

Care Act 2014

A new piece of law which outlines how care and support should be provided in England. It replaces all existing adult social care legislation. For the first time gives carers the same status and rights as those they look after.

Based on the carers supported self-assessment a support plan is generated. This may include a personal budget but it also may include information and advice only.

Financial assistance is based on a combination of features drawn from the assessment. It is focussed on the amount of care that is done and this is combined with the impact that this caring has on the carers wellbeing including their physical and mental health.

A carer should ask for an assessment from Oxfordshire County Council (OCC) or their Doctor may suggest they have one and tell them how to be assessed and what benefits may follow.

The new law places emphasis on promoting the wellbeing of carers. Wellbeing can relate to:

- personal dignity (including treatment of the individual with respect);
- physical and mental health and emotional wellbeing;
- protection from abuse and neglect;
- control by the individual over day-to-day life (including over care and support);
- participation in work, education, training or recreation;
- social and economic wellbeing;
- domestic, family and personal relationships;
- suitability of living accommodation;
- the individual's contribution to society.

From April 2015, changes to the way care and support are provided in England will mean that carers may be able to get support so that they can look after their own wellbeing while continuing their caring role. Caring for someone can mean many different things, like providing support to a relative, partner, friend or neighbour, such as helping with their washing, dressing or eating, taking them to regular appointments or keeping them company.

The main differences between the old situation and the new are summarised in the chart below.

Pre Care Act 2014	Post Care Act (in force 1st April 2015)
Carers only entitled to a carer's assessment if they hit a certain threshold	All Carers entitled to a carers assessment regardless of who/hours they care for
Local self-assessment form or GP recommendation to access grants	National single assessment form and eligibility criteria is fairer, more equitable and will achieve a approach.
2 Grants available: OCC £300 GP £600	Now 3 levels of personal budget (not called grants now) may be awarded: £200, £400 and £600
No support plan created for a Carer	Assessment can produce a support plan for a Carer and that will be reviewed at 6 months
OCCG and OCC funding for Grants	Increased funding for Carers - Carers same funds available for personal budget and OCC have added additional funding.
GP £600 Grant associated with health and wellbeing and had to be used for a break	Carer receiving a £600 will be encouraged to use for a break from caring role and will have to show that a minimum of £200 was used to support their health and wellbeing and this will be audited. More flexibility now in how a carer can use their personal budget
GP's identified Carer for GP grant	All GP's consulted and agreed to using the single assessment form to identify Carers.

Carers' assessments

To help determine a person's support needs, an assessment must be carried out. A carer's physical, mental and emotional wellbeing will be at the heart of the assessment, which could result in a carer receiving information about local support groups, practical support such as respite care, or a payment to spend on the things that make it a little easier to carry on caring. To find out more about assessments, including how to complete your own assessment online come 1 April 2015, visit our website www.carersoxfordshire.org.uk or phone 0845 050 7666.

Carers' grants

Carers' grants will change as of 1 April 2015 and will be replaced by a more comprehensive assessment of a carer's needs. This may lead to a support plan, which could include a payment, to help a person maintain their wellbeing while continuing their caring role.

Information and advice for carers

All carers are entitled to information about ways they can maintain their wellbeing while continuing their caring role. Carers Oxfordshire, have a wealth of information about support services for carers in Oxfordshire. Go to www.carersoxfordshire.org.uk or call 0845 050 7666 to find out more.

Find out how to prepare to complete the online form

<http://www.carersoxfordshire.org.uk/cms/content/you-start>

For your information this is the link to the OCC webpage on this subject:

<https://www.oxfordshire.gov.uk/cms/content/care-act-and-you>

Important information if you are preparing to complete the on-line carer assessment.

- The form takes about an hour to complete
- It is not possible to save changes to the form while completing it and each page will "disappear" after approx. 20 minutes if the page hasn't been completed in full in that time.
- It is not possible to print off a copy nor of printing a personal copy of the completed form to keep as a record

April 2015

South and Vale Carers

South West Oxfordshire Locality Forum