

## ADULT CARE SERVICES



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<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Fair Access to Care Services in Hertfordshire</b></p> <p style="text-align: center;">Adult Social Care Eligibility Criteria Guidance Notes for Staff</p>	
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FAIR ACCESS TO CARE SERVICES: ELIGIBILITY MATRIX (letters / numbers in brackets for reference)

The Table below sets out the areas of risk as defined by the Dept of Health. It shows who would be eligible for help with the threshold set at the substantial risk band

	<i>Eligible for help</i>		<i>Not eligible for help</i>	
	<u>CRITICAL RISK BAND</u>	<u>SUBSTANTIAL RISK BAND</u>	<u>MODERATE RISK BAND</u>	<u>LOW RISK BAND</u>
	<i>There is a <b>critical</b> risk to the person's current or future independence in one or more of the areas below if help is not provided.</i>	<i>There is a <b>substantial</b> risk to the person's current or future independence in one or more of the areas below if help is not provided.</i>	<i>There is a <b>moderate</b> risk to the person's current or future independence in one or more of the areas below if help is not provided.</i>	<i>There is a <b>low</b> risk to the person's current or future independence in one or more of the areas below if help is not provided.</i>
<b>(A)</b> <b>Health and safety</b>	<b>(AC1)</b> Life is or will be threatened.			
	<b>(AC2)</b> Significant health problems have developed or will develop.			
	<b>(AC3)</b> Serious abuse or neglect has occurred, or will occur.	<b>(AS3)</b> Abuse or neglect has occurred, or will occur.		
<b>(B)</b> <b>Autonomy</b>	<b>(BC1)</b> There is, or will be, little or no choice and control over vital aspects of the immediate environment.	<b>(BS1)</b> There is, or will be, only partial choice and control over the immediate environment.		
<b>(C)</b> <b>Management of daily routines.</b>	<b>(CC1)</b> There is, or will be, an inability to carry out vital personal care or domestic routines.	<b>(CS1)</b> There is, or will be, an inability to carry out the majority of personal care or domestic routines.	<b>(CM1)</b> There is, or will be, an inability to carry out several personal care or domestic routines.	<b>(CL1)</b> There is, or will be, an inability to carry out one or two personal care or domestic routines.
<b>(D)</b> <b>Involvement in family and wider community life.</b>	<b>(DC1)</b> Vital involvement in work, education or learning cannot, or will, not be sustained.	<b>(DS1)</b> Involvement in many aspects of work, education or learning cannot, or will not, be sustained.	<b>(DM1)</b> Involvement in several aspects of work, education or learning cannot or, will not, be sustained.	<b>(DL1)</b> Involvement in one or two aspects of work, education or learning cannot, or will not, be sustained.
	<b>(DC2)</b> Vital social support systems and relationships cannot, or will not, be sustained.	<b>(DS2)</b> The majority of social support systems and relationships cannot, or will not, be sustained.	<b>(DM2)</b> Several social support systems and relationships cannot, or will not, be sustained.	<b>(DL2)</b> One or two social support systems and relationships cannot, or will not, be sustained.
	<b>(DC3)</b> Vital family and other social roles and responsibilities cannot, or will not, be undertaken.	<b>(DS3)</b> The majority of family and other social roles and responsibilities cannot, or will not, be undertaken.	<b>(DM3)</b> Several family and other social roles and responsibilities cannot, or will not, be undertaken.	<b>(DL3)</b> One or two family and other social roles and responsibilities cannot, or will not, be undertaken.

# GUIDANCE NOTES ON THE USE OF THE ELIGIBILITY MATRIX

## 1. Introduction

This new single eligibility framework must now be used to determine eligibility for all adults who are referred for social care help. There will no longer be different sets of eligibility criteria for different care groups. The wording contained in this framework, set out in the above matrix, is now a national requirement.

## 2. Principles of Assessment of Eligibility

Assessments of eligibility will be based on an evaluation of the severity of risks to a person's independence, both now and in the future, if help is not provided. It is essential that in using the matrix and these guidance notes staff adopt a *holistic and person-centred approach* to each assessment and not a mechanistic one. This means considering carefully the unique impact on the individual (and on any carer involved) of the particular combination of their difficulties and personal circumstances. The same type of difficulty may result in a very serious impact on one person's well-being and future independence, but a relatively minor impact on another's.

