

Who can have their caring support needs assessed?

If you are providing regular care for an adult or child who is ill, frail or has a disability, you are legally entitled to an assessment of your support needs as a carer.

The Belfast Trust recognises your valuable role in supporting your relative or friend. We want you to take up your right to have a Carer's Support Assessment to help you maintain your health and well-being.



What is a Carer's Support Assessment?

A Carer's Support Assessment is an opportunity for you to meet with a member of staff to talk about your caring situation. It is not a test of your ability to look after your friend or relative. It gives you a chance to discuss:

- The care/support you provide
- How caring affects your physical and emotional health
- What you find difficult at this time
- Any concerns that you have about the future
- What support you may need to continue caring.

What will I get out of having a Carer's Support Assessment?

It can help you think more clearly about your caring role and gives you the chance to talk about your own needs and concerns. It may help you get more practical help and support. This help could be from the Trust, but may also come from other organisations. This help may include:

- Information, advice and emotional support
- Contact with carer support groups
- Support with practical tasks
- Breaks from caring
- Educational courses
- Complementary therapies
- Relaxation days for carers

Your Carer's Support Assessment will be reviewed on a regular basis to see if your support needs are still being met. If the demands of your caring role changes you can ask for a re-assessment at any time.

How can I get a Carer's Support Assessment?

You can ask the Trust staff member, who is involved in organising support for the person you care for, to arrange a Carer's Support Assessment for you. If you do not have a contact person, you can ask one of the Carer Co-ordinators to organise this.



Margaret McDonald, Carer Co-ordinator
3rd Floor, Arches Health and Wellbeing Centre,
1 Westminster Avenue North, Belfast, BT4 1NS
t: 028 9504 6702

e: margaret.mcdonald@belfasttrust.hscni.net

Lynne Calvert, Carer Co-ordinator
Grove Wellbeing Centre
120 York Road, Belfast, BT15 3HF
t: 028 9504 6108

e: lynne.calvert@belfasttrust.hscni.net

How should I prepare for a Carer's Support Assessment?

Take time before the assessment to consider what tasks or responsibilities you have because of your caring role. Also think about what you find difficult. It might help if you keep a diary for a few weeks before the assessment to keep a note of what you do to help the person you care for. You may wish to have an assessment without the person you care for being there, so that you can talk more freely.

Be open with the person carrying out the assessment about your feelings and difficulties. They are there to listen and to help. Ask for a copy of the completed assessment form as this will include a plan of what has been agreed.

For further information go to the carer section of the Trust website: <http://www.belfasttrust.hscni.net/services/CarersInformation.htm>
Alternatively contact one of the Carer Co-ordinators to send you a Carers pack.

The information in this leaflet does not replace professional advice. If you require this information in larger size or in a different format please contact one of the Carer Co-ordinators.

'The one of piece of advice I give to all new carers is to ask for a Carer Support Assessment. It is the gateway to get the help you need to keep on caring for your loved one.'

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ASSESSMENT



Carer's Support Assessment