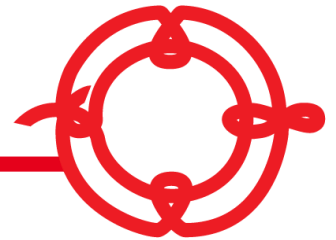


# Assessments and carer support

## Your guide to getting help

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Many carers find it easier to continue in their caring role if they can get some help. Local councils carry out Adult Carer Support Plans and Young Carer Statements to help them decide what help and support they can provide. This factsheet explains how they can help you in your caring role, and applies to people living in Scotland.

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## What assessments are available?

Caring can be exhausting. Many carers find it easier to continue in their caring role if they can get some help. Local councils can provide help and support for disabled people and their carers. The way they make a decision about the help and support that they can provide is by carrying out an assessment. Some people decide to buy in their own help without going through an assessment from the local council. If you want to do this, there are two useful sources that list care agencies across Scotland:

- Care Information Scotland  
w: [careinfoscotland.scot](http://careinfoscotland.scot) t: 0800 011 3200
  
- Scottish Care  
w: [scottishcare.org](http://scottishcare.org) t: 01292 270 240

There are different assessments for carers, disabled adults/older people and for disabled children. This factsheet explains how these assessments can support you in your caring role.

### For carers

**Adult Carer Support Plans (ACSP)** are a way of identifying your needs as a carer. They look at your role as a carer: how being a carer affects you, how much caring you can realistically do (while still allowing you to be involved in activities outside caring), and any help you may need. Carers of all ages are entitled to an ACSP, although for young carers this is called a Young Carers Statement.

**Young Carer Statement (YCS)** can be carried out by a social worker, health professional or through an organisation in the voluntary sector eg, a carers' centre. The responsibility for ensuring that the outcome is implemented remains with the local council.

# What should an assessment for the person you care for cover?

## For disabled adults and older people

**Community care assessments** are for adults who feel they need help because of a disability, ill health or old age. It looks at the help the person needs to be able to live independently or, if they need full-time care in a residential setting. While the focus of a community care assessment is the disabled person, in most cases the role and views of the person's carer should also be taken into account.

Sometimes these are called Single Shared Assessments, Care Needs Assessments or Joint Needs Assessments. These may be carried out by a social worker or a health professional or they may involve both. However, the local council is responsible for making sure the outcome is delivered.

## For disabled children and their parents

Parents of disabled children are also entitled to an assessment under the Children's Act. The Children Act assessments should consider the support and wellbeing needs of your disabled child, the needs of any other children in the family (including any care provided by a young carer) and the help that you may need to care for your disabled child. Parent carers can still have a separate Adult Carer Support Plan and any young carer in the family can also have a Young Carer Statement. Carers can request this at any time.

### Three things to note:

**1/** All assessments and support plans should focus on outcomes. This means that they should identify what services and support would improve the quality of life of the person you care for and what would make your life as a carer better.

**2/** If you are caring for someone who has been given a terminal diagnosis, your local council should have a conversation with you about this within a maximum of five working days of you requesting or being offered an ACSP or YCS. Your ACSP or YCS should be prepared within 10 working days. The assessment of the person you care for should also be prioritised.

**3/** We refer to 'disabled people' for ease of reference in this factsheet, but this also applies to older people and people who have a long-term

condition or an illness, including children unless otherwise stated.

The guidance that local councils follow when carrying out assessments states that local councils should never make assumptions about the level of support available from carers.

If a disabled person needs help, and all of the help they need is being provided by a carer who is happy to continue providing this support, then the local council may decide that the care needs of the disabled person are being met. In this situation, the local council may not need to provide any additional help. It is therefore very important that you tell the local council about any difficulties you are having with your caring role and the care you are not able or willing to provide. It is important to be clear about the support needs of the disabled person that you can meet and those that you cannot.

**You have the right to choose not to provide care or to specify the amount or type of care you can provide.** It is also important to be clear about any support you need to meet the needs of the disabled person. You should tell the person carrying out the assessment about this at both the discussion for your Adult Carer Support Plan/Young Carers Statement and at the community care assessment of the disabled person.

