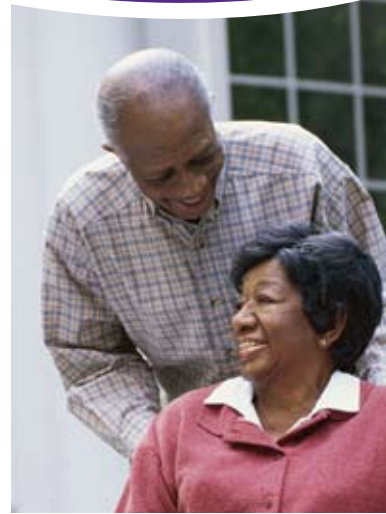


Getting help from social care services



**A guide to assessments, personal budgets
and support planning**

Adult social care has changed

You know better than anyone else what is best for you. Luton Borough Council has introduced a number of changes to modernise the way we look after our residents by putting customer choice and control at the heart of our care services.

We are calling this major change 'Knowing what's right for me' as it gives individuals and their families greater choice and control over the support they need.

Those who need support are now able to choose who provides that support, and to control where and when the services are provided.

Under the old system of adult social care, the Council would assess each person and then put in place traditional services to support them.





Under the new arrangements, people will:

- be given a personal budget to buy their own care and support
- be able to buy services that fit their specific needs, preferences and circumstances – either from the Council or from other organisations or individuals
- have greater control, choice and flexibility in their lives
- be more involved in helping us develop and shape local services.

This leaflet is a comprehensive guide to accessing social care services and explains the new processes of self assessments, personal budgets and support planning.

Getting help from social care services

Are you finding it difficult to manage everyday activities, managing steps or stairs, getting in and out of bed or generally looking after yourself? Or perhaps you have short term problem such as your leg is in plaster or you are waiting for a hip operation. Luton Borough Council's adult social care department is here to help and advise.

If this is your first contact with the Council the first step is to contact our **Referral Management Team** (see contact details on back page). You may want to get someone to contact us on your behalf and sometimes it is your doctor or the hospital that tells us about you and the help you may need.

If you're not already receiving services from us, the Referral Management Team will need to ask some questions so they can understand your situation and what, if any, equipment or services would be helpful or if you are eligible for funded social care support.

Often people just need information about services that are available locally such as luncheon clubs, befriending schemes or getting someone to come and move your bed from upstairs to a downstairs room.



Or perhaps you've got a short term health problem such as coping around the home with a leg in plaster.



Our staff will talk to you so that they can give you the best advice and if appropriate put you in touch with a local service or organisation.

Need urgent or longer term support?

If you are urgently in need of support we promise to contact you within one working day and then arrange the appropriate services. If it appears that you will need support for more than a short period we will need to carry out a full assessment to find out if you are eligible to get help with social care and make arrangements for the help that you need.

Getting a ‘carer’s assessment’

You can also ask for an assessment if you are a carer, looking after someone in the family, a partner or a friend because they are ill, frail or have a disability. The assessment is free, it is not about judging the way you are caring for someone. You can talk about your needs in confidence, away from the person you care for, if you wish. The assessment will look at how you are affected by the demands and the level of care that you give - the impact of being a carer on your life. By telling us about your caring role we can find the support that’s available that will enable you to have increased choice and control over your life.

*Ask for our leaflet ‘**Carers are important - Advice and support for carers**’*

Assessing your needs

The next stage will involve the Council’s adult social care staff spending some time with you to do an in depth assessment of your care and support needs to identify what help and assistance you need to live as independently as possible.

These will be things such as what you can and can't do, the things that are barriers to your independence and wellbeing, and what you feel is most important to your life.

We can also arrange for someone to speak up for you – an independent advocate – if that would be helpful.

Everyone involved will work with you to ensure that YOU are the centre of any plans, whether the Council is organising or providing the services or you are buying services yourself.



Knowing what's right for me

It is important that you think about the outcomes you would like to achieve. This might be something relatively simple like being able to get washed and dressed by yourself, making a hot drink or perhaps taking part in activities with other people.

The assessment process will centre on you. You are the expert of your own situation and what you want to achieve.

Things that will be considered in your assessment

- **What is important to you** – for example your interests, friends, family, living independently, help at times when you want it, taking some risks etc.
- **How you look after yourself** – for example washing, dressing, using the toilet, shopping, cooking, eating, cleaning, staying healthy and safe, how you communicate with people, how you manage at night etc.
- **The activities that you do and how long each takes** – for example going to college, shopping, using the library, visiting friends and neighbours, swimming, walking, going to the cinema, places of worship, hobbies etc.
- **What help you already get**
- **What you want to change**
- **How you will be supported to do this** – for example by family, friends, by employing a personal assistant, by social care organisations etc.
- **How you will organise things and be in control of arrangement**
- **What support you may need to do all this.**

What happens if I am not eligible for social care services?

We understand that even if someone can fund their own care and is capable of making all of their own arrangements for the care and support they need, they may also feel isolated and vulnerable.

So whether or not someone is funding their own care, we promise to provide advice and information, signposting to local services and support with planning a suitable package of care.



There are many other sources of assistance for example Age Concern, the Carer's Centre, luncheon clubs etc. You can also contact our Referral Management Team – explain your situation – and they will see what local organisations might be useful for you.

We know that people's needs change. You may qualify for home care or other help in future. If your situation changes or your difficulties increase, you or your carer should contact us and we will reassess your needs.

Will I have to pay for social care services?

Some people have to pay towards social care services. This is based on an individual's capital and income. The Council has to support people in greatest need and if you are not eligible for social care support our staff will still be able to advise you about other community services – some are free and some you may be able to purchase yourself.

