About this booklet

This booklet provides you with a guide to the advice, practical help and support that is available from Dudley Council to help you, a relative or friend, to live as independently as possible, successfully, in the home of your choice.

The booklet:

- explains what we mean by ‘social care’ as well as outlining other support and services which are available. This should help you to choose the care and support that’s right for you and your circumstances
- sets out the standards that you can expect from us and from your care and support
- explains in general terms the different types of care and support that people can choose as well as helping you understand who may be eligible for care and support
- gives contact details for other sources of advice and information that may be helpful

Contact details for useful services and organisations are listed at the back of this booklet.
What is social care?
At some point in our lives most, if not all of us, will need help with everyday living because of an illness, a disability, because we are getting older or because we are caring for someone. Every one of us will have a different view of the help we need and how we want it to be provided.

‘Social care’ is the name given to the care and support that you may need to help you live the life you choose. It can range from a piece of helpful equipment, to adaptations in the bathroom, or to help with getting out and about. Some support is provided in the form of a short term service, while people with longer term needs can benefit from help to arrange long term care and support.
Other help to support you with living independently

Along with formal social care and support, there is also other support on offer to help people live independently. For many people, the big challenge isn’t ill-health, it’s loneliness, isolation or financial worries. This is where ‘non-social care support’ or ‘universal’ services can help. Universal services can include:

**Health services**

NHS Dudley offers a range of information, advice and programmes on keeping fit and healthy.

**Benefits information and advice**

Depending on your circumstances, you may be entitled to a range of benefits and other forms of financial support.

**Transport**

The local public transport network offers a cheap, convenient and environmentally friendly way to get around. Substantial discounts are often available for people with disabilities and senior citizens.

**Housing**

If you have any housing-related problems or needs, the council and other housing providers, such as housing associations, may be able to help. They can offer advice and assistance with home repairs, improvements, adaptations and on keeping warm and secure at home.

**Libraries**

Libraries are a great place to find information, borrow books and films, access the internet, or just meet up with friends.
Sports and leisure centres
Staying fit and healthy doesn’t need to be expensive. Sports and leisure centres are great places to exercise and socialise.

Clubs and societies
There are a wide range of clubs and societies in the area, so whatever interests you - whether it’s rambling, local history, chess or knitting - chances are, there’s a group waiting to hear from you. What’s more, many groups provide volunteer transport services, helping members to participate in get-togethers and events.

Voluntary organisations and charities
Dudley boasts a wide range of voluntary organisations, charities and self help groups that provide a range of services from befriending services, exercise classes and gardening services to name but a few.

Arts and entertainment
If you like art, music, movies, theatre or comedy, there are some great things available in the local area.

Parks and gardens
You don’t need to travel far to enjoy the great outdoors! Our parks and gardens are great places to relax, meet up with friends or just watch the world go by.

Want to know more about universal services?
Dudley Community Information Directory, www.dudleyci.co.uk, provides a one-stop shop for everything that’s going on in the community, including clubs, events and activities, as well as care and support services. Alternatively you can visit one of the council’s libraries and a member of staff will be pleased to help you find out more.
Prevention is better than cure

While universal services can be a great source of support, they’re not always enough on their own and that’s where adult social care comes in. The council, together with other public sector organisations, the NHS, charities and voluntary groups, offer a whole range of services to support people in their homes and encourage independent living. These services are often known as ‘preventative’ services - as they support people and help prevent accidents, illness, loneliness and isolation.

‘Preventative’ services are often free of charge and can include:

• Information and support to ensure a healthy and safe life. Services range from falls prevention to home security and maintenance

• Housing services such as housing with care schemes, sheltered and extra care housing services and community support services, which offer peace of mind to people who may need added reassurance to live independently at home

• Equipment, adaptations and aids to help people continue living independently in their own homes. These include:
  
  **General mobility aids** - grab handles, stair rails, ramps, walking frames

  **Visual impairment aids** - big button or voice activated phones, talking watches, pocket magnifiers

  **Hearing impairment aids** - hearing aids, hearing loops, visual alerts and alarms
**Telecare alarms** - a range of alarms and sensors linked to a central call centre which is constantly manned. Telecare devices enable people to live independently, safe in the knowledge that help can be summoned immediately if they get into any difficulties.