## **Deciding what help to provide for the person you care for**

The local council will take the following steps when making a decision about whether the person you care for will be provided with any help:

**Step one:** The person carrying out the assessment should collect all the information they need to be clear about the care and support the disabled person needs and the outcomes they wish to achieve.

**Step two:** The assessment will then look at any risks to the health and wellbeing of the disabled person (ie the degree to which the person's health and wellbeing is compromised or is threatened by the absence of appropriate support from the council).

The council should assess the risk to the person if they do not get the support they need. There are four levels of risk – critical, substantial, moderate and low – with critical meaning that there is a very high risk.

If a critical risk has been identified and yet the council still do not provide the disabled person with appropriate support or services, you may need to make a complaint to challenge this decision. For more information, contact Care Information Scotland on 0800 011 3200. There is a parallel process of assessing risk to carers (explored further on in this factsheet).

## How will help be provided?

Following the assessment, the local council may decide that they can offer extra support to the disabled person. This may be called 'self-directed support'. This means that they can choose what support is needed and how it is provided and you may be able to help with this choice. Scottish Government legislation, called the Social Care (Self-Directed Support) Act 2013, states that all councils must offer self-directed support. There are four different options for self-directed support:

- Option 1: a direct payment to purchase support
- Option 2: to choose support while the council holds the money and arranges the chosen support on your behalf
- Option 3: to choose to have the council select the appropriate support and arrange it
- Option 4: a mix of options 1, 2 and 3 for specific aspects of your support.

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### Option 1

A **direct payment** is a sum of money paid by the local council to people assessed as needing services, who would like to arrange and pay for their own care and support services directly instead of receiving them from the local council. They were introduced with the intention of providing more independence, flexibility and choice for those who use services. If the person you care for chooses to get direct payments, they may receive the money to the value of the services that they would otherwise be provided with, unless they are assessed as having to make a financial contribution.

This contribution is decided by each local council's charging policy. The person you care for should be provided with a copy and this should be explained. The direct payment can then used to arrange services for the person you care for or to employ someone, eg, a personal assistant to

provide care. They will need to be able to account for how the money has been used.

They can get help from a local specialist organisation if needed. Your council can help you to make contact with those in your area. You can also help the person arrange and manage their direct payment. The option of direct payments covers all service user groups, including those who may not have the mental capacity to consent to services or those subject to mental health legislation. In those situations, a suitable person would be appointed by the council to manage the direct payment. For example, this may be you as their primary carer or someone with welfare **and** financial powers through guardianship or power of attorney under the Adults with Incapacity (Scotland) Act 2000.

Sometimes a direct payment can be used to employ a close family member to provide support, with the agreement of the person requiring care (or their guardian) and the local council. You can get help from a local organisation to help decide what would work best for you at:

[www.sdsscotland.org.uk/](http://www.sdsscotland.org.uk/)

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### Option 2

The person you care for can also choose their own support through what is often called an **Individual Service Fund (ISF)**. This is an allocation of money to a disabled person following assessment. It is intended to give the person who has the budget more choice and control over what services and support they receive. It can be used to meet assessed needs and, after making choices about services, you can ask the council to arrange and pay for them.

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### Option 3

The person you care for can choose to have the council arrange and manage support for the person you care for. This is sometimes referred to as **arranged services**.

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### Option 4

The person you care for can choose to have a **mix of options** 1, 2 and 3 to

best suit their needs and to support you in your caring role. Councils use a 'resource allocation system' (RAS) to calculate the disabled person's personal budget. The RAS will produce an 'indicative budget' upon which the support plan is based to ensure that the care package can be delivered and paid for.

You have a legal right to have the RAS calculation explained in sufficient detail so that you can understand whether or not the amount proposed will meet the agreed services. You could consider using the complaints system or taking legal advice if you are not happy about the way in which help is going to be provided. Find out more about self-directed support at: [careinfoscotland.scot/topics/how-to-get-social-care-support/self-directed-support/](https://careinfoscotland.scot/topics/how-to-get-social-care-support/self-directed-support/).