Every person who receives support, whether provided by statutory services or funded by themselves, must be given choice and control over the shape of that support in whatever form this takes.



Financial assessment and your personal budget

If you are eligible to receive social care services from the Council, we will carry out a **financial assessment**, which will include a check to make sure you are receiving all the appropriate benefits.

We are now introducing **personal budgets** for people assessed as being eligible for social care.

From your assessment we will consider your personal situation and calculate the amount of money that you can use for the following twelve months to meet your needs. This will be your personal budget - money we will give you to spend on your care services.

You can opt to manage the budget yourself or you may want the Council or a third party to manage it on your behalf.

A personal budget can be used to receive traditional social care services from the Council, or to have a mixed package of services AND a personal budget.

If you would like to know more now please talk to your social care worker or contact The Disability Resource Centre for more information see page 14.

Putting together your support plan

Once your needs assessment and financial assessment are completed, the details of **your personal support plan** has to be written and agreed which will list all the care and support that you will receive.

You will be closely involved in putting together your support plan. If you feel you just don't know where to start – don't worry we will be able to help you.

You may want to involve your family, friends or neighbours but if this isn't possible we can arrange for someone to assist you. **Remember** though it is YOUR plan and YOUR life.

There are a wide range of services that might be suitable – again our staff can advise you.

We will agree your support plan within 28 days of the referral being made.

On the following page are examples of care and support services available.



Some examples of care and support services

Community alarms and Telecare

Keeping you safe at home by connecting you to a range of response services 24 hours a day.

Community meals

Bringing a hot or frozen meal to your door if you cannot cook for yourself. Meals cater for a range of diets and cultural needs.

Day services

Health, social care or leisure services helping you to stay active, learn skills, and maintain friendships and social contacts.

District nurses and community nurses

Looking after your health at home.

Equipment and adaptations

Help to overcome day-to-day problems that make life difficult around your home with advice from an occupational therapist.

Home care

Help at home with your personal needs, meals and shopping, and with housework that is essential to your care.

Rehabilitation services & Intermediate care

Physiotherapists and occupational therapists working with nurses and enablement home carers to help you to keep your independence, to regain it after an illness and to keep active in old age.

Support with employment and training

Travel passes, transport and disabled parking badges

Handy person assistance

Help around the home with things such as fixing dripping taps, putting a lock on an outside door, putting in new light bulbs.

Advocacy

An independent organisation that provides you with good information to help you make decisions and to speak up for yourself

Respite care

Short breaks away from home.

Extra care sheltered accommodation

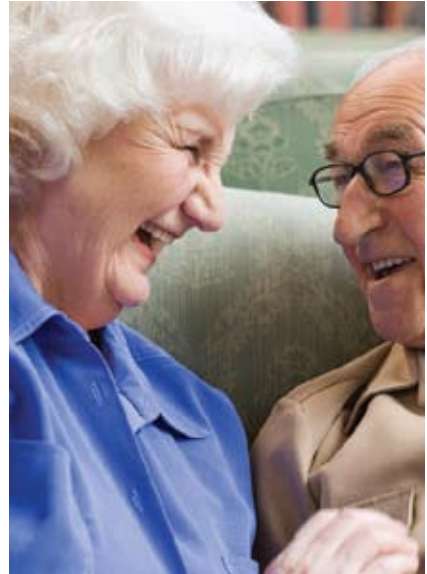
We will ensure that the services it has been agreed that you should receive will be in place within 28 days of your support plan being finalised. If there is a particular service or type of support that you need we will try and source it for you. We are working with a number of local businesses to increase the types of care and support services available in Luton.

Being in control of the support you need

Luton Borough Council's adult social care department is committed to helping you live as independently as possible. If you have been assessed as needing support from the Council, you can choose to have cash payments that will enable you to arrange your own care instead of receiving services directly from the Council. These cash payments are known as **direct payments** and are available now.



The purpose of direct payments is to give you more choice and control over the support that you get, who provides it and how it is delivered in a way or time that suits your individual circumstances. With direct payments, people receive money from the Council so they can organise their own services either with a home care agency or by employing their own care workers.



Luton Borough Council is working with The Disability Resource Centre who are providing independent advice and support to local people considering taking direct payments.

Please ask for our leaflet on Direct Payments and the support available for you from the Direct Payments Support Service, part of

**The Disability Resource Centre, based at
Poynters House, Poynters Road, Dunstable,
Beds LU5 4TP**

Telephone **01582 470900**

Email: **directpaymentsluton@drcbeds.org.uk**

Checking how things are going

If you are receiving a social care service, and if you don't contact us to say that your situation has changed, we will be in touch after a year to see how you are and whether the services you are receiving are still right for you.

Other Useful contacts and information

Advocacy Alliance

An independent organisation, supports individuals by providing good information to help them make decisions and speak up for themselves.

Telephone them on 01582 42 27 42 or write to:
Advocacy Alliance, Voluntary Action Luton,
15 New Bedford Road, LU1 1SA.

Luton Rights

Provides advice, casework and representation on Welfare Benefits, Debt, Housing and Employment law and help to access training and employment.

Telephone: 01582 45 33 72 Email: admin@lutonrights.org

www.directgov.uk

A national website which includes information on; caring for someone, disabled people, benefits, health & wellbeing.

For advice on adult social care please contact

**Luton Borough Council's
Referral Management Team**

on **01582 54 76 59** or

write to them at this address:

**Referral management team,
Town Hall, Luton LU1 2BQ**

A wide range of information leaflets is available from the
Customer Service Centre at Luton Town Hall or visit
www.luton.gov.uk/leafletsonline

**If you need this in large print, on
tape or in**

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