

Factsheet



Adult Care Services

Helping you live your life as independently as possible

This fact sheet explains the role of Hertfordshire County Council's Adult Care Services. If you need help to understand this information please contact our customer service centre, which includes an interpreting service, on 0300 123 4042.

It's your life, take control – Self-directed support

Adult Care Services wants to give people who receive social care services more choice about the help they get. Self-directed support is a new, national system, which offers people who are eligible for support the opportunity to take control of and personalise their care. Following an assessment, people who are eligible are allocated an amount of money to spend on their support. They can then decide to manage all or some of their own care, or we can arrange it for them.

Eligibility criteria - How to find out if you are entitled to our services

We want to make sure that everyone has access to the care services they are entitled to, whether arranged for and funded by Adult Care Services, or paid for independently. We work within a set budget, and have to give priority to people with the greatest need in order to look after their health, safety, wellbeing or independence. To make sure this is done in a fair way, we use national guidance from the Department of Health, and only arrange support for adults when their needs are seen to be at a 'critical' or 'substantial' level of risk.

If we are not able to offer help from Adult Care Services, we will give advice and suggest other organisations, many of which receive funding from us and may be able to provide the support you need.

Paying for services

Some people do not need to pay for their services, but many are asked to pay towards their care and some will pay for the full amount. If you are eligible for services, you will need to have a financial assessment in order to work out whether you will need to contribute financially.

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Direct payments

If you are eligible, you may decide to have a cash payment so that you can manage your own care. These cash payments are known as direct payments. Direct payments are a form of self directed support that allows you to have greater control and choice over the services you receive.

Protecting vulnerable adults from abuse

Hertfordshire County Council's Adult Care Services and all the agencies and organisations it works with are committed to preventing abuse of vulnerable adults. A multi-agency policy called Safeguarding Adults from Abuse has been developed to investigate concerns about the possible or actual abuse of a vulnerable adult. If you would like to look at this policy it is available on our website at www.hertsdirect.org/acs

Vulnerable adults can be silent victims of abuse. People should not suffer in silence. Help is available. Even if you are not sure that it is abuse, there are people who you can talk to about your concerns so that the vulnerable adult can be protected and made safe. If you would like to talk to someone at Hertfordshire County Council about any concerns, please contact us on 0300 123 4042.

If you are concerned about an older person, you can also call the national Action on Elder Abuse helpline on 0808 808 8141 (Monday –Friday 9am – 5pm)

The Mental Capacity Act

Every day we make decisions about lots of things in our lives. But for some people making decisions can sometimes be difficult and any of us might want to plan ahead in case we are unable to make decisions in the future. The Mental Capacity Act 2005 helps and protects people who are unable to make decisions. The Act also has implications for the families and carers of people who lack capacity to make decisions. If you would like to find out more about the Mental Capacity Act, including how to plan for your future and lasting powers of attorney please contact the Office of the Public Guardian on 0300 456 0300 (local call rate) telephone 0115 934 2778 or by email customerservices@publicguardian.gsi.gov.uk

You may also wish to read a leaflet called 'Making decisions about your health, welfare or finances... Who decides when you can't?' Copies are available from Adult Care Services at www.hertsdirect.org/acs or by calling us on 0300 123 4042.

Day care services

These offer the chance to meet other people and participate in social activities, if people have been assessed as needing this kind of support. We can arrange for people to go to specific day centres and it may be possible to get transport there and back to some of

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our centres – please ask our staff about this. There are also other opportunities such as luncheon clubs and community cafes that are open to everyone in the community. Some of the centres have specialist staff on hand to give advice on specialist equipment and local information. If you are eligible for this service, you may be able to have a cash payment, known as a direct payment, so that you can choose what you would like to do.

Home care services

If you are having difficulty dressing yourself, washing, bathing and some domestic tasks, we can provide support through a home care agency if you are eligible for this service. You may also be able to have a cash payment to either employ someone of your choice to support you, or to hire a carer from an agency of your choosing.

