

Introduction to the module: Managing your role as a Carer with other aspects of your life

Within this module you'll be looking at getting the balance between being a carer and being you. In addition, we'll be exploring and developing your own personal resilience.

Getting Started:

The first step to achieving more balance in your life, you need to take a step back and make an honest appraisal of what your life is like at this moment in time.

What the Care Act 2014 says:

The Act represents a fairer system of arranging and paying for care, putting the needs and wellbeing of people at the heart of every decision. Most of the legislation came into force April 2015, the additional cap on care costs will commence April 2016.

Assessments: Carers have the same legal rights to an assessment of their needs as the person they care for.

More carers are entitled to an assessment. It doesn't matter the amount of care they provide or their financial resources – the important factor is the impact that caring may have on daily life and wellbeing.

Carers who have refused an assessment in the past because they did not meet the eligibility criteria can now request another assessment.

An assessment will consider physical and emotional aspects of caring responsibilities, along with wider implications. Is a carer willing or able to continue caring? What about other family responsibilities? Does caring affect employment and study? Are there opportunities to enjoy hobbies, holidays or social events?

Eligibility: National guidelines have been introduced on care and eligibility criteria which all Local Authority (Councils), must use to decide whether someone is entitled to support. This makes for a fairer system, ending the 'postcode lottery' of differing provisions across England.

Information, advice and advocacy: Everyone is entitled to advice and information on care and support services, even if they are self-funding or they have not been assessed as needing specific help.

Independent advocacy services should be provided when someone has difficulties in discussing and communicating their wishes regarding their care needs.

Safeguarding: Adult safeguarding is the process of protecting adults with care and support needs from abuse or neglect.

The Care Act now sets out a clear legal duty for Local Authorities to lead on safeguarding issues in their area. They must set up a Safeguarding Adults Board (SAB) to work the other agencies such as the NHS and the police to develop a joint safeguarding approach.

Wellbeing: Promoting wellbeing is a key part of the act with emphasis on physical, mental and emotional issues. A person centred approach aims to prevent, reduce or delay the need for care interventions.

Paying for care: Following assessment, the Local Authority may decide a carer needs support but is not entitled to financial help (they pay for their own services – they are ‘self-funding’).

People who are self-funding have a right to ask Councils to put services in place for them. These services should be charged at the same rates as the Council pays for someone whose care is being funded.

When someone receives social care support, they have the right to ask for a personal budget. This is a summary of the estimated costs of their support services. It is particularly useful when someone is paying for their own care and will become essential when care accounts are introduced in April 2016.

From April 2015, ‘deferred payment agreements’ (DFA), are available from all Councils in England. This arrangement enables people to use the value of their own home to pay for care home costs. The Council will pay bills, recouping the cost when someone decides to sell their home or after their death. This means people will not have to sell their house during their lifetime in order to pay for care.