**Note:** You can find guidance about what this support should look like here (including an easy-read version): <https://www.sdsscotland.org.uk/new-sds-statutory-guidance-published/>.

## The sort of help available

Following community care and Children Act assessments, disabled people may be able to access things like:

- changes to their home to make it more suitable for them
- equipment such as ramps and hoists
- telecare services such as a community alarm, falls detector, heat and flood sensors
- holiday play schemes for disabled children
- care workers to help provide personal care at home
- short or long-term stays in residential care
- meals delivered to their home
- laundry services
- assistance with travel
- respite care and short breaks.

These are just examples of the forms of support that may be available following an assessment. Think about the sort of things that might help you and the person you are looking after and discuss them at your assessments. And remember that an assessment is not a test – it is an

opportunity to discuss the extra help that the person you care for needs and to see what support might be available.

When your Adult Carer Support Plan or Young Carer Statement is carried out, you have a right to support to meet your eligible needs. Every local council has its own eligibility criteria which is used to decide when services must be provided to a carer. However, even if some or all of your needs do not meet eligibility, your local council can use its powers (sometimes called the “power to support”) to offer assistance, such as training, to help you in your caring role or to refer you to get help from a local carers’ organisation or condition specific group.

### **Self-Directed Support and carers**

Carers must be offered a choice of the self-directed support options (see above) to meet any eligible needs identified in their ACSP or YCS. If a local council decides to offer you help under its “power to support,” you should also be offered the self-directed support options. Examples of how this could be used include:

- driving lessons
- help with housework and gardening
- a short break, with or without the person you care for
- an opportunity to take part in activity to improve your health and wellbeing, for example, art classes, yoga etc
- emotional support or counselling.

You are the best person to decide what help you need. You need to identify what support would make a difference to you personally. You should not be expected to choose from a ‘shopping list’ of options if these options will not help you in your caring role. If your council offers you support as a carer, you cannot be charged for this. You can find out more at Self Directed Support Scotland: <https://www.sdsscotland.org.uk/>.

In some circumstances, a close family member can be employed through self-directed support to provide care to your loved one(s), including on a temporary basis when care is difficult to access.

## Arranging an assessment

Adult Carer Support Plans (ACSPs), community care assessments and the Children Act are all the responsibility of the social work department of the disabled person's local council. If you do not live in the same local council area as the disabled person, it is the disabled person's local council that will be responsible for carrying out your ACSP.

For Young Carer Statements (YCSs), the social work department in the area where the child lives is responsible for carrying out the YCS (unless the young carer is pre-school age, where the child's local health board is responsible).

You can request an ACSP or YCS, but the Carers (Scotland) Act 2016 says that local councils must also inform carers of their right to one, so you should be offered this once they are aware you are a carer. The best way to request an ACSP or YCS is to write to or email the social work department responsible for the disabled person (see template below). You can also make this request by phone, but it is a good idea to follow up this request in writing.

### Template letter/email for arranging an assessment

Dear Sir/Madam,

I am writing to request an Adult Carer Support Plan/Young Carers Statement *[opt for whichever is relevant to you]* under the Carers (Scotland) Act 2016.

I have been caring for *[name & address of the person you care for]* since *[date]*.  
OR

I will be caring for *[name of the person you will soon start caring for]* from *[date]*. They are my *[mother/husband/son/friend etc.]*. *[Name of person you care for]* needs help because *[outline the disabilities the person you care for has, eg she is 90, has arthritis and is becoming frail]*.

The main things they need help with are *[e.g. having a bath, dressing etc]*. The main difficulties I have are *[list the things you need, e.g. a break from caring]*.

Please contact me at the above address/on the above phone number *[State how you prefer to be contacted and, if by phone, if there is a good time to contact you]* to let me know when you will be able to carry out my Adult Carer Support Plan / Young Carers Statement *[add whichever is relevant to you]*.

