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After your assessment, the council will give you a copy of your care needs assessment and explain what your care needs are. If you're not given this, ask. You'll also be told whether or not your needs are high enough for you to qualify for help from the council.There are different national criteria for who qualifies for council support in England, Scotland and Wales. You can find out more in our factsheets First steps in getting help with your care needs (England/Wales) or First steps in getting help with your care needs in Scotland.If you qualify for supportIf you meet the criteria for getting social care support, social services will then work out how best to meet your needs. They should develop a written care and support plan with you.Most people who qualify for council support still have to contribute towards the cost of their care, so you're likely to also have a financial assessment to work out how much you'll have to pay. The way this financial assessment works depends on whether you are going to be receiving care at home or in a care home. The financial assessment should only take place after your care needs assessment. For more information, see our Paying for care section. If you don't qualify for supportThe council will let you know if you don't meet the criteria for care and support. You can ask for a review if you're not happy with their assessment or you could consider making a complaint. They should also give you information and advice to help you cope with your situation – for example by telling you about other local services that may be able to help you and how to prevent your needs from getting worse. We use some essential cookies to make this website work. We'd like to set additional cookies to understand how you use GOV.UK, remember your settings and improve government services. We also use cookies set by other sites to help us deliver content from their services. You have accepted additional cookies. You can change your cookie settings at any time. You have rejected additional cookies. You can change your cookie settings at any time. If you think you, or someone you know, needs help to cope day-to-day, the first step is to get a needs assessment from your local council.You'll need to have this assessment before the council can recommend a service such as:equipment like a walking frame or personal alarmchanges to your home, such as a walk-in showerpractical help from a paid carerday care for your child if either you or they are disabledaccess to day centres and lunch clubsmoving to a care homeThe needs assessment is free and anyone can ask for one.How to get a needs assessmentContact social services at your local council and ask for a needs assessment. You can call them or do it online. What happens in the assessmentSomeone from the council, such as a social worker or occupational therapist, will ask you how you're managing everyday tasks like washing, dressing and cooking.They might ask you to describe how well you do certain things like making a cup of tea and getting out of a chair.If it seems you may need some alterations in and around your home, such as grab rails in the bathroom, you might also be referred for a separate assessment of your home for home adaptations.The needs assessment can happen:face-to-faceover the phone or onlineby self-assessmentHow to prepare for your assessmentThis is your chance to have your say.Give as much detail as you can about all the everyday tasks you struggle with, even the little ones like turning taps on and off. Leaving out things might reduce the care recommended for you.Age UK has information about applying and preparing for care needs assessments. It has a checklist of typical questions you might be asked in the assessment regardless of your age.Independent Age has a step-by-step guide to getting more help from your council, which may help you prepare for the assessment.Have someone with youHave a friend or relative with you, if possible. It will help if you're not confident explaining your situation. They can also take notes for you.If you can't have a friend or relative with you, you could use an advocate. An advocate is someone to speak up for you. They can help you fill in forms and sit with you in meetings and assessments. They're often free.Telephone helpIf you want to talk to someone over the phone about needs assessments, call:your local council's social services department – find your local council on GOV.UKAge UK's free helpline on 0800 678 1602Independent Age's free helpline on 0800 319 6789The Family Rights Group's free helpline on 0808 801 0366Getting the resultsAfter the assessment, the local council will decide whether you need help, and you'll get the results of the assessment.It identifies what kind of care and support would help you, such as a paid carer or meals delivered to your home (meals on wheels).Paying for careYou'll generally be expected to pay toward the cost of social care.If the assessment identifies you need help, you will have a financial assessment (means test) to see if the council will pay towards it. This will be arranged for you.If you're told you do not need careIf the needs assessment finds that you do not qualify for care and support, the council should still give you free advice about where you can get help in your community. Ask if this does not happen.How to complain about a needs assessmentIf you disagree with the results of your needs assessment or how it was done, you have a right to complain.First complain to your local council. Your council should have a formal complaints procedure on its website. It should also tell you about it at your assessment.If you're not happy with the way the council handles your complaint, you can take it to the local government and social care ombudsman. An ombudsman is an independent person who's been appointed to look into complaints about organisations.Find out more on the Local Government and Social Care Ombudsman website We use some essential cookies to make this website work. We'd like to set additional cookies to understand how you use GOV.UK, remember your settings and improve government services. We also use cookies set by other sites to help us deliver content from their services. You have accepted additional cookies. You can change your cookie settings at any time. You have rejected additional cookies. You can change your cookie settings at any time. A needs assessment could be the first step towards getting help and support with daily life. It's provided free by your local council or trust, and looks at what help someone might need with their care and how they could get it. It can mean someone receives services or direct payments to help them. A needs assessment isn't a test that someone can pass or fail. It's a chance to talk to a trained professional about getting support. The