

for **you**

The Care Act:
information for
people currently
getting care and
support from Kent
County Council,
their families
and carers

KCC working for you

kent.gov.uk/careact



Care and support is changing

The new Care Act (2014) is designed to help people plan for their future and put them more in control of the care and support they receive.

This leaflet sets out the main features of the Care Act and what they mean for people who are already receiving care and support from us. You may be:

- living in your own home
- living in a residential care home
- a carer, providing unpaid care for a family or friend

Important: This leaflet is for information only, and you do not need to do anything in response to it.

Care and support needs (from April 2015)

For the first time, there will be a national level of care and support needs that we, and all councils, will consider when we assess what help we can give you. This level is known as the "National Minimum Eligibility Criteria" and from April 2015 it will replace the eligibility criteria we use now. **There is more information about the new criteria on our website: kent.gov.uk/careact.**

You **do not** need to ask us to reassess your needs against the new national levels now. If you are currently receiving care and support from us, you will automatically be eligible from 1st April 2015. We will only assess your needs against the new national levels at your next annual review. However, if your needs have changed you can ask for a new assessment.

Charging (from April 2015)

Most of the care and support services that we provide are chargeable. We carry out a financial assessment to work out how much, if anything, you would need to pay towards the cost of your care. The way we do this will remain the same from 1st April 2015 but will change from 1st April 2016. **You can find out more about charging in our residential and non-residential charging booklets: kent.gov.uk/careandsupport**

Deferred Payment Agreements (from April 2015)

A deferred payment agreement is an arrangement where the council will help to pay your care home bills on your behalf. You can delay repaying the council until you choose to sell your home, or until after your death. From April 2015, to cover our costs, we will charge a small amount of interest on the amount owed to us and there will also be a fee for setting this arrangement up. Existing Deferred Payment Agreement (DPA) and Temporary Financial Assistance (TFA) terms will remain the same until the agreement comes to an end. Further details on the new scheme can be provided by our Finance Team if required. To find out more about all the options available, you may wish to speak to a financial adviser or seek advice from an independent organisation.

Support for carers (from April 2015)

A carer is anyone who provides unpaid care for an adult friend or family member who due to illness, disability, a mental health problem or an addiction cannot cope without their support.

From April 2015, carers may be able to get more help so that they can carry on caring and look after their own wellbeing. Carers may be eligible for support, such as a direct payment to spend on the things that make caring easier or practical support. **For more information visit our website: kent.gov.uk/carers**

The “Cap on Care Costs” (from April 2016)

From April 2016 no one will have to pay more than £72,000 towards the costs of their eligible care and support needs in their lifetime. It is important to note that daily living costs such as food, energy and accommodation will not be included in the £72,000 cap. If you live in a care home only the part of the fee that is for care will count towards the cap. This cap applies to people funding their own care and support, as well as those helped by the council. The amount that will be allowed to count towards the cap will be determined after we have carried out an assessment of your needs.

Means-test threshold (from April 2016)

From April 2016, if you live in a care home you may be eligible for financial support from us if your capital assets are less than £118,000 (an increase from the current limit of £23,250). A lower limit of £27,000 will apply, however, if your former home is disregarded from the calculation (for example because your spouse or partner still lives there). If you do not live in a care home then the capital limit will be £27,000 (an increase from the current limit of £23,250) and this will always exclude the value of the home you live in.

Your views are important to us. Tell us how the changes to care and support are working for you by emailing kentlocalaccount@kent.gov.uk

Finding out more

We sent you this leaflet to keep you informed about changes to care and support being introduced by the Government.

Important: This leaflet is for information only and you do not need to do anything in response to it.

If you would like more information about the Care Act then:

- visit kent.gov.uk/careact
- email careact@kent.gov.uk
- phone 03000 41 99 94
- Text relay: 18001 03000 41 99 94

This leaflet is available in alternative formats and can be explained in a range of languages. Call 03000 41 99 94 or email careact@kent.gov.uk

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