Yours faithfully,  
*[Your name]*

## Breaks from caring

Breaks from caring can be identified through an Adult Carer Support Plan or through a community care or Children Act assessment. A break from caring can be any form of support that enables a carer to have time away from their normal caring responsibilities.

Breaks from caring are different from short breaks for disabled children and adults. These are identified in community care or Children Act assessments. For example, they may be provided to give a disabled person a break from their normal routine, take part in new experiences, visit new places and have fun doing positive activities.

A carer's need for a break might be identified through their ACSP or YCS. If this identifies a need for a break and the local council agrees to provide it, the carer cannot be charged for it. This should include all elements of the break including aspects such as accommodation, travelling expenses, the costs of equipment for classes etc.

If a carer wishes to have a holiday or break with the person they care for, the cost of their holiday will be waived but the cost of the break for the person they care for will not be waived.

### **For example:**

George talks about missing out on making new friends as he never has time because of his caring role. He expresses an interest in attending an art class in a local authority community centre. The authority arranges for him to attend the class and arranges replacement care for the person he cares for once a week.

**Another example:**

Jane is an adult carer who lives in a remote rural area. She is feeling increasingly isolated and depressed. She has no friends or family living nearby and her nearest carers' centre is miles away. She uses a direct payment to pay for the installation of broadband and for a tablet computer. This means she can keep in touch with her family and friends through video calls and email, particularly her grandchildren who live overseas. She has also made friends with other carers on an online forum and now feels more connected and supported.

If the person who is being cared for is having a short break, the local authority should waive charges for the cost of activities the carer takes part in during this period (if identified within their ACSP/YCS).

If the carer cannot take a break without replacement care being provided for the person they care for, local councils must provide or arrange this replacement care. If replacement care is identified within the ACSP or YCS, and it is provided as support to meet the carer's needs, the local council must waive the charge for this. See page 20 for further details about charges for services and support for disabled and older people.

## **Adult Carer Support Plan (ACSP) and Young Carers Statement (YCS)**

### **Who can have an ACSP/YCS?**

The law says that anyone who provides or intends to provide care on a regular basis can have an ACSP. Even if you do not provide a lot of hours of care, you can still have an ACSP.

Young carers can also have a Young Carers Statement (YCS). This is especially important to note if the young carer is not being supported under the Children Act or they are between 16 and 18 years old. The ACSP or YCS is not linked to Carer's Allowance.

It is up to you when you ask for an ACSP. You can ask for it before you take up caring or at any point when you are already caring for someone. If

you share caring responsibilities with another person, or more than one person, you can each have an ACSP or YCS.

You can have an ACSP/YCS to look at the help that you need even if the disabled person does not want to have a community care assessment to look at the help that they need. If the social work department refuses to carry out an ACSP or YCS, you can make a complaint.

You can have an ACSP/YCS if you:

- live with the person you are looking after
- live away from the person you are looking after
- care for someone full time or part time
- care for someone as well as working full or part time.

### Who will carry out the ACSP/YCS?

This will be done by a social worker or another professional nominated by the social work department. In some areas, the social work department asks local voluntary organisations or health professionals to carry out the assessment, but arrangements should still be made through social services. Your social work department should explain who will carry it out. The ACSP/YCS will normally be carried out at a face-to-face meeting. However, many local councils ask carers to complete a self-assessment questionnaire before the meeting to help carers and professionals focus on the help the carer needs.

### Where will the ACSP/YCS take place?

The assessment should be carried out in a convenient and private place. For example, this could be at a social work office or at your home. They can be done over the phone if this is the best way for you, for example if it fits in with your routine or offers more privacy. The social worker carrying out the ACSP/YCS should discuss this with you beforehand.

### Who will be there?

The ACSP/YCS can be carried out with or without the person you are looking after being present. It is up to you. You can also have a family member, a friend or a professional person such as a Carers Support Worker from a carers' organisation with you if you wish. The option of

having someone with you should be discussed when the meeting is being arranged.

## What kind of questions will I be asked?

Your ACSP/YCS should cover the following areas:

- > your caring role
- > your health
- > your feelings
- > choices about caring
- > work
- > study
- > leisure
- > housing
- > emergency planning.