## 3. Eligibility Bands and the Eligibility Threshold

There are four bands of risk in the matrix: critical, substantial, moderate and low. Hertfordshire County Council proposes to set the eligibility threshold at the substantial risk band. We will therefore regard all those needs which are described in the critical and substantial bands as 'eligible' needs, which we will meet. The council is not obliged to meet those needs which fall into the moderate or low risk bands, although we will aim to offer advice and information on other possible sources of help. The 'threshold' decision will be subject to at least an annual review, and may change in order to ensure there continues to be a good match between those needs deemed 'eligible' and the resources available to meet those needs.

## 4 Prioritisation

Where it is necessary to prioritise our response, needs which fall into the critical band will receive a higher priority than those in the substantial band. However, within each risk band, each of the areas of risk described should be regarded as of equal priority. The sole exception to this rule is where there is a critical risk to life, which, as now, will take priority over any other type of risk.

## 5. The Difference between Presenting Needs and Eligible needs

A person may present a variety of different needs some of which may be 'eligible' needs and some not. Even if only one of the needs is an eligible one, they will be entitled in general to social care help. However, we are not obliged to meet the person's 'non-eligible needs', although sometimes this will happen as a by-product of the services provided to meet the eligible need. If this is not the case, the assessor should be prepared to offer information, advice, signposting or referral to other sources of help as appropriate in respect of the presenting but non-eligible needs.

## 6. Carers Needs and Carers' Assessments

Many carers provide a substantial amount of care to someone on a regular basis, without which that person could not manage. In assessing whether a person is eligible for help, it is very important to identify where there is a carer involved. If so, and if there is any doubt about eligibility, it is essential to seek the carer's own views on the situation before making a decision that the referred person is not eligible. One of the areas of risk which determines a person's eligibility for social care is the risk that a 'vital social support system or relationship cannot or will not be sustained' ( DC2) This will be highly relevant if a carer is feeling they will not be able to go on coping without some support, but may not always be obvious from the referral information.

Most support to carers will be provided through the community care services delivered as part of the care package of the person they care for. In planning the care package, the person doing the assessment will work out with the carer and the service user which are the areas where some extra help is most needed.

However it is important to note that a carer who is providing a substantial amount of care on a regular basis is also entitled to assessment of their own needs, and may be entitled to support under the Carers and Disabled Children's Act 2000. This entitlement exists even if the person they care for is refusing services. It is our policy to offer carers such an assessment.

## **AREAS OF RISK**

Below is a brief description of each risk criterion, with references to the matrix in brackets

### **CRITICAL BAND**

#### **(AC1) Life is or will be threatened**

This includes situations where there is a high risk of fire or falls, as well as those where a person poses serious risks to the lives of others.

#### **(AC2) Significant health problems have developed or will develop**

This relates to situations where the absence of social care support is directly leading to deterioration in the person's health serious enough to require immediate or future medical intervention. Examples include risks of malnutrition, hypothermia, pressure sores due to immobility and lack of adequate care, and social isolation which is likely to result in mental health problems.

#### **(AC3) Serious abuse has occurred or will occur**

Evidence exists that physical, sexual, financial, and/or psychological abuse or neglect has occurred or will occur in the future, and that it is likely to have serious impact on the person's health or well-being.

#### **(BC1) There is or will be little or no choice and control over vital aspects of the immediate environment**

Even if a person's care needs are already being met, they may still have little or no choice or control over essential parts of their daily lives, or they may be at risk of losing what little control do have. In this case, they are likely to be eligible for help under this criterion. An example would be a woman with moderate learning disability whose elderly parents, perhaps having failed to get much support in the past, have ended up doing everything for her. They accompany everywhere she goes, and her social life is basically limited to that of her parents. She has little choice and control over her life outside the home. She could qualify for help on this criterion alone even though all her other needs are currently met.

