

Summary of findings from Carers Assessment Questionnaire

Warwickshire Parent Carer Forum circulated a form to ascertain views and experiences of the SEND Social Care Carer's Assessment process. Responses were anonymous.

134 people responded to the questionnaire

Summary of responses

Have you heard of a Carer's Assessment?

Yes	76	56.7%
No	51	38.1%
Not sure	6	4.5%
Other	1	0.7%

Comments

- Only told by a friend

Have you ever had a Carer's Assessment?

Yes	45	33.6%
No	87	64.9%
Not sure	1	0.7%
Other	1	0.7%

Comments

- Waited years to have an assessment

Has your child/young person had a social care assessment by a family support worker or social worker?

Yes	63	47.0%
No	62	46.3%
Not sure	2	1.5%
Other	7	5.2%

Comments

- Not applicable. My carers' assessment was for an adult in another county.
- This is still in progress
- I think so
- Didn't receive a copy of the RAS
- Not sure. We do have a Family Support Worker.
- Being redone

- I have tried unsuccessfully to get an assessment as I would like my son to receive direct payments. I have tried repeatedly to contact someone regarding this but nobody seems to know how I go about it as we do not have a social worker. When I asked my son's (special) school to refer us to social care, he said he wouldn't do the referral because we would get turned down because we seem to be 'coping', despite me explaining that we are not! I am very frustrated - any help would be appreciated.

Would you like a carer's assessment?

Yes	45	33.6%
No	9	6.7%
I've already had an assessment	47	35.1%
Maybe	33	24.6%
Other	0	0.0%

Are you aware of the assessment criteria?

Yes	17	12.7%
No	102	76.1%
I've already had an assessment	15	11.2%
Other	0	0.0%

If you have not had a carer's assessment, or have been refused an assessment, please give further details

32 Comments were received:

Examples of Comments

- First social care assessment we had 3 years ago the social worker left the form and was supposed to come back to help fill it in and I never heard any more about it
- Did not meet criteria
- I asked for one but it's never happened!
- I've never been told about it, another parent told me.
- I've never heard of this so have no idea what this is
- I think we had one of these from a social worker from SEND. Basically we were functioning too well despite being in crisis to attract support. We didn't tick enough boxes like having DLA or other benefits and we have no social problems etc so we were below the threshold. We were initially refused an assessment but we and the school said we really needed one, it was also a really long form and it wasn't made clear we didn't need to fill it in ahead of the meeting if we didn't want to and then had to go through it all again. It is uncomfortable to go through it all then to have no support at the end of it.
- I was given an assessment & awarded direct payment but never given the money! Told later it was a mistake
- I have asked my GP, child's doctor and school but nobody seems to be able to point me in the direction of how to apply for one.

- My / our assessment was very upsetting and adversely affected my mental health. I would welcome an updated assessment if I could be certain I would be treated fairly and with respect, unfortunately experience had taught me that would be unlikely
- I have been trying to get a carers assessment but had no joy
- only had one in children's services think I should have had more
- Not had an assessment as I do not wish to affect the benefits that my brother currently receives. I am told that by receiving an assessment/benefit for my caring role, it is likely that his benefits will be reduced. I feel he benefits from access to the benefit than I would.
- We were just refused in July, 2019

Were the assessment criteria explained to you?

Yes	12	9.0%
No	42	31.3%
Not sure	12	9.0%
Blank	64	47.8%
Other	4	3.0%

Comments

- It was all very vague
- Not had one
- Probably but when you need the support you are usually least able to process that sort of information
- Sort of. Was given paperwork

Did you find the assessment process transparent and accessible?

Yes	12	9.0%
No	55	41.0%
Blank	67	50.0%
Other	0	0.0%

Have you received support of funding after the assessment?

Yes	14	10.4%
No	37	27.6%
Blank	68	50.7%
Other	15	11.2%

Comments

- A very small amount
- Appealing assessment
- Assessment was 3 years ago, but I need another
- Yes, but only for a short period and even though circumstances had not changed I was told another (traumatic) assessment would be necessary for support to continue
- Never had don't know what it is
- On round 3 at present - received funding after the first on 3 years ago

- Awaiting outcome
- Awarded 12 weeks ago still no payment
- Yes. One off grant some years ago.
- Going through the long drawn out appeal process
- Only done 2 weeks ago
- Still awaiting after 4 years
- I did twice then after completed another assessment told the support was stopped

Was the amount awarded following the assessment satisfactory, do you feel?

