Charging for Community Care Services

April 2019

This factsheet is for people who have care services at home or in the community.

This guide provides information about charges for services that people receive in their own home and in the community. This includes services like day care, home care, project work and short term care stays in a residential or nursing home which are less than eight weeks.

Flintshire County Council invites you to have a full financial assessment of your ability to pay towards the services you are to receive.

The guide explains:

1. What services are charged for
2. How the amount a person has to pay is worked out
3. Details for current charges for April 2019 to March 2020
4. Queries and challenging the assessment outcome
5. How charges can be paid
6. How a person can make sure they are claiming all their benefits to help pay any charges
7. What happens to the financial and personal information given to Social Services
8. Useful contacts
9. If things go wrong
1. What services are charged for?

- Home care
- Day care services
- Project or support work
- Night time care
- Community living schemes
- Direct Payments and Personalised Budgets
- Short term care of stays less than eight weeks

You may also be asked to pay for Telecare services but this service is not currently covered by our Charging Policy.

Meals provided in the day centres are daily living expenses and are not affected by the financial assessment but are charged at a flat rate.

We do not charge:

- A person under the age of 18 years,
- An adult subject to Section 117 of the Mental Health Act 1983.
- Adults who are diagnosed as suffering from Creuzfeldt Jacob disease (CJD)
- Adults who have received compensation payments for effects of the drug Thalidomide.

2. How the amount you have to pay is worked out

If you have community care services arranged by Social Services the charge for these services will be based on your weekly income, the amount of savings and capital you have and the number of hours of care you receive each week.

To make sure that the charges we make for community care are fair, Flintshire’s Charging Policy is based on guidance and regulations from the Welsh Government which sets a maximum weekly charge which is currently £90.

The Charging Policy is used to decide whether you will pay:

- The full charge for your care. This is worked out according to how much care you are receiving, but this will not be more than £90 per week.

- Part of the cost of your care. The exact amount will depend on how much money you have each week after meeting certain expenses and how much care you receive, but this will not be more than £90 per week.

- Nothing towards the cost of your care.
A Welfare Benefits Officer from Flintshire County Council will arrange to visit you to complete a financial assistance claim form to help the Financial Assessment Officer work out how much you can afford to pay towards your services. For example we will ask you for bank statements and benefit letters. We will need this information as soon as possible otherwise you may have to pay the full charge (£90 per week) for the services you receive. You can request to have a family member, friend or someone you trust to be present to support you at this visit.

**What if I don’t want to or fail to give you information on my finances?**

If you choose not to tell us your financial circumstances or don’t provide the information we need, you will be asked to pay the full cost of your care from the day your care starts. This will be up to a maximum of £90 per week.

If you do not have the correct information at this visit the Welfare Benefits Officer will leave written details of what is requested. You have a maximum of 15 working days to provide this further information. Please let us know if you are experiencing difficulties providing this information or we may assume that you wish to pay the maximum £90 per week.

**Weekly income**

Your total weekly income includes:
- all social security benefits and pensions
- all occupational pensions
- payments you receive from other sources such as payments from other people
- We are not interested in money which you or your partner earns as wages.

**Capital**

Capital includes savings, investments, property and land (other than the person's home). We do not count the value of the home you live in. The financial assessment team calculate your capital using government guidelines. You should contact the team to discuss your capital if it is not held in a bank, building society, or post office account, as certain sorts of assets are treated as income and not as capital.

**Below £24,000** if a person's capital is below this then it is ignored.

**Over £24,000** a person with capital over this amount will be charged for services up to a maximum of £90 per week.
If at any time you are receiving services and your capital/savings fall below £24,000 please contact your Financial Assessment Officer. They can then arrange for a financial assistance claim form to be completed. Contact details are in Section 4 of this leaflet.

The rules about capital and income for couples.

If you are part of a couple, we will take into consideration capital that belongs to both of you and then consider 50% of that amount for each person in receipt of services.

We will take into consideration 100% of the income in your name unless you receive a benefit for joint use, such as Income Support or Pension Credit where we will take into consideration 50% when completing the financial assessment.

Income and disregards.

We have disregards to:

- make sure that a service user’s net income is not reduced after charging below basic levels of Income Support or guaranteed pension credit plus 35% of this rate, and
- make sure that all service users who have a financial assessment have a further 10% income disregard as a contribution towards their disability related expenditure.
- make sure that nobody is charged more than £90 per week.

Income which will be disregarded from your assessment

Once we have added up your total weekly income, certain amounts are then disregarded. These are:

- yours or your partner’s earnings and associated working tax credit
- any disability living allowance (DLA) or Personal Independence Payment (PIP) mobility component
- housing benefit (rent rebate) or council tax benefit
- any mortgage, rent or council tax less any benefits paid
- £10 of any war pension or war widows pension
- £5.75 of any savings credit element of your pension credit and
- War Disablement Pension is fully disregarded.
Once we have disregarded any of these that apply from your total weekly income, the amount left is used to work out how much you should pay for your services.