Even if you are not asked questions about these issues, you can raise them in the meeting. By answering the following questions, you should get a much clearer idea of your needs and you can then discuss with your social worker the services that might be most helpful to you to meet these needs.

## Time

- > How many hours a week do you provide care? Include all the time you spend with the person you care for, the things you do for them and how long they take you.
- > Do you help the person you are looking after with any of the following activities?
  - > Shopping
  - > Bathing
  - > Going to the toilet
  - > Cooking
  - > Other personal care
  - > Keeping an eye on them
  - > Dealing with money, e.g. cashing pension, paying bills

## > Laundry

- > Do you have to help during the day or night or both?
- > Does anyone else help? If so, for how long?  
Would you like some help (or extra help) with these jobs? List the tasks you would like help with (putting the most important first).
- > Are you able to spend enough time on other family responsibilities, eg being with any children?

## Health

- > Does the person you care for have any health problems you find hard to deal with? Describe them as fully as you can.
- > Do you have any health problems? If so, are they made worse by your caring role? Describe them as fully as you can.
- > Are you getting enough sleep?
- > Do you feel you are suffering from stress or depression?
- > Is caring having a negative impact on your health?

## Feelings and choices about your caring role

- > Do you feel that you do not have a choice about providing care?
- > If you feel that you cannot carry on at all, or can only carry on if you reduce the amount of caring you do, tell the social worker. It is not unusual to feel this way and it is important they know how you really feel.
- > What would you most like to change about your situation?

## Work/study/leisure

- > Do you work? If so, for how many hours a week?
- > Does your employer know that you are a carer – do they know about your rights, e.g. to time off in an emergency?
- > Do you feel you can manage to work and provide care? If you cannot manage or are at risk of not managing - do explain this.
- > What would make working/caring easier for you?
- > Would you like to start work/study?
- > Are there things that you find enjoyable and relaxing that you cannot do anymore because of your caring responsibilities? (such as a hobby, visiting friends, going to the cinema).

- > When was the last time you had a whole day to yourself to do as you pleased?

## Housing

- > Do you live with the person you care for? Is the arrangement satisfactory? If not, why not?
- > Does the person you care for have difficulties moving about or getting in or out of their home? (E.g. can they climb the stairs, have a bath on their own, leave the house?)
- > Do you have to help them? If so, are you able to do this safely and without causing yourself any pain or injury? Special equipment could make life easier for the person you look after and caring easier.

It is important that you give as complete a picture as you can about your caring role and are as honest as you can be about the care that you provide and how you feel about being a carer.

Remember, this is your chance to tell them about your needs and how you feel, so don't hold back. Once any problems with caring have been identified, you and the person carrying out the ACSP/YCS can discuss what sort of help may make it easier for you to take up caring or continue in your caring role. You can ask your local council to consider anything that could support you in your caring role – so feel free to think creatively.

## Planning for emergencies

During your ACSP/YCS, there should also be a discussion about planning for emergencies. This is to make sure the person(s) you care for would be looked after if, for example, you were taken ill and had to go into hospital.

Some local councils have a Care Emergency Scheme and through this you can contact a scheme operator who will have access to your emergency plan and will put it into action. The local council should be able to tell you more about what they can do to help you plan for an emergency.

You should also have the opportunity to have a discussion about planning for the future. This could include looking at future plans for your adult child or partner should you be unable to care in the future because of age or ill health or to plan for your child leaving school.

Future planning could also include thinking about your own plans for the future and when caring ends, e.g. employment, training, education etc. The local council should help you prepare a plan, sometimes called an 'anticipatory plan' to prepare for the future.

## Deciding what help to provide

The local council will take the following steps when making a decision about whether you will be provided with any help:

### Step one

The person carrying out the ACSP/YCS should collect all the information they need to be clear about the care you are providing and any difficulties you have providing that care.