The council offers a range of prevention services which include:

- **Dudley falls service** - providing help for people who have fallen or who are worried about taking a fall
- **Dudley telecare service** - offering a whole range of telecare solutions which meet all sorts of needs and can be life changing
- **Enabling community support service** - support packages for people needing a regular ‘at home’ checking service or support with daily living
- **Home safety and security service** - help with making homes safe and suitable for people’s needs
- **‘Out and about’ service** - helping people who are feeling lonely or isolated to get out socialising and involved in their communities
- **Dudley home improvement service** - offering home improvements and adaptations to suit people’s needs and make homes safe and sound
- **Dudley dementia gateways** - supporting people with dementia, their families and carers, to live as full a life as possible

The council also heads up a partnership service - Living well, feeling safe, which offers a one-stop shop home assessment for the full range of preventative services listed above. They can be contacted on **01384 817743**. Alternatively the services can be contacted directly, call **0300 555 0055** for details. Most preventative services are provided free of charge, regardless of financial circumstances.
What happens when you contact us?
Firstly we will ask a few questions to find out a little bit about you and the kind of help you are looking for. We will take into account your wellbeing and what is important to you and your family. If it seems that you are looking for support that is not ‘social care’ or need some help from prevention services, you may be signposted to helpful services or agencies to support your wellbeing and keep you independent for longer. If however it looks as if you may need social care support we will help you move to the next stage.

Helping you find the support you need - the social care assessment
To find out more about what you need we will have to ask you more about your needs and circumstances and how we can help you. This process is known as assessment. How this social care assessment is carried out depends on the type and urgency of your needs, the nature of your illness or disability and most importantly on the care and support you need. In some cases you will be able to complete your own assessment, in others we will need to do it with you, or you may prefer it that way. You will be in control of the decisions that affect you all along the way. We will advise you on your options and may help you with an assessment and support plan tailored to your needs. The plan will work out how you can do the things that are important to you and your family, with the right level of care and support. If you are a carer, this same process applies to you.

Who is eligible for social care support?
The Care Act 2014 introduced a ‘national eligibility threshold’ which is made up of three criteria - all of which must be met for a person’s needs to be eligible for care and support. All councils have to follow these government guidelines when making decisions about whether we are able to support you. The guidelines make sure that everyone is treated fairly and help us decide how quickly we need to see people. We see those with the most urgent problems first.

If you meet the eligibility criteria following a social care assessment, we will work in partnership with you to produce an assessment and support plan. This will be tailored to your individual needs. If you don’t meet the criteria we will still provide you with information, advice and support and signposting on other options which will help improve your situation and wellbeing. If your needs change in the future you can request a further social care assessment.
If you meet the eligibility criteria the council may be able to give you a personal budget to help you pay for all or some of the care and support you choose. Some people are happy to organise this support themselves, others want help with this. We can help you with it if you wish.

**Will you have to pay for social care support?**

Whether or not you will have to pay for care and support depends on your own individual circumstances, income and savings. If following the social care assessment you are eligible for care and support we will arrange to do a financial assessment. This will help us decide whether or not you have sufficient money to pay towards some, or all of the cost of the support you need. Even if you are a ‘self funder’ – that is paying for all of your support, you are still entitled to a social, care assessment. We will also still help you to organise and arrange your care and support.

More information on the financial assessment can be found in our separate leaflet - ‘Arranging and paying for care and support while living in your home’.

**Types of care and support we offer?**

Regardless of who you are our overall aim is to keep you independent, safe and well within your local community.

A whole range of care and support is available from us and our partners. Some of this is provided on a short term basis, some is long term care and support. This includes tailored care and support to suit people with specific needs. Examples of some types of tailored care and support on offer is listed below.

Support for:

*Short-term support to regain your independence*

Short-term support for people who need help while they are recovering from an illness, or have returned home from a hospital stay. The service normally lasts for a fixed short time period and its main focus is intermediate care to help people regain independence, skills and confidence. The aim is to help people continue to live safely and independently at home.

*People with disabilities*

Tailored care and support is provided by the council, as well as other organisations for adults with physical disabilities, sensory impairments, along with people with learning disabilities and autism. This includes support with finding employment, educational opportunities, support to live independently, as well as leisure and social opportunities.
People with mental health needs
A range of integrated mental health services for adults are available from Dudley & Walsall Mental Health Partnership NHS Trust. These are provided in the community, or from three specialist hospitals. Support is also available from local charity Dudley Mind.

People with a brain injury
Dudley Brain Injury Service provides information and support to people with a brain injury, their family and carers. Help and support to develop independence and a good quality of life is on offer.

