



Department  
of Health



# Care and Support is Changing





**From April 2015, Care and Support in England is changing as a result of the Care Act. The Care Act is one of the biggest changes to adult social care law in over 60 years and it aims to achieve a clearer and fairer care and support system. The new Care Act will help make care and support more consistent across the country. The Care Act covers a whole range of adult social care services but we have identified specific areas that we think may be of interest. These key changes include: New National Minimum Eligibility Criteria, Carers' Services and Deferred Payment Agreements.**

## **New National Minimum Eligibility Criteria**

The new national minimum eligibility criteria has been designed by government to be on the same level as 'substantial' in the Fairer Access to Care Services (FACS 2002) framework currently used by the council. As this is a national criteria, this means that if you decide to move to another area in England, councils will work together to make sure that there is no gap in your care when you move.

We anticipate a vast majority of people currently receiving services in Sutton will remain eligible for those services. Some people previously not eligible may become eligible for services as a result of the new national minimum eligibility criteria. Whatever your level of need, we will put you in touch with the right organisation or services to support and help you remain independent for as long as possible. You may also find that the support you need could be met through the local community for example services organised by local charities or other support networks.



## Carers

The Care Act, from April 2015, gives carers the same legal footing and rights as the cared for with a comparable eligibility criteria and a right to services if eligible. If you are eligible for support a Direct Payment option may be offered which can be used to make caring easier or for practical support, like arranging for someone to step in when you need a short break. You may also prefer to be put in contact with local support groups or networks in your community. The council covering the area where the person you care for lives can help you find the right support and you can ask them for a carer's assessment. You are entitled to a carer's assessment even if the person you care for does not get any help from the council.

## Deferred Payment Agreement (DPA)

A Deferred Payment Agreement (DPA) is an arrangement with the council that enables you to use the value (equity) of your house to pay for care home costs. If you are living in care home accommodation and a home owner, you may be eligible for a DPA which means the council will pay your care home bills on your behalf but you will need to repay the council when you either sell your home or after your death. The council will charge interest on the amount owed to them, and there will also be a fee for setting up this arrangement. These will be set to cover the council's costs and not to make a profit. DPAs will suit some people's circumstances better than others and we will therefore recommend that independent financial advice is sought before agreeing a DPA.





## What should I do next?

If you think you may need care and support services, you can contact the council to discuss what options are available by visiting our website on [www.sutton.gov.uk/careact](http://www.sutton.gov.uk/careact). If you would like to register for an assessment after the 1 April 2015, please visit our website where you can register or alternatively, contact the council directly.

Further information can be found on our website [www.sutton.gov.uk/careact](http://www.sutton.gov.uk/careact)