### Step two

The ACSP/YCS will then look at any risks to the sustainability of your caring role (i.e. to what extent your caring role is compromised or threatened by the lack of appropriate support). For example, this could include any times you have had major health problems yourself or the stresses of caring have, or could, lead to a breakdown of the relationship between you and the person you care for.

The council should assess the risk to you if you do not get the support you need. There are four levels of risk – **critical**, **substantial**, **moderate** and **low** – with critical meaning that there is a very high risk that you will not be able to begin to care for someone or to continue in your caring role. It may be that not all areas of your life will be assessed as having a critical or substantial risk. For example, you may need support to sustain employment as there is a substantial risk of losing your job because of the demands of caring, but you have less need for support in other areas of your life.

Following an assessment, the council has an obligation to provide support if the risk is assessed as critical. Most councils will also provide support to carers and disabled people if the risks associated with not providing support are assessed as substantial. Each local council has eligibility criteria which will explain these terms and how they work locally.

The local council must either provide services to the disabled person or

support the carer to appropriately address this critical risk. If a carer's needs do not meet the threshold of critical or substantial, the council is not obliged to provide the carer with services but they must act, e.g. to refer a carer to local carer support or the local carers' advice and information service.

If a critical risk has been identified and yet the council still do not provide either you or the person you are looking after with appropriate services, you could make a complaint to challenge this decision.

The tests the local council applies when deciding if there is a critical or substantial risk cover the following:

- the carer's physical and/or emotional health is breaking or has broken down
- the carer's living environment is unsuitable and poses an immediate risk to the health and safety of the carer and/or cared for person
- caring is having a significant impact on finances eg, difficulty meeting housing costs and utilities
- the carer feels that he/she has lost a large amount of control over the decisions they make about the nature of tasks they will perform (eg, whether to help the person they are looking after with personal care) and how much time they will give to their caring role (e.g. the carer feels that caring is round the clock because the person they care for won't accept outside help)
- the carer is unable to look after their own domestic needs and other daily routines while carrying out their caring role
- involvement in employment or other responsibilities (eg, looking after other family members) is, or will be, at risk
- many significant social support systems and relationships are, or will be, at risk (eg, unable to maintain friendships, visit relatives etc).

### Step three

Once the council has decided that help is going to be provided, there are two ways that this can be done.

Firstly, support could be provided to the disabled person, which in turn could also benefit you as the carer. This help is provided under the community care assessment. An example of this is respite care which gives the carer a break, but it is the disabled person who will receive the service.

Secondly, the local council may decide through a carer's ACSP or YCS to provide support. If the disabled person you are looking after is a child then help for the child and you can be provided under the Children Act assessment. You can ask for a separate ACSP/YCS to assess support for your own needs.

## Examples

John cares for his brother, Matthew but he is finding it very difficult to continue caring and working because he receives no other support. His brother's care needs are very unpredictable and flexible working is not really an option for him. He has talked with his employer about giving up work. During his ACSP, he explained this to the social worker. She decided that there is a critical risk to the sustainability of John's caring role because John's employment is at risk.

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Rahila looks after her son, Aadeel who is 22. He needs to be lifted in and out of bed each morning and evening. He also needs help with washing, dressing and getting up and down stairs. Rahila is exhausted and is beginning to develop a bad back. Her doctor thinks she may be suffering from stress. Aadeel is also feeling isolated and would like to get out more.

Following her ACSP it is agreed that the council will provide a direct payment to pay for a holiday so she can take a week's break from looking after Aadeel. In addition, the following help will be provided for Aadeel under his community care assessment, which will enable Rahila to continue in her caring role:

- > a week's respite care while Rahila is on holiday
- > a place at a further education college each Thursday morning so Rahila can have a regular break and Aadeel feels less isolated
- > lifting equipment to help Rahila get Aadeel in and out of bed
- > a stairlift to help Aadeel get himself upstairs.

## The help you will get

### Notifying you about the outcome of your ACSP/YCS

Following the meeting, the person carrying out the ACSP/YCS should notify you in writing of the support needs that have been identified. You should also be notified how these support needs will be addressed, usually within a specific time-frame. You should be provided with a copy of your plan.

