# Preparing for your social care assessment (Wales)

For up-to-date advice tailored to your circumstances, please call our Helpline on **0303 123 9999**, from 8am to 8pm weekdays or 9am to 1pm Saturdays.

## Introduction

This toolkit is designed to help you prepare for a social care assessment if you live in **Wales**. It should be read alongside our “Guide to social care (Wales)” which looks at the types of support available through social care assessments and how you go about requesting one.

**If you live in England, Scotland or Northern Ireland, then this toolkit will not apply to you.** If you need further information on social care assessments in England, Scotland or Northern Ireland, then call our Helpline on **0303 123 9999** or email us at [**helpline@rnib.org.uk**](mailto:helpline@rnib.org.uk) for further advice. Alternatively, you can get more information online at:

[**rnib.org.uk/ social-care**](https://www.rnib.org.uk/information-everyday-living-your-rights/social-care)

## Why do I need to prepare for my needs assessment?

There are national eligibility criteria set out in the Social Services and Well-being (Wales) Act 2014. If you pass the criteria, then your council is legally obliged to provide you with the required support to meet your needs. Therefore, it is important to understand the criteria being applied so that you can clearly express your needs for care and support in the most effective way possible.

Before your social care assessment there are 3 key steps to preparing:

* Understand the eligibility criteria that you are being assessed against
* Think about what your physical, mental and emotional needs are and what goals or preferences you want to achieve.
* Think about how (1) and (2) fit together and make a record of this before the assessment to make sure nothing gets missed out on the day.

The first half of this toolkit is designed to help you understand the national eligibility criteria. The second half helps you to think about your own needs and how they fit into the eligibility criteria by providing you with a “care and support diary” template for you to keep a record of your needs. This can then be handed to the person carrying out your assessment.

## How does the national eligibility criteria work?

When you are being assessed by your local authority, the trained assessor should be exploring how your disability impacts on your ability to carry out daily living and mobility tasks. It should consider your personal circumstances, what you want to achieve with the assistance of support, any barriers you face, and the risks involved in the event you don’t get any support.

Once this information has been gathered, the Care and

Support (Eligibility) (Wales) Regulations 2015 set out criteria that the council should follow to determine if you qualify for care and support. If you do, then the council is legally obliged to meet your needs by arranging support for you.

The eligibility criteria have 4 stages to pass to qualify for care and support:

1. First, you need to demonstrate that you have a need which arises from disability (e.g., sight loss)
2. Second the need must be in relation to at least one of the following activities (we will look at these in more detail later):
3. ability to carry out self-care or domestic routines (e.g., eating and drinking; maintaining personal hygiene; getting up and getting dressed; moving around the home; preparing meals; keeping the home clean, safe and hygienic)
4. ability to communicate
5. protection from abuse or neglect
6. involvement in work, education, learning or leisure activities
7. maintaining or developing of family or other significant personal relationships
8. developing or maintaining of social relationships and involvement in the community
9. fulfilment of caring responsibilities for a child.
10. Third, you must be unable to meet this need either:

* alone
* with the support of a willing carer
* with available services in the community

If you currently have an unpaid carer but want support from the council to pay them (e.g., direct payments), then it needs to be made clear that they are no longer willing to provide care unless they can be employed through direct payments.

1. Finally, the needs must not be able to be met without the local authority providing or arranging support services or direct payments.

If you have passed the first 3 stages, you should qualify for support. However, if this does not happen, please call our Helpline, our Legal Rights Service may be able to help you challenge the decision.

## Take action: prepare your “care and support diary”

In this section we have created a template for you to create a care and support diary of your needs that covers each of the activities of the national eligibility criteria (as well as an extra section for “other help needed”). Once you have completed the diary, you can hand it to the social worker carrying out your assessment to make sure that none of your needs get missed out.

Each page of the diary contains examples of issues people with sight loss commonly report. Below this, there is a space for you to write/type about your needs and what help you require.