person being assessed can talk about any difficulties they have in looking after themselves, and how that affects them. Getting more help with your caring role can seem daunting, but some extra support can make a big difference. In this animation, we share some tips to help you request extra help at home. Who can have a needs assessment? Anyone who needs care and support can have a needs assessment. It doesn't matter how simple or complex their needs are, or what their income or savings are. Anyone aged 18 and above, who appears to have a need for care or support can have a needs assessment, regardless of the level of those needs or the person's financial resources. Even if you as the carer are providing all the care the person needs, they are still entitled to an assessment. Remember that carers can be eligible for a needs assessment too. If you think you could do with extra help and support, you can request a needs assessment for yourself too. You can have this as well as a carer's assessment. How do I get a needs assessment for the person I look after? Anyone can request a needs assessment for another person. The Social Services department of the local council or trust has a legal duty to carry out a needs assessment once they become aware of the person's potential needs. The process will differ depending on where you live so download our country specific factsheets about assessments to find out more. Contact the local council or trust of the person you look after. Tell them you help someone who needs care and support, and ask for a needs assessment for them. If someone needs urgent support, the local council or trust can provide services before an assessment has been carried out. In this case, they will carry out a full assessment as soon as possible to make sure the right support has been put in place. You can find contact details for your local council on GOV.UK. In Northern Ireland, you can find your trust at NI Direct. A trained care professional will talk to the person you care for about how they're managing everyday tasks such as washing, dressing and cooking. The cared for person must be involved in the assessment and their needs and wishes should be taken into account. If someone has complex needs, the assessor should have specialist knowledge or expertise. Needs assessments are normally done face-to-face, usually at the home of the cared for person. They can be done online, over the phone or by self-assessment, but only if the person you look after agrees to it. The assessor should consider the following: the care and support needs of the person you look after the things that are important to them, such as a need to help with getting dressed or support to get to work their choices and goals, such as maintaining relationships or taking up a new activity the services, advice, information and resources that will stop or slow down any further needs developing their family's needs. You can be involved in the assessment if the person you care for would like this. The person you look after will be eligible for help if they answer yes to all three of the following questions. 1. Do you need support because you have a physical or mental illness or disability? 2. Are you unable to achieve two or more care outcomes? Care outcomes include someone's ability to: prepare and eat food and get enough to drink maintain personal hygiene, eg by washing themselves and keeping their clothes clean manage their toilet needs dressing appropriately keep their home safe maintain and develop relationships with friends and family take part in any work, education, training or volunteering they wish to participate in social activities and hobbies use public transport and local services look after any children they're responsible for The assessor must only look at what the person can do for themselves and ignore any support you or others give them. The person must be assessed as unable to achieve an outcome if they can't do it at all without help, or if doing it causes a lot of pain or anxiety, puts their safety at risk, or takes a lot longer than normal. 3. Could this have a significant impact on your wellbeing? 'Wellbeing' covers a lot of different areas, including being treated with dignity and respect, relationships with other people, health, safety and protection from abuse or neglect. The local council or trust will give the person you care for a copy of their assessment notes. If they qualify for support, the council or trust must then draw up a care and support plan showing how these needs will be met. If some of their eligible needs are already being met - eg by you as their carer - then the council or trust doesn't have to meet these needs. However, they can't just assume you'll continue to provide the same level of care, so it's important you're clear about what you're able and willing to provide. If the person you care for doesn't qualify for support, they must still be given information and advice on what can be done to meet their needs now and how to prevent their needs getting worse in future. What help they get depends on their eligible needs. The council or trust can provide services or direct payments so the person you care for can arrange their own care and support. Services might include: disability equipment or home adaptations help from a care worker with things such as washing, dressing or eating residential care access to day centres. How much will the person I look after have to pay? The local council or trust will carry out a financial assessment (or means test) for the person you care for. This will look at their income and capital and work out whether they need to contribute towards the cost of their care. The council or trust can't charge anyone else for their care, including you or anyone the cared for person lives with. What if I'm not happy with the outcome or service? If you, or the person you are looking after, are having issues with the local council/trust, the NHS or a care service, you or they could look into making a complaint to try and resolve these issues. It may be helpful to know about other assessments that are available to help provide support. If you're under 18 and help to look after a relative with an illness or disability, then you're a young carer. It's important that you decide how much and what type of care you want to give, and whether you want to be a carer at all. You shouldn't be doing the same things as adult carers, or spending most of your time caring for someone else. Disabled adults are entitled to support from their local council or trust, so it's important they have their own needs assessment to find out what help they can get. If you're under 18, your carer's assessment will be different to the one adult carers have. The assessor will look at the help you and your family need. The review will also explore whether it's appropriate for you