

Accessing adult social care services

27 June 2025

Aberdeen City Health & Social Care Partnership (ACHSCP) is responsible for community-based adult social care services in the city. Almost all of these are provided by the third and independent sectors. We also have a number of in-house services providing support to adults with learning disabilities.

After a referral to social work, an allocated worker will carry out an assessment of a person's needs. This includes considering each case in accordance with our eligibility criteria and determining the level of support which may be needed. It may also include signposting to other sources of advice and support.

Anyone who is eligible for a service will work with their allocated worker to identify their personal outcomes and receive advice and support to help them choose the best support option for them.

1. Social Work Assessment

You or someone acting on your behalf can refer for an assessment. Your referral will be screened on submission and if it is not emergency or urgent you will require to wait to be allocated. Referral numbers are high and this is likely to be around six weeks.

During the assessment we look, with you, at your needs and what services may be needed to meet those needs.

For some services there may be a charge, but this normally depends on your income (see below).

The time needed for an assessment depends on your needs and circumstances. If your needs are complex, and we have to gather information from a number of people as well as from you, it may take longer to complete your assessment.

You can invite someone like a friend or a relative with you for an in-person assessment and they can support you. This information relates to those who live in a community setting. We refer to this as 'non-residential' support. Those who require a residential care service, for example, a Care Home will follow the same process of assessment and application of eligibility criteria however there is a different charging policy for residential care services.

Older adults and physical and sensory disabilities (Care Management):

Referrals for care and support can be made via this form <https://www.aberdeencity.gov.uk/media/18679> or by contacting Care Management on 01224 070077, Mon-Fri, 9am-5pm. The completed form can be sent to CareMgtAdmin@aberdeencity.gov.uk.

Care management accepts referrals from you, from family members and from health professionals.

People with needs that do not reach the eligibility criteria thresholds will receive information and advice, and/or direction to alternative provision.

Adult learning disabilities:

Adult Learning Disabilities Service
Len Ironside Centre, Mastrick Drive
Aberdeen, AB16 6UE
Tel. 01224 070073
Email: LDCommunityTeamsAdmin@aberdeencity.gov.uk

Mental health and substance misuse:

Senior Social Worker
Adult Mental Health
Aberdeen City Health and Social Care Partnership
1st Floor, Clerkseat Building
Royal Cornhill Hospital
Cornhill Road
Aberdeen
AB25 2ZH
01224 557260/557734 (Adult Mental Health)
01224 557306 (Old Age Psychiatry/Resettlement Co-ordinator)
Fax: 01224 557730
cornhill@aberdeencity.gov.uk

2. Eligibility criteria

Social Work has a set amount of money for community care services. We use guidelines known as 'eligibility criteria' to decide who should receive funded social care support.

The criteria ensure:

- Independence is promoted
- everyone who asks for a service is dealt with fairly, according to their needs
- people in most need or at most risk are prioritised
- everyone understands how decisions are made about care.

Funding for services is finite and limited. Demand is rising and there is a widening gap between that demand and the financial resources available to meet it.

Only people assessed at Emergency/Urgent or High levels will be eligible for a service. This allows us to provide vital care packages to those in greatest need. People assessed as Medium or Low need do not meet our eligibility criteria and so will not receive a service. We will, though, provide information and advice on other sources of support where possible.

The eligibility criteria apply to everyone who currently receives a service and to people requesting an adult care service.

When people who currently receive a service are reviewed, the criteria are applied in the same way as to new referrals. This means that some services currently provided may change or be stopped if those services are no longer meeting an eligible need.

What do Social Work consider as Emergency/Urgent need?

If you are assessed in this category, you need an immediate or rapid service response within 48 hours. This could be because:

- you are at risk of abuse
- you have a significant disability or health problem which is, or will be, a serious threat to your safety or independence
- you are terminally ill and need essential non-medical services to support you at home
- you live alone and are housebound, and essential daily personal care needs are not being met
- your essential daily care and support is being met by a carer whose health and wellbeing is seriously at risk
- your care situation cannot continue because you have significant difficulties in your present living conditions, placing you at serious risk
- your vital family and other social relationships are at serious risk of breaking down, placing you at immediate risk because of a significant disability or health problem.

What do social work consider as High need?

If you are assessed in this category, you need a priority service response. This could be because:

- you have a disability or health problem which is, or will be, a significant threat to your health, safety or independence
- you live alone and are housebound, and essential daily personal care needs are not being met
- your essential daily care and support is being met by a carer whose health and wellbeing is seriously at risk
- your care situation cannot continue because you have significant difficulties in your present living conditions, placing you at serious risk
- your vital family and other social relationships are at serious risk of breaking down, placing you at immediate risk, because of a significant disability or health problem
- you are in hospital and cannot be discharged safely because of the circumstances described above.

