, Somerset Choices.

Visit www.somersetchoices.org.uk

Prevention

We want to make sure that you remain as independent as possible for as long possible. By providing you with the right information when you need it, you will be able to research and source the things you that could help you when you need them, or we can help you to source them.

Paying for care and support

The first thing many people want to know is, 'Can the council help me pay for care?' As a general rule, if you have over £23,250 in capital and savings, no we can't. If you have less than this and you meet the national eligibility criteria for care, we may be able to.

Talking with someone from Social Care

We have moved from being a social care system where people expected an assessment to lead to a service, to being part of a joined-up, community-based 'system of support', focusing on exploring community options and solutions that help people get on with their lives. To achieve this, we are linking closely with existing and newly-created community and voluntary groups and people who work to support people locally.

We are also helping to set up local, friendly drop-in centres at venues across the county, where you can pop in for a cup of tea and discover the range of groups available that may be able to provide advice and support to help you continue to live independently.



People who, in the past, may have contacted Social Care directly for advice, can now make contact with relevant groups and people who could help them develop new and different approaches to achieve the things they want. These are often more flexible and more suitable than traditional care. Someone from Social Care will also be on hand if you would like to talk with them. We have called this 'Community Connect'.

Contacting us

Most people first contact us by phone, but you will also be able to contact us through the Somerset Choices website. Experienced staff will try and help you when they talk to you, or the person phoning on your behalf. Many people can be helped by being given good information and advice on the phone. But if they feel that talking with someone from Social Care, or a full care assessment would be most suitable, they will make sure your information is passed to the Social Care team that is most local to where you live, so that they can follow this up with you, or provide you with the date of your nearest Community Connect drop-in.

Health Interface Service

We have teams linked to each hospital. Social Care staff in the teams can assist people to leave hospital or may be able to help prevent someone being admitted to hospital. They will often be able to see people in hospital, complete a care assessment, and if it is needed put in place suitable short-term care and support arrangements or suggest equipment, to help you regain your independence. Or they can help you make longer-term care and support arrangements if needed.

Please see **A5 – Health Interface Service** for more information.

Community Teams

People who need support from social care for longer, or who have more complex social care needs, are helped by our Community Teams. This could be people who may be considering moving into a care home, or who want to remain at home, or are vulnerable in their current situation and need our support.

Please see **A6 – Community Teams** for more information



Care and support assessment

Someone will contact you to arrange to talk with you to understand what difficulties you are having and what you want to achieve. This could be making an appointment for you to attend a local Community Connect drop-in, or by visiting you where you live. After the assessment they can provide more information and advice, or if you need help from us they will tell you if you are eligible for our financial help

Please see **A4 – Your care and support assessment** for more information

Eligibility

We use national eligibility criteria to work out if you can have our financial support to meet your care and support needs. You may be eligible for help if:

- your need for support results from illness or disability, and
- you need support to achieve outcomes in two or more areas of life, and
- failure to achieve these outcomes would result in a significant impact on your wellbeing

Please see our information sheet **C5: Help with paying for care and support**

Money

If you are eligible for our financial support, someone from our Financial Assessment and Benefits Team will contact you to talk about your finances. They will help you to make sure you are claiming all the benefits you are entitled to so that you have enough money to live on, and will work out if you should pay something towards the costs of your care.

Please see **C6 – Working out your contribution towards your personal budget** for more information

Personal Budget and Direct Payments

If you are eligible for our financial support, we will tell you how much it will cost to meet your care and support needs. This is called a **Personal Budget**.

You can decide how you use your personal budget to arrange the things you need. The best way to do this is to ask for a **Direct Payment**. This means we will give you the money so that you are in full control. If you need it there is help available for you to manage this.

Please see **B1 – Care and support plans and personal budgets** and **C2 – Direct Payments: An introduction** for more information

Care and support plans

We will help you to write your care and support plan. This describes what you want to achieve (often called “**outcomes**”) and who will do what to help you achieve them.

Please see **A4 – Your care and support assessment** for more information

Reviews

We will regularly review or reassess your care and support plan to check that it is working and that you are achieving your outcomes. We will update it with you. As you achieve things, we will either add new things or reduce your Personal Budget accordingly. If your needs increase, we may increase your Personal Budget.

Please see **B2 – Information about your care and support review** for more information

Support for carers

If you care for someone, for example a family member, we can also talk to you about your caring role and complete an assessment. Using similar eligibility criteria, we may also be able to provide support so that you can arrange things to allow you to continue in your role. You may be eligible for help if:

- your need for support results from providing necessary care for an adult, and
- you need support to achieve outcomes in one or more areas of life, and
- failure to achieve these outcomes would result in a significant impact on your wellbeing



Advocates

If you need help to understand us or someone to speak up for you and have no one else to do this, we have information available about organisations you can contact, or we can contact them on your behalf.

Please see **A2 – Getting independent advice and support** for more information

Independent financial advice

We recommend that anyone who is considering care and support, particularly if you are moving into a care home, gets independent financial advice. We can provide a list of organisations that can help you if you need it.

Please see **C4 – Getting independent financial advice** for more information

Care homes

We have lots of information for people who are considering moving into a care home. Before deciding, always ask for a social care assessment first, as there may be alternative solutions for you.

Please see **D1 – Choosing a care home** for more information

Sensory Loss

If you have a sight loss, hearing loss or dual sensory loss, we have lots of information for you.

Please see **F1 – Sight loss – general information** or **G1 – Deafness and hearing loss** for more information

Staying safe

If you want information about staying safe, how to help protect a vulnerable person, or to report a vulnerable person, please visit our Safeguarding Adults website: <https://ssab.safeguardingsomerset.org.uk/protecting-adults/>



Your opportunity to feedback

We welcome your comments about the services you receive. If you would like to tell us what you think, please either:

Contact us by going to our website, www.somerset.gov.uk, or

- Speak to your social care worker
- Phone Somerset Direct on 0300 123 2224, or
- Contact the Adults and Health Customer Experience Officer

Floor B2 East

County Hall

Taunton

TA1 4DY

Email: customerexperience@somerset.gov.uk

This document is also available on request in Braille, large print, tape, disc and can be translated into different languages.

Where can I go to choose my own care and support?

Go to www.somersetchoices.org.uk

NHS



SOMERSET*Choices*