

Eligibility Criteria

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Control schedule

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Eligibility Criteria

Policy statement

This document sets out the Council's policy on eligibility criteria for community care services for adults, as adopted by Full Council on 11 March 2010.

Decisions about who can receive care and support are based on an assessment of need. The City of Edinburgh Council has to give priority to people who are at the greatest risk.

To make sure Health and Social Care's decisions are fair, we use agreed criteria to assess people's eligibility to receive care services and support. The eligibility criteria allow the Council to identify the degree of risk to an individual's capacity for independent living, or health and wellbeing, taking account of each person's circumstances.

The Council's eligibility criteria are based on the Scottish Government's National Eligibility Framework for Adult Social Care, with some amendments to the wording of the criteria, following extensive consultation with service users, carers and representative organisations.

This guidance is intended to assist practitioners to use the eligibility framework. Please send any comments on this guidance to the lead officer.

Guidance on recording eligibility on Swift may be found on the Swift [dedicated home pages](#).

Scope

All adults over the age of 16 years who receive a community care assessment undertaken by or on behalf of the City of Edinburgh Council.

Definitions

Definitions have been included in the next section.

Policy content

Good quality assessment continues to be central to achieving better outcomes with and for people with social care needs, and to ensuring consistency and transparency in decision making. Section 12A of the [Social Work \(Scotland\) Act 1968](#) places a duty on local authorities to assess any person who appears to need “community care services” and then to decide whether the assessed needs “call for the provision” of such services.

Eligibility criteria provide guidance as to the circumstances that the local authority regards as requiring the provision of services. In reaching such decisions, the Council requires its staff to have regard to its eligibility criteria.

Eligibility for Health and Social Care services is decided in terms of the degree of risk to an individual’s capacity for independent living, or health and wellbeing. There are four risk categories:

1. Critical risk
2. Substantial risk
3. Moderate risk
4. Low risk

The four risk categories are defined in the table below:

Critical	Indicates that there are major risks to an individual’s capacity for independent living or health and wellbeing, likely to call for the immediate or imminent provision of social care services.
Substantial	Indicates that there are significant risks to an individual’s capacity for independence or health and wellbeing, likely to call for the immediate or imminent provision of social care services.
Moderate	Indicates that there are some risks to an individual’s capacity for independence or health and wellbeing. These may call for the provision of some social care services managed and prioritised on an ongoing basis or they may simply be manageable over the foreseeable future without service provision, with appropriate arrangements for review.
Low	Indicates that there may be some quality of life issues, but low risks to an individual’s capacity for independence or health and wellbeing with very limited, if any, requirement for the provision of social care services. There may be some need for alternative support or advice and appropriate arrangements for review over the foreseeable future or longer term.

In these definitions the following terms define the urgency of response:

- **immediate** – required now or within approximately one-two weeks
- **imminent** – required within six weeks
- **foreseeable future** – required within next six months
- **longer term** – required within next twelve months or subsequently.

One of these four eligibility levels must be recorded on Swift at the conclusion of each assessment, re-assessment or review. This provides a summary of the risk at that time, based on the assessed needs, risks and circumstances. Guidance on recording is available on the Orb.

Providing, arranging or enabling social care services reduces risk. However, **it is essential to assess and record the risk, which would be the case if no social care services were being provided or arranged by the Council**, or on its behalf. For example, if someone is in the critical eligibility category, but providing home care reduces risk to a moderate level, then the assessed eligibility category is still “critical”. Eligibility categories are not outcomes achieved by services.

Assessment takes into account the **support provided by carers**. For example, if someone has critical level needs and risks, but the support by carers is reducing these risks down to a moderate level, the eligibility level is “moderate”, unless the carer is unable to sustain his or her level of support. Then the person’s eligibility level will rise to a level consistent with the reduced carer support available.

