Parent /carer assessments of need
All parents and carers of disabled children, young people and disabled adults have a right to ask for an assessment of their own needs. This will usually be carried out by a worker from a social care team such as 0-25 Together. The assessment will consider your needs or circumstances, for example you may need to spend more time doing other caring responsibilities or you may wish to return to work or wish to take up education or training.

A carer’s assessment looks at the different ways that caring affects your life, and works out how you can continue your caring role whilst also being supported to do the things that are important to you and your family. It covers your caring role, your feelings about caring, your physical, mental and emotional health, and how caring affects your work, leisure, education, wider family and relationships.

A carer’s assessment involves you talking with a worker from a social care team about the things that could make looking after your child or young person easier for you and your family. You will need to tell the worker how caring for your child is affecting your life.

After the carer’s assessment
We will: Give you information and advice about support and services available in your community to help with your wellbeing and your caring role.
Offer advice about how to prevent or delay things becoming more difficult in the future.
Work with you on a contingency plan to help you think about times when you might not be available to care and what might happen if your current plan needs to change at short notice.

If the assessment identifies unmet needs, there may be a recommendation to provide more regular support services. If that is the case then you can ask for direct payments and arrange the necessary services yourself. Help is available to do this. You can also choose for services to be arranged by Hertfordshire social care services for you.

How do I ask for a carer’s assessment?
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An assessment should be offered to you when the child or young person you care for is being assessed. In many cases it can take place at the same time as the assessment for your child, young person or young adult.

Further information
Search “carers” at www.hertfordshire.gov.uk/localoffer

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We welcome feedback about your experiences to help us develop and improve our services. To make a comment, compliment or complaint, contact our customer services team on 01992 588542 or email us cs.complaints@hertfordshire.gov.uk
If you are looking after a child with a physical or learning disability, or life limiting condition you may not think of yourself as a carer. However, being the parent of a child with disabilities can cause you to experience additional pressures and problems.

These are just some of the issues you may be concerned about as a parent/carer:
- Your child’s friendships and social/support network
- Child care and short breaks
- Finances for you and your child
- Your child’s education
- Your child’s challenging behaviour
- Preparing your child for adulthood
- The impact of caring on your health, wellbeing and on your relationships

This leaflet is designed to give you information that may help make life easier and tells you about some of the support that is there to help you.

Ways that parents/carers can get help and support

The special educational needs or disabilities (SEND) Local Offer is available online. It is Hertfordshire’s one stop shop to find up to date, comprehensive information and links to a range of organisations, both locally and nationally, that offer support, advice and guidance. www.hertfordshire.gov.uk/localoffer

Access to support and short breaks

All Local Authorities must offer short breaks for disabled children. In Hertfordshire, we call this our Short Break Local Offer (SBLO).

The SBLO enables parents/carers to access a variety of suitable short breaks, such as youth clubs, after school clubs, play schemes, leisure and community support opportunities, without having an assessment or meeting a worker from Children’s Services.

You can find information about short breaks at www.hertfordshire.gov.uk/shortbreaks

Some families require additional resources to meet their needs. These families will need to be assessed by a professional to understand what might be needed. The assessment will gather information about your child and family to work out what kind of, if any, help may be needed. This could include short breaks, care and health interventions or other personalised funding. Families may be offered a range of assessments including:

- **Families First Assessment** – is an early help assessment which can be undertaken by a range of agencies to look at how they can support children and families and coordinate a multi-agency team around the family.
- **Short Break Assessment** – is for children and families who need an increase in their Short Break Local Offer but do not require any other types of social care support.
- **Child and Family Assessment** – this is an assessment led by a social worker for children in need (such as those with disabilities), or children and young people who are at risk of harm, abuse or exploitation.
- **Care Act Assessment** – this is an assessment of those over 18 to support their wellbeing.
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