

Preparing for a Carer's Needs and Support Plan conversation

Consider the impact caring has on all aspects of your own and your family's lives, and ways this can be made easier for you. Keep a record of what you do each day.

Feelings: How do you feel about your caring role? Do you feel you have adequate support?

Health: Has your physical or mental health been affected as a result of the caring role?

Time: How many hours a week do you care? Do you have any time to yourself? Have you enough time to be involved in other activities?

Relationships: Do you have enough time for other family members or friends? Do you have an opportunity to socialise?

Unplanned events or emergencies: Do you have a plan in place should an unexpected event occur such as you become sick or involved in an accident?

Housing: Are the living arrangements adequate? Do you have the right equipment? Do you live with the person you care for, or close by?

Work: Are you struggling to maintain a job as well as your caring role?

The future: Are you concerned about the future?

For more information

If you would like more information about supports available to you, please contact any of the following:

Carers First, Clanrye Group
(Southern Trust's community support service for carers)



 028 3005 0200

 info@clanryegroup.com

Southern Trust Carers Coordinator

 028 3756 6284

 carers.coordinator@southerntrust.hscni.net



Access & Information Service
(support for anyone over 65 and their carers)

 028 3756 4300

 access.information@southerntrust.hscni.net



Carer's Needs and Support Plan



January 2022

Are you a carer?

A carer is someone who regularly provides a substantial amount of unpaid care to a family member, friend or neighbour who is ill, disabled or is an older person.

What is a Carer's Needs and Support Plan?

A Carer's Needs and Support Plan (previously called a Carers Assessment) is a shared conversation between you and your key worker about your caring role or responsibilities. It will take account of your circumstances, needs and views.

The support plan is not a test of your financial situation, it is a conversation to focus on how caring impacts on you and your lifestyle. The issues can be discussed over a number of visits.

You may ask to talk in confidence, without the person you care for being present, so you have the opportunity to speak openly about your feelings and any difficulties.

Your legal entitlements

If the person you care for is assessed as needing services from the Trust, even if they do not avail of these, you are legally entitled to request an assessment of your needs which, will provide you with a Carer's Needs and Support Plan.

You should be given a copy of the agreed Needs and Support Plan.

What is the purpose of the Plan?

The Support Plan will ensure a shared understanding between you and your key worker. It is also the gateway to accessing a range of other support services such as self directed support and short breaks.

It will:

- Ensure you are recognised and feel valued in your caring role
- Identify any help or support you might need
- Assess if you are eligible for respite services
- Provide information on local support services, such as carers support groups and benefits
- Explore your options for managing work alongside your caring role

How can it help?

The discussion aims to help you:

- Feel that your contribution is recognised as important in the care of your relative or friend
- Feel better informed about what support is available to you when you need it
- Feel more confident speaking to staff about your caring role
- Be more aware of the services being provided to help you continue in your caring role
- Have a contingency plan in case of emergencies

How to request

If the person you are caring for has a healthcare key worker, you can ask them to complete a Carer's Needs and Support Plan with you.

Examples of healthcare staff include:

- Social Worker
- Care Manager
- Doctor (GP)
- Community Nurse
- Mental Health Nurse
- District Nurse or Health Visitor
- Physiotherapist
- Podiatrist
- Speech and Language Therapist
- Occupational Therapist
- Dietitian

If the person you are caring for does not have a key worker or does not want to have their own needs assessed, you can still request a Carer's Needs and Support Plan.

- If the person you care for is over 65, contact our Access and Information Service on 028 3756 4300
- Or ask your GP for a referral to social services for an assessment of your needs.

Referrals can also be made through the Trust Carers Coordinator or through Carers First, our dedicated carer support service provided by Clanrye (see over).