Enabling home care

If you are recovering from an illness or operation you may be able to get back to managing everyday living sooner with some intensive support and guidance in your own home - we call this 'enabling' home care and it is free for up to four weeks.

Flexicare housing

Sometimes it is not possible for people to continue living in their own home. When this happens, many older people say that they do not want to move into a residential care home when, with some extra hours of home care in more suitable accommodation, they could continue to lead independent lives. Flexicare housing schemes offer self-contained accommodation and some communal facilities, with a team of carers available 24 hours a day. This helps people to retain their independence while ensuring they have all the support they need, when they need it. Flexicare housing schemes can support people over the years even if they need much more help in the future.

This means people are able to stay in the schemes for much longer and avoid having to move into residential care. Hertfordshire's flexible approach, that allows care to increase or decrease in response to changing needs, is known as flexicare housing.

Care home placements

Residential care homes provide personal care and social support for people who are no longer able to manage living in their own homes.

Nursing care homes look after people who need constant care from professional nurses. Care homes may be run privately, by voluntary organisations (including charities) as non profit making businesses, by local authorities, or by the health service. Most people have to pay towards the cost of care home fees, subject to a means test.

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Sheltered housing

Sheltered housing is managed by district and borough councils, often through housing associations, and is designed to provide independence within a secure and friendly environment. If you would like more information, please contact your local district or borough council.

Housing related support

Housing related support helps people improve their quality of life by living more independently. Housing-related support services aim to prevent homelessness and promote independence. They help people do things for themselves so that they can continue living at home, rather than go into hospital or residential care. It can also help people make the transition from living in an institutional setting to living independently. You can apply for this support in a number of ways. Adult Care Services can advise you and also make a referral for the support on your behalf. Please talk to our staff about this.

Care at home for someone who is terminally ill

There is no charge for home care, day care or direct payments if you are in the end stages of a terminal illness.

Meals at home

It is possible for a choice of meals to be delivered to your home if you are having difficulty in cooking for yourself. Special diets and diets based on your culture can be catered for. Frozen meals can be provided, so that you can defrost, heat and eat, when you wish. This is often known as meals on wheels.

Short term breaks (respite care)

Short term breaks aim to provide:

- Carers with a break if they are caring for someone who needs regular assistance with essential personal care and daily living tasks.
- People with a disability or long term illness with a break from caring for themselves so that they are more able to continue living at home. These breaks can be organised as short stays in a residential or nursing home, which can be arranged at regular intervals. You may be able to receive a cash payment so that you can arrange the break yourself, rather than Adult Care Services arranging it for you.

Breaks and support for carers

Almost 24,000 people in Hertfordshire describe themselves as caring for someone else for more than 20 hours a week, with over 15,500 caring for 50 hours-plus. If caring has

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a major impact on your life, and the person you care for would be eligible for help from Adult Care Services, then you are entitled to have your needs as a carer assessed, to see if you could get extra support. You are entitled to this assessment even if the person you care for does not actually receive any services from us. Short term breaks provide carers with a break if they are caring for someone who needs regular assistance with essential personal care and daily living tasks.

Disability equipment and adaptations

Home adaptations and improvements may be needed to make life easier. This could include simple equipment or more major changes such as installing a hoist over the bath, or making your home suitable for wheelchair access. The council may support you to make these changes if you need the adaptation to maintain independence. As well as recommending equipment, Adult Care Services staff can also tell you about other organisations that provide or lend equipment. An occupational therapist can advise about major equipment or adaptations.

Sensory services

We have a specialist team who work with people with a sensory need. We will assess your needs with you and if you are eligible for our service, we can offer solutions to your problems. We can provide equipment, set up packages of care, short term breaks and day care or signpost you to other helpful resources.

Work Solutions

Work Solutions offer help and support to people whose situation makes it difficult for them to find, get and keep a job. This includes people with mental ill health, learning disabilities (including Asperger's Syndrome), physical disabilities and sensory needs who meet Adult Care Services' eligibility criteria and also incapacity benefit claimants on income support.

