

Eligibility Criteria and Fair Access to Community Care

- A Summary Guide -

WHAT ARE THESE POLICIES ABOUT?

The Health and Social Care Partnership (HSCP) is committed to taking a person-centred approach to assessing and meeting the eligible needs of people, who require support to live safely in the community. Person-centred means that we recognise that people's lives, needs, values and choices are unique to them, as are the personal outcomes that are important to them.

The Eligibility and Fair Access to Community Care Policies work together to make sure that we get the balance right between treating people individually and also making sure that we are fair and consistent in our approach overall. Importantly, they also allow the HSCP to manage overall demand with the money it has available.

The Eligibility Criteria for Community Care (Adults) Policy explains how services are prioritised for people at the highest levels of risk. These are called "eligible needs". This ensures that people at the greatest need receive the services they require to stay safe in the community. The Eligibility Criteria also explains how people can receive services to prevent risks becoming more severe.

The Fair Access to Community Care (Adults) Policy explains how services will be arranged for people, to meet their eligible needs. It ensures that personal budgets are calculated fairly and consistently. It describes how different services types will be used and how people can use Self Directed Support for personal choice.

In short:

Eligibility Criteria are used to help decide *who* we will provide services to and what those services should be *for*.

The Fair Access Policy is used to help decide *what* types of services are available and *how* they will be arranged. It also explains about choice.

ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA – MORE DETAIL

Eligibility Criteria uses "risk" as the key factor in deciding eligible need for support. The policy describes different levels of risk and explains that the urgency of the risks should also be taken into account. Risks may be assessed as *low*, *moderate*, *substantial* or *critical* and these are described in detail across a range of aspects of a person's life.

Where people are assessed as being in the *critical* or *substantial* risk categories, their needs will generally entitle them to immediate or imminent provision of statutory support.

Where people are assessed as being in the *moderate* or *low* risk categories, then statutory support will not normally be provided. In these circumstances advice or information should be provided to the individual to direct them to mainstream or informal community resources that may be of help to them.

In certain situations, people assessed as being at *moderate* risk may be eligible for short-term, focused support to prevent avoidable or rapid deterioration in their circumstances.

FAIR ACCESS TO COMMUNITY CARE – MORE DETAIL

The Fair Access to Community Care policy includes a number of approaches that the HSCP uses to make sure the supports and services that people receive are delivered fairly and equitably:

Resource Allocation

This explains how we agree the value of the services to meet eligible needs. This matters because some people will ask the HSCP to arrange services for them, while other people may ask to control their own personal budget, to arrange their own services. These are different options available through Self-Directed Support (SDS). It is important that the value of similar services to meet similar needs is about the same, to make sure we treat people equally, whichever option they choose.

We will use a Schedule of Rates based upon actual service costs. This will help us to ensure people receive a fair allocation of resources. The Schedule of Rates will also be used to set cost thresholds for different types of support arrangements.

Types and Levels of Support

We will encourage the use of mainstream and informal community-based support first, before deciding on statutory formal support. This is to ensure that people feel close to their communities and maximise their independence.

Where statutory formal support is needed, we will often organise this support around the needs of people living in a neighbourhood area. Where people have very complex care needs we will maximise shared support where possible and appropriate. Shared support is when more than one service user will be supported in their own home by one or more members of care staff working as a team.

Types of Living Arrangements

We will work in partnership to support service-users living with families, when in the best interests of service-users.

Where people are living alone in single occupancy arrangements, we will meet the cost of eligible needs up to a certain level. This kind of *independent living with support* usually presumes that the person can manage for significant periods of time

on their own. If their support needs go beyond this and exceed the threshold cost, then a *supported living* option will normally be proposed and used as the basis for the personal budget. *Supported living* may take the form of extra-care sheltered housing, a small group tenancy or residential care, depending on needs and circumstances.

Where service-users have deteriorating health or wellbeing, increasing frailty and are at risk of regular admission to hospital, their living arrangements will be assessed with a view to determining the best care and support type to meet their needs. Cost thresholds will normally apply where this type and level of care and support is needed.

Out of Area Placements

East Dunbartonshire HSCP will not normally support the use of out-of-area day services or living arrangements, if local alternatives are available that meet eligible needs. This is important to ensure that people can receive the support they need in their own communities and also to avoid the need for long, expensive commutes to and from out-of-area services. We want to avoid people becoming disconnected from their families and friends. We also want to ensure local oversight of the quality of care and support provided.

There will be circumstances when we will not be able to meet the particular needs of individuals locally, in which case we will have to look further afield. However, if local services are available that can meet the eligible needs of the individual, then this will be offered and the value of this will be used as the equivalent personal budget. Where individuals are placed out of the East Dunbartonshire area, we will continue to explore the potential to provide local services to meet their needs.

WILL THESE POLICIES CHANGE MY SERVICES?

These policies will come into force from June 2019. If you already receive support services, your support plan will be reviewed as normal. These policies don't change eligible services levels, but it is possible that the way services are currently delivered to you may need to change. Your needs and options will be discussed with you or your representative. You will be able to have someone with you or we can arrange an independent advocate if you would prefer this.

MORE INFORMATION

This summary provides information on some of the main aspects of the Eligibility and Fair Access to Community Care Policies. For more information, please speak to your Social Worker or contact the Social Work Adult Intake Service on 0141 355 2200. Copies of both policies are also available on the Health and Social Care Partnership's website at:

<https://www.eastdunbarton.gov.uk/health-and-social-care>