The Council has adopted more detailed guidance on the risks to independence or health and wellbeing, which form the basis of decisions about eligibility. These include:

- risks relating to neglect or physical or mental health
- risks relating to personal care / domestic routines / home environment
- risks relating to participation in family and community life
- risks relating to carers.

This guidance is contained in the table below:

CRITICAL	SUBSTANTIAL	MODERATE	LOW
Risks relating to neglect or physical or mental health			
Major health problems which cause life threatening harm or danger to the person or others.	Significant health problems , which cause significant risks of harm or danger to the person or others.	Some health problems indicating some risk to gaining / sustaining independence and / or intermittent distress, potential to maintain health with minimum interventions.	Few health problems indicating low risk to gaining / sustaining independence, potential to maintain health with minimum interventions.
Serious abuse or neglect has occurred or is strongly suspected and the person needs protective intervention by social care services (includes financial abuse and discrimination).	Abuse or neglect has occurred or is strongly suspected (includes financial abuse and discrimination).	Vulnerable person, need to raise their awareness to potential risks of abuse .	Preventive measures, including reminders to minimise potential risk of abuse .
Risks relating to personal care / domestic routines / home environment			
Unable to do vital or most aspects of personal care causing a major harm or danger to the person or others, or major risks to gaining / sustaining independence.	Unable to do many aspects of personal care causing significant risk of danger or harm to the person or others or there are significant risks to gaining / sustaining independence.	Unable to do some aspects of personal care indicating some risk to gaining / sustaining independence.	Difficulty with one or two aspects of personal care , domestic routines and/or home environment indicating little risk to gaining / sustaining independence.

CRITICAL	SUBSTANTIAL	MODERATE	LOW
<p>Unable to manage the most vital or most aspects of domestic routines, causing major harm or danger to the person or others or major risks to gaining / sustaining independence.</p>	<p>Unable to manage many aspects of domestic routines causing significant risk of harm or danger to the person or others or significant risk to gaining / sustaining independence.</p>	<p>Able to manage some aspects of domestic routines indicating some risk to gaining /sustaining independence.</p>	<p>Able to manage most aspects of basic domestic activities.</p>
<p>Extensive/complete loss or lack of choice and control over vital aspects of home environment causing major harm or danger to the person or others or there are major risks to gaining/ sustaining independence.</p>	<p>Substantial loss or lack of choice and control managing home environment causing a significant risk of harm or danger to the person or others or a significant risk to gaining / sustaining independence.</p>	<p>Able to manage some aspects of home environment, leaving some risk to gaining / sustaining independence.</p>	<p>Able to manage most basic aspects of home environment.</p>
Risks relating to participation in community life			
<p>Unable to sustain or develop involvement in vital aspects of work / education / learning causing severe loss or lack of independence.</p>	<p>Unable to sustain or develop involvement in many aspects of work / education / learning causing a significant risk of losing/not gaining independence.</p>	<p>Unable to manage several aspects of involvement in work / learning / education and this will, in the foreseeable future, pose a risk to gaining/ sustaining independence.</p>	<p>Has difficulty undertaking one or two aspects of work/ learning / education / family and/or social networks indicating little risk to gaining / sustaining independence.</p>