The support that will be provided to you as a carer should be included in the care plan of the disabled person. The care plan of the disabled person is a written document which contains information about the services that will be provided for the disabled person. If, for reasons of confidentiality, you do not want information about the support that you will be getting to be written in the disabled person's care plan, you can ask for your own carer's plan.

As your ACSP/YCS can also affect the community care assessment of the person you look after, some of your assessed needs may be reflected in the care plan of the disabled person. Therefore, help may be provided for them instead of directly to you. For example, if you are having difficulties lifting the disabled person, it is they who will be provided with equipment and so the equipment will be mentioned in their care plan; but the lifting equipment will help you in your caring role. With the agreement of the disabled person, you can be given a copy of their care plan.

### Choosing to accept or reject the help you are offered

You can accept some or all of the help you are offered. If you do not feel the help you are offered is necessary or appropriate, you can refuse it. Before refusing help, please do talk about your concerns with the social work department – it may be that more suitable arrangements can be made.

The person you care for may refuse services for a range of reasons including because of the charges they may be asked to pay for them.

If the person you care for refuses services, ask your local council what help they can provide you in your caring role. For example, they may be able to provide equipment, such as a hoist to lift someone, to protect your health and wellbeing or arrange other services such as housework or gardening to

reduce the strain in other areas of your life. These would be provided under the local council's power to offer carers self-directed support.

## Charging for help

You cannot be charged for support or resources provided to sustain you in your caring role as a result of an ACSP or YCS. The Scottish Government passed legislation [the Social Care (Self Directed Support) Act 2013 and the Carers (Scotland) Act 2016] to ensure that it is made clear to all councils that carers cannot be charged for support.

However, if help is provided for the person you are looking after through a community care assessment, they may be charged separately for this help.

If you are caring for your partner, your joint finances may be taken into account by the social work department when deciding whether or not they will be charged for services. This includes joint capital and savings as well as a proportion of benefits you receive as a couple e.g. pension credit or income support.

Your own income (for example) your salary should not routinely be taken into account. However, some local councils may take part of this income into account.

If local councils charge for the help they provide to the person you care for, they must follow guidelines when deciding how much to charge. The social work department must explain the rules they use when deciding how much they will charge for help.

You can ask your local council to consider the extra costs the person you care for may have because of their disability (e.g. extra laundry, equipment, special diets and heating) when deciding how much they will charge for help. This is sometimes known as disability-related expenditure. You can read more about this here:

[carersuk.org/scotland/help-and-advice/financial-support/benefits-if-you-are-disabled-ill-or-injured/disability-related-expenses/](https://carersuk.org/scotland/help-and-advice/financial-support/benefits-if-you-are-disabled-ill-or-injured/disability-related-expenses/).

If you feel that proposed charges are unreasonable and will cause you and/or the person you care for hardship, you can ask your local council to reconsider them.

## Free personal care

Anyone of any age who lives in the community will not have to pay for any personal care services that they are assessed as requiring.

Free personal care includes:

- services to support personal hygiene e.g. help with bathing, shaving, mouth, teeth and nail care
- personal assistance e.g. help with dressing, to get in and out of bed and use of a hoist
- help to manage continence eg toileting, catheter or stoma care, bed changing and laundry
- food and diet including help with eating and the preparation of meals (but not the costs of supplying food)
- dealing with the consequences of immobility and helping move about indoors
- counselling and support e.g. reminding and safety devices and psychological support
- simple treatments e.g. help with medication, application of creams and drops, simple dressings and oxygen therapy.

However, they may still need to make a contribution towards non-personal care services such as day care, home helps, lunch clubs, meals on wheels, community alarms and help with shopping and housework.

## Reassessments and reviews

You can ask for a review of your ACSP/YCS and any community care or Children's Act assessments at any time if your circumstances change, or the circumstances of the person(s) you are looking after change.

When you have an ACSP/YCS, there should be an opportunity for you to agree the likely point at which this should next be reviewed.

