Am I entitled to help with care and support from North Somerset Council?

Who is this leaflet for?

If you are struggling to live independently then North Somerset Council may be able to help. The council can arrange services to help you with your care and support or give you a direct payment so you can buy the support you need.

This leaflet provides useful information for you or anyone who is helping you.

What do you mean by care and support?

Care and support is the help needed to allow a person to live as independently as possible. It can include support with things like:

- washing and dressing
- eating and drinking
- getting out and about
- keeping in touch with friends or family

If you think you need help, you can contact the council to ask for an assessment. If you are a carer and you need some support, the council may also be able to offer help.

What does a needs assessment cover?

The needs assessment will look at what care and support you need so you can live at home. This will include physical needs, such as whether you need help to wash or dress, get in and out of bed or keep your home safe.

The assessment will also look at your mental and emotional needs and consider what is important to you. This could include being able to carry on working or volunteering, or being able to meet your friends.
Does this cover equipment and adaptations to help me manage more independently at home?

The council provides information about equipment and has a demonstration centre in Weston where you can get free advice and try things out. The council provides certain items of equipment on a free loan basis.

The council will also carry out small adaptations to your home and if you require a major alteration you may be able to get a Disabled Facilities Grant which will involve a financial assessment.

To find out more call Care Connect on 01934 888 801

What is the difference between a needs assessment and a carer’s assessment?

A needs assessment looks at an individual’s care and support requirements. A carer’s assessment considers the support requirements of someone who provides help to an adult family member or friend.

Caring comes in many forms and can include help with washing, dressing or providing company.

Who carries out assessments?

Lots of different people can carry out assessments - as long as they have the right training. The person doing your assessment could be a social worker or care manager, or it could be someone else who has been trained by the council.

You could also be offered a supported self-assessment. This means you do your assessment yourself with help from the council.

How does the council decide if it has a duty to help pay towards care and support?

The council will first use the assessment to determine if you have ‘eligible needs’.

Your needs could be eligible if you are not able to do a number of things that impact on your wellbeing and you might be at risk if you do not get help. These
may include washing yourself, getting dressed, getting in and out of bed or keeping your home safe.

The council will assess your care and support needs with you, and decide if they are at the level where you need help. If you are entitled, the council can pay towards supporting you.

Subject to a financial assessment, you may be liable to contribute towards some or all of the costs yourself.

**How will I get to know if I am eligible or not?**

After the assessment, the council will give you a decision and explain how they reached it.

You are entitled to receive a written explanation of either why you are eligible or why, at this time, you are not.

**What happens if I have eligible needs?**

If you have eligible needs, the council will contact you to discuss what help might be available. This will be based on the information you gave during your assessment. As far as possible the council will agree your care and support plan with you.

The council may not always provide money to help you meet your needs – there might already be something that could help you which is already available. This could include community meals or the Carelink service.

**What happens if I am told my needs are not eligible?**

North Somerset Council will give you information and advice about what care and support is available to help you locally. This could include help from local charities or voluntary organisations.

If you are not eligible for support now, that does not mean you will not be eligible in the future. You should contact the council again if you feel your needs or situation has changed.

**What if I am unhappy with the council’s decision?**

If you are not happy, you can talk to the person who assessed you and explain why you think their decision is wrong.

If you are still not happy, you can use the council’s complaints system to have the decision looked at again.
If I am eligible for care and support will I have to pay anything?

If you are eligible for care and support from the council, you may have to pay something towards the cost. To find out how much you might need to pay, you will be asked to do a financial assessment and give details of any income and savings. You can choose not to share your financial information but will pay the full cost yourself.

To find out more call Care Connect 01934 888 801.