It is recognised that those who are assessed as low or moderate need still have needs which could benefit from support however the risk of not providing support is not considered to be at a level where there is a requirement on social work to provide ongoing paid support. In this circumstance the person will be signposted to other options within the community or directed to appropriate technology and equipment.

Changes in your needs

Needs will change over time and all care packages are routinely reviewed. All social work and social care staff take an enabling approach to the provision of support and promote a 'step up' and 'step down' approach.

This may mean that support you have been provided with is reduced or stopped if your situation improves, for example, recovery from a period of illness or increased skills to live independently, including the use of technology enabled care (TEC) to support independence.

This may also mean that your support needs to increase in response to changes in your health or living situation, for example, progression of a serious illness or an unpaid carer being unable to continue to support you.

This flexibility is essential in order to ensure that there continues to be support and financial resources available for those with high and emergency/ urgent needs.

3. Contributing to your Care

ACHSCP aims to help people live at home independently, safely, and for as long as possible.

To help us continue to provide services to people with a range of needs, we ask them, if they can afford it, to contribute towards the cost of certain aspects of their support.

Decisions on charging are based on the local picture of demand, cost of providing support and the need to maintain sustainable services whilst responding to increases in multiple and complex needs.

We continually review our service delivery and change the way we do things to try to reduce costs, increase efficiency and achieve best value to avoid increasing the charges to those who use our services. Some level of charging is, however, inevitable.

Charges are carefully considered to make sure they are reasonable for people to pay, take account of the service provided and reflect what others in similar circumstances in different parts of Scotland pay. Any charge will not exceed the actual cost of providing the service.

Services which are always non-chargeable are:

- care at home which is considered 'free personal care' for all adults, for example, support with personal washing and dressing
- support provided to an unpaid carer where they are eligible in their own right following completion of an adult carer support plan (ACSP).

Services subject to charging are:

- supported living
- housing support
- day care
- social/educational/recreational support
- community alarm telecare
- meals at day care, very sheltered housing and in the community.

Exemptions apply in specific circumstances, for example:

- end-of life care: people with a progressive disease where death can be reasonably expected within six months (the exemption is not limited to the six months)
- people with a mental illness who are subject to a Compulsory Treatment Order under the Mental Health (Care and Treatment) (Scotland) Act 2003
- people receiving criminal justice social work services, including those who are subject to a Compulsion Order under the Criminal Procedure (Scotland) Act 2003.

What are the increased charges?

Increased charges are agreed in line with the appropriate governance processes for ACHSCP and Aberdeen City Council. The charges, as follows, were agreed by Elected Members at Full Council on 5 March 2025.

Service	Unit	24-25 Charge	25-26 Charge	Flat charge or financially assessed?
Day Care	Per day	9.25	20.00	Flat charge
Day Care	Per ½ Day	4.65	10.00	Flat charge
Day Care (meals)	Per meal	4.35	4.80	Flat charge
Very sheltered housing (meal)	Per meal	4.35	4.80	Flat charge
Community Alarm	Per week	3.85	6.00	Flat charge
Sheltered Housing Support	Per week	14.80	16.30	Financially assessed
Very Sheltered Housing Support (included in the condition of tenancy)	Per week	40.25	44.30	Flat charge
Supported Accommodation /Housing Support	Per hour	15.05	16.55	Financially assessed

What support is available?

Some services have flat-rate charges, however, for others, a person's contribution is calculated according to their means and to determine this Aberdeen City Council will carry out a financial assessment. If a person is concerned that they will be unable to afford the charge, a financial assessment can be carried out which may reduce the charge. If they have a previous assessment, but feel their circumstances have changed since, they can be reassessed.

The form can be downloaded from the Aberdeen City Council website and should be returned via email or post:

- **Website:** <https://www.aberdeencity.gov.uk/services/housing/find-home/apply-sheltered-housing/sheltered-housing-information>
- **Email:** NonResFinAssessments@aberdeencity.gov.uk
- **Post:** Revenues and Benefits, Customer Experience, Customer Marischal College, Business Hub 17, Broad Street, Aberdeen, AB10 1AB
- **Contact Details:** 03000 200 292

Further support from the Financial Inclusion Team can help to ensure that you are receiving all the benefits you may be entitled to:

<https://www.aberdeencity.gov.uk/services/benefits-and-advice/benefits-and-money-advice>