#### **(CC1) There is or will be an inability to carry out vital personal care or domestic routines**

A '*vital personal care routine*' is defined for the purpose of these eligibility criteria as:

- getting in and out of bed safely
- up and down from a chair safely
- washing whole body
- dressing and undressing
- using toilet or otherwise manage continence
- eating and drinking
- manage medication safely

A '*vital domestic routine*' is defined as:

- obtaining suitably prepared food
- maintain a minimum safe level of hygiene in the house, including essential laundry
- summon assistance in an emergency

There may be some people who though physically *able* to undertake all these essential daily routines, nevertheless do not do so, perhaps because of mental health difficulties or other personality factors. The fact that they are technically able should not automatically preclude their eligibility under this criterion. The important question is 'what is the seriousness of the risk to that person's independence if they do not receive help to undertake such tasks?' Of course, the person may still choose not to accept the help that is offered, but this should not affect the eligibility decision.

### **(DC1) Vital involvement in work, education, or learning cannot or will not be sustained**

*Vital involvement in work* means that a person who wishes and is otherwise able to work is either at risk of losing their current job or is being prevented from getting a job because of problems arising from their disability, and the provision of support could help overcome these barriers to work.

*Vital involvement in education or learning* means that a person is unable to access or sustain a college course or other avenue of learning, which is considered essential if they are to fulfil their potential for leading as independent a life as possible in future.

### **(DC2) Vital support systems and relationships cannot or will not be sustained**

A *vital social support system* is defined as a network of interconnecting relationships and/or activities on which the person depends to give life quality and meaning, although no single relationship within meets the definition of a vital support relationship. An example would be a single man in his late eighties who lives alone and is becoming increasingly frail, but still just about manages to cope with the support of various local friends and neighbours, who constitute his only social contacts. These neighbours now feel very anxious about getting trapped into doing more than they can manage, so are planning to cut down on their involvement.

A *vital social support relationship* is defined as a relationship with someone who currently provides physical and/or emotional support to such a significant extent that its loss would mean the person's functioning would seriously deteriorate. The most common example of reason for eligibility under this criterion would be the presence of a 'substantial and regular' carer who is likely to collapse at some point under the weight of their caring responsibilities unless some additional help is provided now.

### **(DC3) Vital family or other social roles and responsibilities cannot or will not be undertaken**

A *vital family role* is defined here as either the role of parent of a dependent child or the role of husband/wife/ partner. It is difficult to offer a precise definition of what constitutes a *vital* responsibility attached to either of these two roles because individual, social and cultural factors will mean what is considered vital for the minimum performance of the role may vary considerably, and these must be taken into account. The eligibility decision will need to be based on a careful assessment of the impact of the person's inability to carry out specific family responsibilities on the independence and functioning of both the individual and of the whole family.

An example of a person who is likely to qualify for help under this criterion is a physically disabled new mother who is able to manage all her own care needs but needs assistance to manage her baby when her husband is at work. Her own mother has offered to look after the baby during weekdays in her own house, but this means that she may lose the chance to establish her own maternal role during the first critical years of her baby's life. What constitutes a vital social role and responsibilities will also vary from person to person and is thus hard to define. The test should be is this role is critical to the person's quality of life, and could its loss be predicted to lead to a deterioration in his or her physical, social or psychological functioning?

## **SUBSTANTIAL BAND**

### **(AS3) Abuse has occurred or will occur**

Evidence exists that physical, sexual, financial, and/or psychological abuse, exploitation or neglect has occurred or will occur in the future and it is likely to have a noticeable impact on the person's health or well-being

### **(BS1) There is or will be only partial choice and control over the immediate environment**

An example of a person who would be considered to have only partial choice or control over their lives and/or their immediate environment would be someone with a progressive illness who although they can still manage most personal care and domestic routines, is on the point of being unable to climb the stairs to use their bathroom and bedroom. They will therefore have no choice but to sleep in the living room, use an outside toilet and wash in the kitchen- a significant loss of choice over the use of their home environment.

### **(CS1) There is or will be an inability to carry out the majority of personal care or domestic routines**

(It is assumed that the person can manage all the routines defined as 'vital', otherwise they will already be eligible for help under the critical band.)

The following areas of personal *care and domestic routines* should be counted in order to determine whether a majority of needs match this criterion.

1. Bathing or showering
2. Shopping
3. Cooking
4. Basic cleaning and laundry
5. Managing essential household finances

If a person cannot carry out or is unable to make adequate arrangements for 3 or more of these basic personal care and domestic routines, their needs match this criterion.