## Complaints

### Assessments, Adult Carer Support Plans, and Young Carers Statements

If you are not happy with the way you have been treated, or with the outcome of any of the assessments, you can complain to social services. All social work departments should have a complaints procedure that you can follow – ask the social work department for a copy.

If you are not happy with the outcome of your complaint after the complaints procedure, you may be able to take a complaint to the Scottish Public Services Ombudsman. They can be contacted on **0800 377 7330**. They also have a website providing more information at **spsso.org.uk**.

If the council has acted unlawfully (eg, have refused to carry out an Adult Carer Support Plan or Young Carers Statement without good reason), you may be able to take them to court. This is called a judicial review.

You will need to seek legal advice if you are thinking about taking the local council to court. If you are considering this, it is important to get this advice as quickly as possible. You can find out information about getting legal advice, including legal aid and advice services that can provide free assistance, from the Scottish Legal Aid Board at **slab.org.uk**.

### Services

If you are not happy with the services provided after an assessment, you can complain to the social work department. If services are provided by an agency or care home, you may also be able to complain directly to them through their own complaints procedure.

You can also make a complaint about a service to the Care Inspectorate by contacting **0845 600 9527** or visiting **careinspectorate.com**.

## Further help

For information, advice and support contact the Carers UK Helpline on **0808 808 7777** (Monday - Friday 9am - 6pm) or email [advice@carersuk.org](mailto:advice@carersuk.org). Information is also available on our website – visit [carers.scotland](http://carers.scotland)

## Other organisations

### Find local carers and young carers support services

Carers Trust Scotland

0300 123 2008 | [carers.org/our-work-in-scotland/our-work-in-scotland](http://carers.org/our-work-in-scotland/our-work-in-scotland)

### Find out more about breaks from caring

Shared Care Scotland

01383 622462 | [sharedcarescotland.org.uk/](http://sharedcarescotland.org.uk/)

### Information and advice if you are caring for an older person

Care Information Scotland

0800 011 3200 | [careinfoscotland.scot/](http://careinfoscotland.scot/)

### Information if you are caring for someone with dementia

Alzheimers Scotland

0808 808 3000 | [alzscot.org/](http://alzscot.org/)

### Information if you are caring for a disabled child

Contact

0808 808 3555 | [contact.org.uk/](http://contact.org.uk/)

### Information if you are caring for someone with cancer

Macmillan Cancer Support

0808 808 0000 | [macmillan.org.uk/](http://macmillan.org.uk/)

### Information if you are caring for someone with a learning disability

Enable Scotland

0300 0200 101 | [enable.org.uk/](http://enable.org.uk/)

### Information if you are caring for someone with mental health issues

Change Mental Health

0808 8010 515 | [changemh.org/](http://changemh.org/)

This factsheet is designed to provide helpful information and advice. It is not an authoritative statement of the law. We work to ensure that our factsheets are accurate and up to date, but information about benefits and community care is subject to change over time. We would recommend contacting the Carers UK Helpline or visiting our website for the latest information.

Please email us your feedback on this factsheet by sending your comments to [info@carersuk.org](mailto:info@carersuk.org)  
This factsheet was updated in April 2026. Next review due April 2027.

### **Carers UK Helpline**

For expert information and advice about caring.



**0808 808 7777**

(Monday – Friday 9am-6pm)



[advice@carersuk.org](mailto:advice@carersuk.org)

### **Carers Scotland**

Suite 1B  
38 Queen Street  
Glasgow G1 3DX  
0141 378 1065  
[info@carerscotland.org](mailto:info@carerscotland.org)

### **Carers UK**

20 Great Dover Street  
London SE1 4LX  
020 7378 4999  
[info@carersuk.org](mailto:info@carersuk.org)

**However caring affects you,  
we're here.**

Caring will affect us all at some point in our lives.

With your help, we can be there for the 6,000 people who start looking after someone each day.

We're both a support network and a movement for change.

Visit us at our website to join us, help us or access more sources:  
[carersuk.org/scotland](https://carersuk.org/scotland)

**This information can be requested  
in large print or as a text file.**