Gypsy services

Adult Care Services manages and maintains accommodation for Gypsy families on 11 sites around the county. The Gypsy Unit provides support to the local Gypsy community.

Money Advice Unit

The Money Advice Unit helps people claim the benefits and tax credits that they are entitled to. Its web information and fact sheets cover a wide range of benefit and debt-related matters, such as advice for older or disabled people, families and carers, help with housing costs and dealing with debt. It also provides training courses on benefits and debt for organisations and individuals. The unit is not a public advice service but your care manager or other support worker can refer you for individual support in claiming benefits if needed.

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Crime and drugs

The Community Safety Unit works with partners across the county to reduce crime, the fear of crime and anti-social behaviour and tackle drugs and alcohol misuse and domestic violence. Teaming up with organisations like the police, district councils and probation service, the unit coordinates a number of key initiatives, including Hertfordshire Home Safety and Security Service, which offers security and fire safety checks and a minor repairs service across the county.

Using local services

There are many local community services available that could make life easier for you. For example, many shops now deliver prescriptions and food. You can also get support services from your local district or borough council, voluntary organisations and home care agencies, including:

- Equipment, adaptations and repairs to the home.
- Community alarms and telecare services.
- Shopping and gardening services.
- Befriending schemes and carer support groups.
- Dial-a-ride and other services to help with mobility.
- Meals delivered to your home (often known as meals on wheels).
- Luncheon clubs and local day centres.
- Sheltered housing with a warden service.

HertsHelp is a network of local organisations. They can find advice, information and services from a wide range of providers. See contact details at the end of this factsheet.

Working with other organisations

We work with a number of different organisations to ensure that we are able to deliver prompt, effective help where it is needed most. Working with health (NHS) and housing (district and borough councils) we have developed a charter called **Who cares? We do...** on the standards of service you can expect if you have difficulties associated with getting older, long term illness or disability, or are a carer who supports someone in these circumstances. We also work with a number of voluntary organisations who provide specialist services on our behalf.

Having your say

We would like you to tell us how you think Hertfordshire County Council's Adult Care Services has worked with you and what you think of our care services. Our staff will ask you for your views at various stages in your contact with us.

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Your comments are important to us so that we can check whether people are satisfied with the services they receive and if not, what we can do to make them better. Ask for a 'having your say' form to tell us confidentially what you think.

Contacting us for advice and support

Please call us on:

0300 123 4042

0300 123 4041 (textphone for people who are Deaf or hard of hearing only)

Calls to 0300 numbers cost the same as local calls to numbers starting with 01 or 02 and they will count towards any inclusive minutes in a phone contract in the same way. The lines are open from 8am to 8pm Monday to Friday and 9am to 4pm on Saturday. Our team of advisers are able to answer most enquiries. If not you will be put into contact with staff in your local office. Outside office hours, 365 days a year, any urgent call for help using the telephone numbers above will be passed through to the emergency social care service.

More information

For more information about Adult Care Services you can visit our website www.hertsdirect.org/acs We have a range of leaflets and fact sheets which give further information – you can download these from our website or contact us using the contact details at the end of this factsheet.

You can also contact us by email hertsdirect@hertfordshire.gov.uk

Contact us

For adult care services and to comment or complain:

Web: www.hertfordshire.gov.uk/adults E-mail: contact@hertfordshire.gov.uk

Telephone: 0300 123 4042 Textphone: 0300 123 4041

British Sign Language (BSL) video interpreting service available.

Find a local community service: www.hertfordshire.gov.uk/directory or drop into your local library

Call HertsHelp for independent information and advice:

Telephone: 0300 123 4044

E-mail: info@hertshelp.net

Text: Text HertsHelp to 81025

Textphone: 0300 456 2364



If you or someone you know is at risk of abuse or neglect:

Call us on 0300 123 4042 (24 hours a day)

Calls to 0300 cost no more than a national rate call to a 01 or 02 number