**Remember, it is important to not underestimate your needs. Local authorities will only provide help to you if they are convinced that you need it.**

The diary starts on the following page.

## Care and support diary

### Eating, drinking and preparing meals

Do you have difficulties in preparing food or eating and drinking?

* finding cutlery, utensils and ingredients
* peeling, cleaning and chopping vegetables
* deboning meat or fish
* checking “sell by” dates on packages and checking for mould on food
* heating oil and boiling water, carrying pots and avoiding spillages
* serving food and checking if there is food left on the plate
* avoiding accidents in the kitchen
* determining the contents of tins and packets of food
* navigating shop environments
* checking prices, special offers, ingredients (allergies), fat content
* sorting shopping once home
* travelling to the shops.

#### Record your needs here:

Remember to mention if any activity:

* Causes you pain, anxiety or distress
* Endangers your health or safety or the health and safety of others
* Takes you a long time

### Maintaining personal hygiene

Do you have difficulties with managing personal care and hygiene? Examples of this may be:

* getting in and out of the bath or shower
* checking your cleanliness
* shaving or putting on make up
* washing, drying and styling your hair
* cutting your fingernails and toenails
* getting in and out of bed, especially during the night
* washing, drying and ironing clothes
* changing bed linen

#### Record your needs here:

Remember to mention if any activity:

* Causes you pain, anxiety or distress
* Endangers your health or safety or the health and safety of others
* Takes you a long time

### Getting up and getting dressed

Do you have any problems with dressing yourself appropriately? This could include:

* choosing clean clothes that match and are appropriate for the weather or any activity you are doing (e.g., work or volunteering)
* making sure clothes are not being worn inside out
* fastening buttons
* tying shoelaces.

#### Record your needs here:

Remember to mention if any activity:

* Causes you pain, anxiety or distress
* Endangers your health or safety or the health and safety of others
* Takes you a long time

### Moving around the home

* Are you able to enter and move around your home safely?
* Is your home suited to your needs?
* Do you need advice about accommodation, including any adaptations your home might need such as improved lighting, guide rails or changes to the kitchen?
* Do you need assistance to access your home such as braille markings in the communal lift, or guide strips on steps to the building?

#### Record your needs here:

Remember to mention if any activity:

* + Causes you pain, anxiety or distress
  + Endangers your health or safety or the health and safety of others
  + Takes you a long time

### Keeping the home clean, safe and hygienic

Is your home clean and safe from dangers and hazards? Do you need help with:

* Keeping the kitchen surfaces and appliances clean and hygienic, or knowing that a surface is already clean? Washing up, drying and storing crockery, cutlery, glasses and cookware?
* Clearing away uneaten food and taking rubbish outside
* Clearing up breakages or spills?
* Sweeping and vacuuming floors?
* Maintaining a safe environment (e.g., making sure there are no loose carpets to trip on or obstacles to bump into)?
* adjusting your central heating, hot water temperature controls and ventilation?

#### Record your needs here:

Remember to mention if any activity:

* Causes you pain, anxiety or distress
* Endangers your health or safety or health and safety of others
* Takes you a long time

### Maintaining or developing relationships with family, friends

Is your sight loss causing difficulties with keeping in contact with people? For example, this may include difficulties with:

* living alone or feeling isolated
* maintaining family or domestic roles
* ability to travel to visit people
* ability to travel to and sustain social groups that you belong to
* ability to use and obtain accessible phones, or other technology to keep in touch with people on a regular basis
* ability to access emails and social networking sites
* access to training to use accessible software or equipment.

#### Record your needs here:

Remember to mention if any activity:

* Causes you pain, anxiety or distress
* Endangers your health or safety or the health and safety of others
* Takes you a long time

### Work, education, learning or in leisure activities

Is your sight loss making it difficult for you to:

* find voluntary work in the community?
* look for a new job, because you recently lost your previous job because of your sight loss?
* cope with changes to your education, which has been disrupted due to your sight loss?