Yes	10	7.5%
No	26	19.4%
Blank	82	61.2%
Other	16	11.9%

Comments

- Don't know
- Not had offer
- Not had one
- We were refused
- Not assessed
- Not had one
- Not sure
- Still waiting
- Don't know as no one said what it should or shouldnt be
- Still haven't heard had assesment over 6 months ago have rang and been told still going through
- Unclear as to what, if anything, was happening next. Heard nothing since
- Only done 2 weeks ago
- N/A didn't get anything. Was told it was to give further evidence in my son's assessment, and that if I wanted anything specific I would have to request it
- It paid for a specific one off thing
- Not sure how long it is meant to last.
- Don't know how to apply

Have you ever had a Carers Assessment No or Other.

34 Comments were received

Examples of comments

- Never asked
- Not sure what it is
- Don't know how to apply
- We were refused
- Never had one
- Not assessed

- The amount paid is only basic and does not cover the needs of the child
- The carers assessment I received I used to help give my other child a break aswell, as he too is a Carer.
- I have 30 mins a week I don't feel it's adequate for the impact it has on me.
- It was a token amount which in no way supported my needs, especially as I was forced to the point of crisis by the assessment process
- We were shown to meet criteria based on 2 of our children from the assessment but the social worker refused to take it further.
- It would have been good if it had been more than once
- It was significantly lower than expected
- Couldn't get to the point where an assessment was offered. Social care workers seem to have little understanding or knowledge
- Not a clear process, not easy to understand, not explained properly, takes a long time to organise, peer group meetings are not making decisions easy as social workers have to check with further managers

Have you undergone a fresh assessment annually?

Yes	5	3.7%
No	61	45.5%
Not sure / maybe	5	3.7%
Blank	63	47.0%
Other	0	0.0%

Were you told what you were allowed to spend the payment on?

Yes	21	15.7%
No	33	24.6%
Blank	80	59.7%
Other	0	0.0%

If you were granted a carer's payment, please indicate the amount offered below

£0	£300	£1100 per 4 weeks	£14 for an hour a week
£61	£324	£300 per annum	£150 for 6x counselling sessions
£160	£340	£7 a week!	Never got to this stage!
£180	£377	£292 monthly	DLA we received £315 so I would expect the same for PIP
£180	£400 ish	£750 for the year	Indicative figure so not been confirmed
£200	£600	Can't remember	Don't know not shared
£200	£700	Can't remember	Not applicable
£300	£750	No I wasn't	N/A

Did you have to evidence what you had spent your payment on?

Yes	17	12.7%
No	28	20.9%
Blank	89	66.4%
Other	0	0.0%

Were you able to spend the payment on what you had been told to spend it on?

Yes	16	11.9%
No	20	14.9%
Blank	86	64.2%
Other	12	9.0%

Comments

- Had no payments
- Haven't spent it yet
- I've been told nothing
- Haven't received funding
- Not specified
- Was not told

Is there anything else you'd like to share?

31 Comments were received

Examples of comments:

- How do u apply
- Very poor process
- Have asked for one several times but no joy!
- People need a definite of what can and can't be used
- I need more information and is it back dated??
- Have to ask several times for an assessment and then wait for 4- 6 months each time to receive carers payments allocated.
- I don't really know what a carers assessment is or the payment. I am a carer for my son and would like to find out more.
- I do not feel that this assessment is explained clearly. I was told it was a 1 off payment for my well being and was not told that it can be reviewed 6 monthly/yearly. Having spoken to others it is showing that the communication is poor and not a transparent communication.
- I use towards 2 hours cleaner every week....this makes my life easier
- I would like a carers assessment but I'm finding applying confusing
- To be told about it by key worker and not to have to find out through third party

- I am having to pay upfront and reclaim the funds so no actual money received to date.
- Not sure why this is offered in addition to the DLA
- It's not openly shared, I feel let down that regular assessments are not carried out automatically and even when they are completed they are left in a pile somewhere and ignored.
- How awful, long winded and difficult the whole process is! My son would never be able to access funding by himself with the many obstacles placed. It saddens and angers me to think how many people need and deserve this service but don't have the support to apply. **SOMETHING NEEDS TO CHANGE!**
- The assessment system is flawed, the process takes too long, the peer groups are used by social workers but it takes far too long for decisions to be made. It's not an easy process, it's difficult to understand the assessment and how the funding is agreed at the end .
- The system is not transparent and that when as a single parent I felt I needed help in a crisis that the 'help' took a long time coming- it was months until I had any feedback and then it was more damaging than anything else- even when I complained about the process the complaint was never followed up.
- An acknowledgement letter would of been nice, also a decision letter