**Care Act factsheet 2 - Assessing needs and determining eligibility**

**Introduction**

This factsheet explains how the law, along with its rules and guidelines, helps assess what care and support an adult needs. It also talks about how eligibility for publicly funded care is determined.

**Understanding the assessment process**

An assessment, carried out by a social care professional, is key to figuring out if someone needs help with their daily life. The assessor looks at things like the person's needs, how they affect their well-being, what they want to achieve, and their overall situation. This helps get a clear picture of the person and what support they might need.

Not all care needs are covered by the government, so local authorities use a framework to decide who gets public support.

**Assessment requirements**

The law says local councils must assess everyone's needs, no matter their money situation or if they might qualify for help. It's important for the person and their carer to be involved in the assessment, and they can get an advocate if needed. Assessments don't just look at services but also consider other factors that affect what the person wants to achieve.

Rules within the law make sure assessments are fair and take into account the person's family and require special training for assessors, especially for complicated cases like those involving people who are deafblind. People can choose to do a self-assessment if they can, empowering them to identify what support they need, with help from the local council.

**Determining eligibility: finding the right balance**

After the assessment, local councils decide if someone qualifies for help based on national rules that apply everywhere in England. A person qualifies if, because of their physical or mental health, they can't achieve two or more specific outcomes that significantly affect their well-being. These outcomes include everyday activities, maintaining personal relationships, and being in work or education.

If someone qualifies, the local council works with them to make a plan for their care and support. Even if they don't qualify, they still get advice and information about other support available in the community. The person always gets a copy of their assessment and the decision about whether they qualify.