

## **FAQ's – PCA Consultation:**

### **1. What is the Parent Carer Assessment (PCA)?**

- *If you are a parent carer of a child with a disability and have parental responsibility, you have the right to request a parent carer needs assessment ([Children and Families Act 2014](#)). The assessment will consider:*
  - *Your individual needs as a parent carer*
  - *Things that could make looking after your child easier for you*
  - *Your well-being as a parent carer*
- *We must assess parent carers if:*
  - *It appears to us that the parent carer may have need for support, or*
  - *We receive a request from the parent carer to assess their need for support*
- *In the proposed model of Parent Carer Support we would not undertake a parent carer needs assessment if:*
  - *Your child has an allocated social worker. This is because your needs as a carer and any identified support would be considered within the holistic social care assessment for your child.*

### **2. What does the application involve?**

- *The focus of the new Parent Carer Support Pathway is to move away from the sense of having to meet a threshold and move towards a guided 'Wellbeing conversation'. Through this conversation the trained practitioner will be able to identify with you the appropriate signposting and /or support.*
- *The 'Wellbeing Conversation' will consider your needs as a parent carer, with an emphasis on providing the right support at the right time including drawing on support available from other departments or other local agencies.*

### *Examples of support*

- A. *You may feel that the needs of your child with a disability impacts on your other children, and that you are unable to offer them the time and attention you would like. The 'Wellbeing Conversation' may identify a referral to [young carers](#), where they can meet with other young people who have a sibling with a disability*
- B. *If you have health or mental health needs, a referral could be made to adult services for support in your own right*

### **3. How do I get an assessment?**

- *In the proposed new process, you can complete an online form or call the Customer Service Centre who can put you through to the team. Following either route will result in a 'Wellbeing Conversation' with a trained practitioner.*

### **4. Is this linked to or has anything to do with Carer's Allowance?**

- *No. This is a separate process for supporting parent carers provided by Warwickshire County Council*

### **5. Will a financial award affect my benefits/tax/other allowances?**

- *If your benefit is means tested, you would need to declare this money*

### **6. Who is eligible for an assessment?**

- *If you are a parent carer of a child with a disability and have parental responsibility you can ask for a 'Wellbeing Conversation'.*

**7. Does my child need to have an EHC, social care package or SEND statement for me to be assessed?**

- *No. You do not need to have an EHC, social care package or a SEND statement. You can request a 'Wellbeing Conversation' at any time. If your child has an allocated social worker, the Parent Carer Support needs will be considered as part of the social care assessment.*

**8. How long will an assessment take?**

- *Approximately up to one hour. It may take longer but this would depend on the levels of support identified during the conversation.*

**9. What type of information is required?**

- *Through the 'Wellbeing Conversation', we will be able to identify the right support for your needs*

**10. What are the outcomes of the PCA?**

- *Outcomes may involve signposting to support groups or specialist information services, referrals (with the your permission) to other departments or services, enabling the provision of an item or activity that will help to support you or it may be that a social care assessment is required (each outcome is not exclusive, and it may be that all of the identified outcomes are provided depending on your needs)*

**11. I do not wish to have an assessment; can I still get support?**

- *Assessment is required for some outcomes i.e. EHC assessment to determine if EHCP is required. The purpose of the remodelling for Parent Carer Support is to move away from the sense of assessment i.e. do I meet a criteria and move towards a 'Wellbeing Conversation' that identifies your needs and provides the Right Service at the Right Time.*

**12. Will a social worker come to my home to do the assessment?**

- *The 'Wellbeing Conversation' can be conducted over the phone but if a home visit is required, this can be arranged.*

**13. Can I have someone to support me during the assessment?**

- *Absolutely yes. You can have anyone that you would like to support you through the Parent Carer Support pathway*

**14. Do I need to have a social worker in order to apply?**

- *No. You do not need to have an allocated Social Worker. If your child has an allocated social worker, the Parent Carer needs will be assessed as part of their holistic assessment (Section 17 Children and Families Act 2014)*