It is important to bear in mind that an inability to manage in even one of these areas *could* be enough to launch a person into the critical risk band. An example would be someone with a mild learning disability, or an older person with a degree of confusion, who is ignoring essential household bills and is therefore under threat of eviction or of disconnection of their fuel supply. This may well mean that the person qualifies for help under at least one of the criteria in the critical risk band. There could be a significant risk to health and even life itself if such a vulnerable person is made homeless, or starts lighting candles and using old paraffin heaters around the house because their electricity has been cut off.

### **(DS1) Involvement in many aspects of work, education, or learning cannot or will not be sustained**

(It is assumed that the identified risk is not to a 'vital' involvement in any of the above as otherwise the person would already qualify for help in the critical band.)

If there remains a risk that the person is likely to lose many of the aspects of work, education or learning activities that they are currently engaged in, and the provision of some help now could reduce this risk, they will fit this criterion. An example might be someone with increasing sensory impairments who may no longer be able to get to the adult learning classes he has always enjoyed, will have to give up his role as a volunteer at a local lunch club because he feels unsafe crossing a busy road nearby, and finds it hard now to read the paper, or listen to the news to keep up his interest in current affairs.

### **(DS2) The majority of social support systems and relationships cannot or will not be sustained**

Most people have more than one support system or relationship. None might be vital in itself but if *most* of these are breaking down or will break down in the future if help is not provided now, then the person will fall into the significant band of risk in this area.

**(DS3) The majority of family or other social roles and responsibilities cannot or will not be undertaken**

Most people have a number of family and social roles and responsibilities. Some of these may be valued and important to the person but could not in themselves be defined as ‘vital’. However, if the majority of this latter type of roles and responsibilities are at risk of being lost if help is not provided, then the person will fall into the substantial band of need in this area.

**MODERATE BAND**

**(CM1) There is or will be an inability to carry out several personal care or domestic routines**

An example of someone fitting this criterion would be an older person who can carry out all vital personal care and domestic routines and can also carry out three or more of the routines listed in the substantial band. However, there are many tasks she used to be able to do but is now finding increasingly difficult -for instance, gardening, ironing, spring cleaning, scrubbing the floor, cleaning the oven properly, or washing her hair.

**(DM1) Involvement in several aspects of work, education or learning cannot or will not be sustained**

For a person to be regarded as at moderate risk in this area they may no longer be able to participate in as many activities or as fully as they might wish. However no vital involvement is threatened, and there are other ways in which the person can participate in life outside the home without the need for social care help.

**(DM2) Several social support systems and relationships cannot or will not be sustained**

Some people build up numerous relationships and support systems over their lives. Although several of these may be lost, no single one of those which may be lost is defined as ‘vital,’ and the majority of are still intact and not under threat.

**(DM3) Several family and other social roles and responsibilities cannot or will not be undertaken**

A person may no longer be able to sustain all his or her previous family and roles and responsibilities, but no vital role is threatened and s/he is still able to fulfil other important roles and responsibilities. For example a woman whose arthritis is causing her increasing pain may have to give up caring for her grandchildren, give up her role as secretary of the local neighbourhood association, and transfer some of her traditional domestic responsibilities onto her husband. She is sad about this loss, but accepts it reluctantly as she is still involved with her family, friends and neighbourhood even though not as actively or extensively as she once was.

**LOW BAND**

**(CL1) There is or will be an inability to carry out one or two personal care or domestic routines**

An example of someone fitting this criterion would be an older person who can carry out all vital personal care and domestic routines and can also carry out more three or more of the routines listed in the substantial band. However, there are one or two tasks she used to be able to do but is now finding increasingly difficult – such as gardening or ironing.

**(DL1) Involvement in one or two aspects of work, education or learning cannot or will not be sustained**

For a person to be regarded as at low risk in this area they may be one or two ways in which their involvement in work, education or learning is not as full as they would wish, or they may have to give up the idea of undertaking a new activity. However no vital involvement is threatened, and there are other ways in which the person can participate in life outside the home without the need for social care help.

**(DL2) One or two social support systems and relationships cannot or will not be sustained**

One or two of these may be lost, but no 'vital' ones and the person's others support systems and relationships are not at risk.

**(DL3) One or two family and other social roles and responsibilities cannot or will not be undertaken**

A person may have lost or about to lose one or two roles or responsibilities but no vital role is threatened and s/he is still able to fulfil other important roles and responsibilities. There is no indication that the inability to undertake these roles will impact on the person's general well being.