3. Charges for April 2019 to March 2020

Domiciliary Care: £17.35 an hour
Project/Support work: £17.35 an hour
Day Centre/Care: £24.75 a day plus flat rate charge of £5 per day for a meal.

There is a maximum £90 weekly charge for Community Care Services, including Short Term Care stays of less than eight weeks. This does not include flat rate charges for such things as meals at day care as they take the place of ordinary living costs.

4. Queries and challenging the assessment outcome

Should you have any questions or are unhappy with the outcome of the financial assessment, please contact the Financial Assessment Officer in the first instance, whose contact details will be on the letter notifying you of the assessment outcome.

or You can ask for the Team Leader to review your financial assessment.

or If you feel you are unable to afford the assessed charge, the financial assessment officer will explain how to apply for a waiver of charges.

You can also access a copy of our current Charging Policy

Financial Assessment & Charging Team
Social Services
Tŷ Dewi Sant,
St David’s Park,
Ewloe,
Flintshire, CH5 3XT
☎ 01352 701318

5. How charges can be paid

Bills listing services that have been provided, their costs and the total amount payable will be sent monthly. These will always be a month in arrears – for example, the invoice for services you received in September will be sent to you in October.
Payments can be made:

- in cash
- over the telephone (using a debit or credit card)
- by standing order
- Flintshire County Council’s website: www.flintshire.gov.uk
- At Flintshire Connects Offices

Flintshire County Council expects invoices to be paid in full following a financial assessment or you opting to pay up to a maximum of £80 per week. If you have difficulty paying you should contact the Financial Assessment Officer or speak to your Care Coordinator or Social Worker.

Any non-payment of an invoice will be reviewed and reminders will be sent out. Continued failure to pay invoices will result in action being taken by the Council to recover the debt.

6. Claiming benefits to help pay for charges

We understand that having to pay for services is likely to be of great concern to service users, even though the charges have been kept as low as possible.

The calculation of what you will have to pay towards the cost of the services you receive takes account of your ability to pay.

There is a commitment from the Welsh Government and Flintshire County Council that anybody who needs services should be helped to claim all social security benefits and pensions they are entitled to. This includes benefits that you may have missed out on in the past.

A Welfare Benefits Officer can help with this process and deal with all matters relating to benefits. There is no charge for this service and it is available to everyone who has a chargeable service, whether they have to pay for their services or not.

In most cases people will be better off after claiming extra benefits even if some of that increased income goes towards paying for care.
7. What happens to the financial and personal information given?

Social Services will deal with all information confidentially and your details will be held safely and securely in accordance with data protection legislation.

You have a right to see personal records we hold about you. An administrative fee may be charged. Please ask us for more information.

8. Useful contacts

A wide range of voluntary organisations provide independent advice and assistance. Contacting them will help to give you information on your rights.

**Flintshire Citizens Advice Bureau**
☎ 08444 772020  🌐 www.flintshirecab.org.uk

**Flintshire Care and Repair**
☎ 01352 758700  🌐 www.flintshirecr.co.uk
Flintshire Care and Repair offer advice on housing repairs, adaptations and benefits for disabled and elderly people.

**Age Connects North East Wales**
☎ 08450 549969  🌐 www.acnew.org.uk

**Mencap Cymru Helpline**
☎ 0808 808 1111  🌐 www.mencap.org.uk/wales

**MIND**
☎ 01352 757637  🌐 www.flintshirerind.org.uk

**North East Wales Carers Information Service (NEWCIS)**
☎ 01352 752525  🌐 www.carers.org/local/wales/flintshire

**Flintshire Disability Forum**
☎ 01352 755546

**Social Services**
First Contact, Preswylfa, Hendy Road, Mold, Flintshire, CH7 1PZ
☎ 01352 803444  SSDUTY@flintshire.gov.uk  🌐 www.flintshire.gov.uk/careinfo
9. Compliments, comments or complaints

We are aware that despite our best efforts there may be occasions when a service user has a complaint. Any complaint about services can be made to your Social Worker, Home Care Manager or their Team Manager or you can contact:

Customer Feedback Team
Social Services
Tŷ Dewi Sant,
St David’s Park,
Ewloe,
Flintshire, CH5 3XT
☎️ 01352 702623

A leaflet “Your right to compliment and complain” which explains how your comments can be made and how they will be dealt with is available from the same address or online at: Your right to compliment and complain

A wide range of information on the care and support system in Wales is online at: www.dewis.wales

This factsheet is available in alternate formats including Braille and Large Print on request to 01352 803444.

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