**15. If I receive a financial award, is this means tested?**

- *If you are in receipt of state benefits that are means tested, you would need to declare any financial payments. Please note that we are not intending to stop giving financial awards, but we do intend to stop giving awards that are open ended / ongoing. Any financial award will be agreed to meet a specific outcome identified in the 'Wellbeing Conversation' and will be for a time limited period. If the need continues beyond the agreed period, you can request a new 'Wellbeing Conversation'.*

**16. Can I and my spouse both have an assessment separately?**

- *Assessments will be conducted holistically to address both carers needs. Ideally this would be conducted with both of you at the same time, but if that isn't possible, we may be able to arrange to meet or speak with you separately.*

**17. Can I apply for each child in my family?**

- *The 'Wellbeing Conversation' will include all children within a family provided they have a disability and that you have parental responsibility for them.*

**18. Can I apply for this and the adult carers assessment?**

- *Both Pathways – Child (under 18) and Adult (over 18) - will consider the needs of all family members whom you have caring responsibilities for and therefore it should only be one assessment per family.*

**19. How often can you have a carers assessment?**

- *There is no set time period or restriction on how many (whilst the child is under 18yrs of age). The emphasis of the new Pathway is on flexibility and meeting need with the Right Service at the Right time.*

For example:

*Outcome of @Wellbeing Conversation' in June the Parent Carer is given a financial award for a gym membership.*

*In December the Parent Carers health needs change and a new 'Wellbeing Conversation' is undertaken. The outcome is a referral to a local support group in addition to the gym membership which was still running.*

*In June the following year the gym membership ends. A new 'Wellbeing Conversation' is undertaken with an outcome that a new financial award is given for a renewal of the gym membership.*

**20. Can you have a carers assessment for children and adults if you have both in the family?**

- *Both Pathways – Child (under 18) and Adult (over 18) - will consider the needs of all family members whom you have caring responsibilities for and therefore it should only be one assessment per family.*

**21. How do they work out how much funding you will receive?**

- *The new Pathway is not based on a point scoring basis. The 'Wellbeing Conversation' will identify the right support. The trained practitioner will submit their recommendation to the Agency decision maker who will then agree or disagree with the recommendation. The focus is on the value of the support provided, so in some situations, the outcome will not be a financial award. However, on other occasions, financial support may be the most appropriate outcome to support you.*

**22. How do we agree on outcomes on how to spend the funding?**

- *The 'Wellbeing Conversation' will identify the right support to meet the agreed outcomes. In terms of financial awards, we intend to move this away from 'ongoing' and have a targeted approach.*

**23. How can we receive the carers assessment? is it available online?**

- *Parent carers will be able to complete an on-line form or by making a call to the Customer Service Centre.*

**24. Does it have to be completed by a social worker?**

- *If your child is allocated a social worker, they will assess your parent carer needs as part of the social work assessment. Otherwise, the 'Wellbeing Conversation' will be undertaken by a trained practitioner.*

**25. Can the carers assessment be simplified for parents to understand?**

- *We welcome parent carer views during the consultation period on how we can ensure this happens. We have listened to the views of over 100 parents to date and have tried to capture this in the proposed pathway for Parent Carer support. The proposed pathway takes the steps down from 14 (in the current pathway) to 4 or 5 depending on which outcome is right for you.*

**26. Can the carers assessment be included in your young person's EHCP?**

- *There is no Section within the EHCP that captures the needs of Parent Carers as the EHCP is about the child / young person.*

**27. What can I use the money for?**

- *This will be determined through the 'Wellbeing Conversation'. The key is ensuring that any financial award meets a clear outcome.*

**28. What does this mean for me if I currently receive a financial award following a Parent Carer Assessment?**

- *If the proposal is implemented anyone currently receiving a financial award following a Parent Carer assessment will continue to receive it until the next review date. It will then be reviewed using the proposed Well Being Conversation tool and outcomes.*