Older people
Lots of support is out there for people as they get older. This includes specialist services such as our dementia gateways, supported housing options, help with mobility and social activities.

Carers
People who are caring for others can ask for help and support with their caring role. All carers are entitled to a carer’s assessment from us. Support is also on offer from Dudley Carers Network, which offers a comprehensive signposting, information and advice service free of charge for carers. The network can also help with access to carer’s payments, as well as social and wellbeing support. Their details are listed in the ‘Useful contact details’ section at the back of this booklet.
What if you still can’t manage, even with long term support?
A small number of people may find that, even with support, they cannot remain in their own home. If this is the case we will advise you on the options available to you. These include supported housing, housing with “extra care”, residential and nursing homes. We can provide you with information and support to decide which of the options is best for you.

Standards of care you can expect from us
We work to the standards set by the Care Quality Commission (CQC). These standards cover care you receive in your home or in a care home setting.
The essential care standards are:
1. You (or someone acting on your behalf) can expect to be respected, involved in your care and support, and told what’s happening at every stage
2. You can expect care, treatment and support that meets your needs
3. You can expect to be safe when using a service
4. You can expect to be cared for by staff with the right skills to do their jobs properly
5. You can expect your care provider to routinely check the quality of their services

For more information on these standards you can visit the CQC website at www.CQC.org.uk

Complaints, compliments, comments

We offer a clear complaint, comment or compliment process. We like to know when we are getting things right and we also need to know if we have made mistakes or could have done something better.

You can raise any issue or tell us about something we have done well by filling in a form available on our website, by writing to the manager of the service, or by writing directly to the:

Quality & Complaints Team
Council House, Priory Road, Dudley DY1 1HF
Phone: 01384 813067
Email: complaints.dachs@dudley.gov.uk

Need more information?

We know that understanding social care can be very confusing, particularly if you are at a stressful point in your life. For any queries relating to adult care and support, our access to adult social care team will point you in the right direction and help you make the choices that are best for you. Their contact details are available on the back of this booklet.

The access team will ask a few questions to find out a little bit about you and the kind of help you are looking for. If it seems that you are looking for support that is not ‘social care’ you may be signposted to other services or agencies. If however it looks as if you may need the kind of social care support we have described, we will help you move onto the next stage.
The council also provide advocacy support to anyone living in Dudley borough who has ‘substantial difficulty’ as defined in the 2014 Care Act. This is ‘substantial difficulty’ that prevents a person from being involved in care and support processes and where a person does not have an appropriate adult who can support them.

**Other publications in this series**

- Arranging and paying for care and support while living in your home
- Arranging and paying for residential or nursing home care
- Housing options for independent living
- Support for carers in Dudley
- Keeping adults safe
- Having your say
Useful contact details

www.dudley.gov.uk/asc
Our website has a host of information on the social care process and the information and resources that are available.

Dudley community information directory
www.dudleyci.co.uk

Dudley Carer’s Network
01384 818723
email - carers.network@dudley.gov.uk

Care Quality Commission (CQC)
Citygate
Gallowgate
Newcastle upon Tyne NE1 4PA
03000 61 61 61
email - enquiries@cqc.org.uk
www.cqc.org.uk

Dudley and Walsall Mental Health Partnership NHS Trust
2nd Floor
Trafalgar House
Dudley DY2 8PS
Freephone: 0300 555 0535
email - Sed@dwmh.nhs.uk
www.dwmh.nhs.uk

Dudley Mind
221 Hagley Road
Stourbridge DY8 2JP
01384 442938
email - enquiries@dudleymind.org.uk
www.dudleymind.org.uk

Dudley Brain Injury Service
Stourbridge health and social care centre
John Corbett Drive
Stourbridge DY8 4JB
01384 323210
email - brain.injury@dudley.gov.uk

NHS choices
www.nhs.uk
Further information

For further information please contact our access to adult social care helpline

Telephone
0300 555 0055 (Monday to Friday - 9am to 5pm)
An emergency duty team is available on 0300 555 8574, at all other times

Web
www.dudley.gov.uk/asc

Email
accessteam.dachs@dudley.gov.uk

Post
Brierley Hill Health & Social Care Centre
Venture Way, Brierley Hill DY5 1RU

If you are a carer telephone 01384 818723
or email carers.network@dudley.gov.uk

If you require any assistance with regards to this document or would like to request an interpreter, large print or audio version, please contact the communications team on 01384 814280

PS 05/15