

# Support for people with sensory impairment

What you need to know



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# Deciding what help you need

If you live in County Durham and think you need social care and support, your first step should be to visit our Locate website. Locate hosts a range of information and advice, including organisations to help you live as independently as you can. If you choose to, you can complete some simple questions about yourself and your situation which will help Locate to guide you to the most appropriate places for support. Any information you provide is confidential.

If you find using the internet difficult ask a friend or relative who you are happy to share your information with to help you. You can use computers for free at your local library (booking advisable). If you don't have anyone who can help or can't access a computer, please contact Social Care Direct who can assess your care and support needs over the telephone.

**If your needs are urgent you should contact Social Care Direct immediately**

**Telephone: 03000 26 79 79**

**Text message: 07786 027 280**

**Email: [scd@durham.gov.uk](mailto:scd@durham.gov.uk)**

In most cases, you will be able to find the information you need from our Locate website.

**[www.durhamlocate.org.uk](http://www.durhamlocate.org.uk)**

# Registering as blind or partially sighted

We are required to establish and maintain a register of people with a visual impairment, however, registration is entirely voluntary.

Only a consultant ophthalmologist can certify that someone is eligible to be registered. If you agree to register, your consultant will complete a Certificate of Visual impairment (CVI) form. This form will then be forwarded to the Adult Sensory Support Team.

There are two categories of registration:

- Severely sight impaired/blind
- Sight impaired/partially sighted

After we receive the form from your eye specialist, we will arrange a visit from the rehabilitation officer who will carry out an assessment to find out about the areas of life that you are struggling with.

# Registering as hearing impaired

We are required to establish and maintain a register of people with hearing impairment; however, registration is entirely voluntary. There are a number of categories of deaf and hard of hearing registration dependent on your degree of hearing loss.

If you want to register you can complete an online form at [www.durham.gov.uk/deafblind](http://www.durham.gov.uk/deafblind), contact Social Care Direct or speak to your hearing aid provider.

The online form will ask for your level of hearing loss. This is made easier if you have already seen an audiologist and they have recorded your level of hearing loss on an audiogram. Your GP can refer you to an audiologist if you have not seen one.

If you are experiencing difficulties because of your hearing loss, contact Social Care Direct to discuss your individual circumstances.



## Dual sensory loss

If you are experiencing difficulties because of sight loss and hearing loss, contact Social Care Direct to discuss your individual circumstances. They can arrange for a specialist worker to visit you in your own home or other place suitable to you.



# How will I know if I'm eligible for care and support arranged by the council?

The **My Needs** feature on our **Locate** website provides the opportunity for people to consider how or where they may require a little extra help in their daily lives.

You can complete some simple questions about yourself and your situation which will help Locate guide you to useful information for help and support. Depending on your responses you may be given the opportunity to answer some further questions to assess your needs.

The information that you provide will identify if you have any needs that are eligible for care and support arranged by the council. If you wish to apply for help with the costs you will need to complete a Financial Assessment.

If you are not eligible for care and support from the council we will tell you about organisations who may be able to help you.



The national eligibility criteria set a minimum threshold for adult care and support. All councils must meet needs at this level.

The threshold is based on identifying how an individual's needs affect their ability to achieve relevant desired outcomes and whether as a consequence this has a significant impact upon their wellbeing. We have produced a useful factsheet 'Eligibility criteria for adults with care and support needs' which is available on **Locate**.

You can also find out more by reading The Care and Support (Eligibility Criteria) Regulations 2014 and the Care and Support Statutory Guidance available on the Gov.uk website.





# Money matters

## About the Financial Assessment

Care and support, unlike health care, is not free to everyone at the point of delivery. Many people pay for their own care and support. However, if you have any needs that are eligible for care and support arranged by the council, you may wish to apply for financial help. This is done through a Financial Assessment, which is the way that the council works out how much you can afford to pay towards the cost of your care and support.

When we carry out the Financial Assessment you must give us information about your income, assets and savings.

If you have a Financial Assessment which shows you are eligible for support, you will be allocated a Personal Budget to meet your eligible care and support needs. A Personal Budget includes money the council will pay, and money (if any) that you will pay. You can use your Personal Budget to pay for the support described in your Care and Support Plan (or Support Plan if you are a carer). There are different ways of managing your Personal Budget such as Direct Payments and there will be help and support available to help you decide which option is best for you.

## What services are available?

We will provide general advice, information and training. Training will help you to adapt existing skills and adopt new skills in order to maintain your independence and safety.

There are services and support including:

- Help in your own home
- Adaptations to your home
- Telecare services
- Leisure opportunities
- Employment support services

A referral may be made to a relevant organisation for help with your agreement.

## Caring for other people

If you are an adult who provides unpaid care for another adult, who has care and support needs, then you are a carer. Most people who are carers do not see themselves as carers but as husbands, wives, partners, parents, children, siblings or friends.

More information about being a carer can be found in our guide 'Looking after someone? A carer's guide to help and support'. Copies of this can be downloaded from [www.durhamcarers.info](http://www.durhamcarers.info) or call Durham County Carers Support on 0300 005 12 13.





# locate

Care and support in County Durham

This free online resource provides a wealth of information and services making it easier for you to make plans now and in the future.

[www.durhamlocate.org.uk](http://www.durhamlocate.org.uk)



**Social Care Direct**  
**03000 26 79 79**

**Social Care Direct is open from 8.30am - 5.00pm Monday to Thursday and 8.30am - 4.30pm Friday**

**An out of hours EMERGENCY service is also available on this number.**

**Telephone: 03000 26 79 79**

**Text message: 07786 027 280**

**Email: [scd@durham.gov.uk](mailto:scd@durham.gov.uk)**

**Please ask us if you would like this document summarised in another language or format.**

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03000 261 381**