CRITICAL	SUBSTANTIAL	MODERATE	LOW
<p>Unable to sustain / gain involvement in vital or most aspects of family / social roles and responsibilities and social contact causing severe loss / lack of independence.</p>	<p>Unable to sustain / gain involvement in many aspects of family / social roles and responsibilities and social contact causing significant distress and / or risk to gaining/ sustaining independence.</p>	<p>Able to manage some of the aspects of family / social roles and responsibilities and social contact, that pose some risk to gaining/ sustaining independence.</p>	<p>Able to manage most of the aspects of family / social roles and responsibilities and social contact, that pose some risk to gaining/ sustaining independence.</p>
Risks relating to carers			
<p>Carer has major physical / mental health difficulties due to the impact of their role as a carer causing life threatening harm or danger to themselves or others.</p>	<p>Carer has significant physical / mental health difficulties due to the impact of their role as a carer causing significant risk of harm or danger to themselves or others.</p>	<p>Carer able to manage some aspects of the caring / family / domestic / social roles. Potential risk to breakdown of their own health identified.</p>	<p>Carer able to manage most aspects; has difficulty undertaking one or two aspects of their caring / domestic role but with low risk.</p>
<p>There is a complete breakdown in the relationship between the person and carer, and carer is unable to continue caring or has difficulty sustaining vital or most aspects of their caring role.</p>	<p>There is a significant risk of breakdown in the relationship between the person and carer and carer is unable to sustain many aspects of their caring role.</p>	<p>Relationship maintained although at times under strain between the person and carer / limiting some aspects of the caring role.</p>	<p>Relationship maintained between the person and carer by limiting aspects of the caring role.</p>

CRITICAL	SUBSTANTIAL	MODERATE	LOW
Carer is unable to manage vital or most aspects of their caring / family / work / domestic / social roles and responsibilities.	Carer is unable to manage many aspects of their caring / family / work / domestic / social roles and responsibilities.	Carer is able to manage some aspects of their caring / family / work / domestic / social roles and responsibilities.	Carer is able to manage most aspects of their caring / family / work / domestic / social roles and responsibilities.

Implementation

- 5.1 For details of the completed [Implementation and Monitoring form](#), contact the named author of the policy.

Roles and responsibilities

- 6.1 Staff providing information about services to the public must include information on eligibility criteria. Information is included in [A guide to adult social care services](#).

Staff carrying out assessments of an individual's service needs must ensure that the appropriate eligibility criteria are satisfied before adult social care services are provided.

The Council's public information booklet – [A guide to adult social care services](#) – explains that:

We give priority to people who are assessed as being within the critical and substantial categories. People who are assessed as being in the moderate or low categories may receive help to maintain or develop their abilities.

This means that people who are assessed as being in the moderate or low categories will not be eligible for services, such as residential care, home care / care at home following reablement, and registered day care, but may be eligible for other services such as: advice and information; advocacy; carer support; counselling services; unregistered day care and lunch clubs; frozen meals; telecare; alarms systems; and other equipment to enhance independence; some respite and sitter services; befriending and volunteer services; local area co-ordination; and local self-help groups.

In all cases, staff carrying out assessments should ensure that people are encouraged, and where necessary supported, to access mainstream public services, and local community services.

Finally, eligibility should be recorded on Swift using the [guidance available](#).

Related documents

7.1 The eligibility criteria for adult social care services in Edinburgh are based on the Scottish Government's eligibility framework entitled: [National Eligibility Criteria for Adult Social Care and Waiting Times for Personal and Nursing Care](#).

The key Council policy reports are:

- The City of Edinburgh Council: [National Eligibility Framework for Adult Social Care](#). City of Edinburgh Council, 11 March 2010
- The City of Edinburgh Council: [Preventative Services in Adult Social Care, Health, Social Care and Housing Committee, 13 December 2011](#)

The City of Edinburgh Council: [The Edinburgh Partnership Prevention Strategic Plan 2015-18](#)

Equalities and impact assessment

8.1 For details of the completed [Record of Equality and Rights Impact Assessment \(ERIA\)](#) form, contact the named author of the policy.

Strategic environmental assessment

9.1 This policy does not have any environmental implications.

Risk assessment

10.1 Decisions about who can receive care and support are based on an assessment of need. The City of Edinburgh Council has to give priority to people who are at the greatest risk. The Council's eligibility criteria are based on the Scottish Government's National Eligibility Framework for Adult Social Care, and is used to identify the degree of risk to an individual's capacity for independent living, or health and wellbeing, taking account of each person's circumstances.

Review

11.1 The policy and associated procedures will be reviewed within 12 months, subject to any further changes in legislation.