#### Record your needs here:

Remember to mention if any activity:

* + Causes you pain, anxiety or distress
  + Endangers your health or safety or the health and safety of others
  + Takes you a long time

### Involvement in the community (getting out and about)

Are you unable to get around safely on your own outdoors? Can you get to local shops and facilities, visit friends or attend social activities or classes?

For example, difficulties could include:

* crossing the road
* avoiding obstacles and tripping or falling in the street
* using public transport (e.g., reading timetables, finding the right train platform or bus stop, finding a seat) or hailing a taxi
* reading street signs
* asking for assistance when you are lost
* going to pubs, restaurants, sports events and theatres
* taking part in religious worship
* avoiding traffic accidents
* coping with disorientation after moving to a new house.

#### Record your needs here:

Remember to mention if any activity:

* Causes you pain, anxiety or distress
* Endangers your health or safety or the health and safety of others
* Takes you a long time

### Caring responsibilities for children

Being blind or partially sighted can impact greatly on being able to carry out caring responsibilities for a child. Are you able to carry out your caring responsibilities, such as parenting for your own child? Difficulties can include:

* taking children to school
* identifying if they are unwell
* reading to children and helping with homework
* preparing meals
* keeping the environment safe
* reading letters from school or GP
* being able to take part in family leisure/play
* being able to get to, access and take children to activities outside school

#### Record your needs here:

Remember to mention if any activity:

* Causes you pain, anxiety or distress
* Endangers your health or safety or the safety of others
* Takes you a long time

## What other things should I mention in my assessment?

### Equipment and adaptations

Would special equipment help you to manage everyday tasks? If you have a need for equipment (called “community equipment”) this should be covered by the assessment.

Examples of community equipment could include:

* magnification software
* screen readers
* white canes
* gadgets for the kitchen (e.g., liquid level indicators, adjustable chopping boards)
* tactile watches and alarm clocks
* mobile phones with tactile, well-spaced buttons and a function that reads text messages aloud
* telephones with a very large colour-contrasting keypad

Examples of minor adaptations could include:

* lighting
* grab rails
* lever taps
* non-slip flooring
* raised markers

### Your health

Do you have another disability or a health problem which affects your daily life? If you have any difficulties in the following areas then you may wish to raise this in your assessment:

* Identifying the correct tablets to take
* Measuring the correct dosage of drugs and medicines
* Reading the instructions on medicine bottles
* Using eye drops
* Managing serious conditions such as diabetes (e.g., testing blood sugar and urine, injecting insulin)
* Taking enough exercise and keeping fit

### Social and leisure activities

Examples could include:

* reading for pleasure
* gardening
* needlework, knitting or sewing
* painting, writing or other artistic or cultural activities
* watching television
* identifying CDs and USB sticks
* arranging a holiday

**Record any further issues or requests here:**

## How we can help

### RNIB Helpline

If you need someone who understands sight loss, call our Helpline on **0303 123 9999**, say **“Alexa, call RNIB Helpline”** to an Alexa-enabled device, or email **helpline@rnib.org.uk**. Our opening hours are weekdays from 8am – 8pm and Saturdays from 9am – 1pm.

### Sight Advice FAQ

Sight Advice FAQ answers questions about living with sight loss, eye health or being newly diagnosed with a sight condition. It is produced by RNIB in partnership with a number of other sight loss organisations. **sightadvicefaq.org.uk**

### Connect with others

Meet or connect with others who are blind or partially sighted online, by phone or in your community to share interests, experiences and support for each other. From book clubs and social groups to sport and volunteering, our friendly, helpful and knowledgeable team can link you up with opportunities to suit you. Visit **rnib.org.uk/connect** or call **0303 123 9999.**

The factsheet gives general guidance only and is not an authoritative statement of the law.



**RNIB Legal Rights Service**

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