to be a carer, and whether you want to continue in your caring role. The assessor must look at your education, training and leisure opportunities, and thoughts about the future. They should involve you, your parents and anyone else you want to include. You should get a written record of the assessment including whether the council thinks you need support and whether they'll provide it. If you're 16 or over and not in full-time education, you may be eligible for help finding work and benefits. If you're a parent who cares for a disabled child, you're entitled to a parent carer's need assessment. It's your chance to talk about the things that could make looking after your child easier. You may get services or direct payments to meet your assessed needs. If your local council or trust thinks you may need support as a carer, then it must offer you an assessment. If it doesn't, you can request one. The assessment must take in account: whether you have needs for support, and what those needs are how much support you're giving your child and whether you're willing or able to give the same level of support in future. It's important to be realistic about what you can do your wellbeing the need to safeguard the child being cared for, and any other children you have responsibility for. This assessment can be combined with one for your disabled child, if you wish, and carried out by the same person. If you care for a disabled child but you're not their parent - for example, if you're their grandparent - you don't have the right to a parent carer's need assessment. However, you can still request a carer's assessment to find out what help you may be entitled to. A carer's assessment is specific for adult carers who are 18 or older and is separate from a needs assessment. It is an opportunity for you to put forward what additional support you might need to make your life easier as a carer. This could be anything from help with taxi fares to hospital appointments, to temporary care cover put in place so that you can have a break every so often. For more information, see 'What is a carer's assessment?' We use some essential cookies to make this website work. We'd like to set additional cookies to understand how you use GOV.UK, remember your settings and improve government services. We also use cookies set by other sites to help us deliver content from their services. You have accepted additional cookies. You can change your cookie settings at any time. You have rejected additional cookies. You can change your cookie settings at any time. A needs assessment is a process for determining the needs, otherwise known as "gaps," between current and desired outcomes. When used properly, this assessment provides valuable insight into your team's processes and highlights areas for efficiency improvements.When you're balancing multiple growth initiatives and new projects, it's hard to know which team improvements to prioritize. Where do you even begin?When in doubt, try a needs assessment. A needs assessment helps you determine the most important process gaps so you can achieve your desired outcome in the shortest amount of time. Not only will assessing your current processes give you insight into how your team works, but it can also help identify areas of potential efficiency improvements.Reducing work about work and streamlining processes doesn't just increase productivity—it also boosts team morale. By listening to your team members and improving any painful processes, you can help them achieve their highest-impact work faster. We've written a practical guide to creating a needs assessment of your own.Watch a live demo and Q&A session to help you streamline goal-setting, accelerate annual planning, and automate how teams intake strategic work.What is a needs assessment?A needs assessment is a process for determining the needs, or "gaps," between a current and desired outcome. It's a part of strategic planning—essentially, a needs assessment helps you pinpoint how you'll accomplish your strategic goals. A need is an opportunity for improvement within a particular process or system. When you identify—and resolve—needs, you can act on potential new opportunities, like making processes more efficient, streamlining resource allocation, and identifying resource gaps in your current workflow. For example, say your team is working on a process to organize customer data. A needs assessment would be a great way to understand where gaps exist in the data collection process—such as missing or inaccurate information—and where internal resources could be better utilized.What is the purpose of a needs assessment? A needs assessment identifies areas within your organization that need improvement. Use a needs assessment on existing processes to analyze data and inform internal changes.Examples of processes you might use a needs assessment to accomplish include:A process to automate duplicative manual workAcustomer journey process that is underperformingIt can be challenging to pinpoint exactly where enhancements are needed. When you're faced with multiple areas of opportunity, a needs analysis can help you identify the best areas of improvement. Example of a needs assessmentA needs assessment is a great way to improve processes, but it's not always easy to get started. Start by taking a look at some example questions to get a better understanding of the data you're looking for. Success rate questionsWhat activities must be done to accomplish our objectives? What is the probability our solution is a success? What tasks are required to successfully solve our needs?Performance questionsWhich KPIs are we using to measure performance?What does excellent performance look like?What does current performance look like?Operational questionsWhich stakeholders are involved?Where does the need occur within the process?How frequently do we observe the need?Identifying needs requires team communication, problem solving skills, and out-of-the-box ideas. Use these questions as a jumping off point to get the ball rolling. Once you know which questions to ask, you can begin to gather data. How to conduct a needs assessmentA needs assessment is a great way to analyze and interpret relevant data. To do this, you need to understand your team's baseline needs, as well as the process's overall desired outcome. Success rate questions:What activities must be done to accomplish our objectives? What is the probability our solution is a success? What tasks are required to successfully solve our needs?Performance questions:Which KPIs are we using to measure performance?What does excellent performance look like?What does current performance look like?Operational questions:Which stakeholders are involved?Where does the need occur within the process?How frequently do we observe the need?Identifying needs requires team communication, problem-solving skills, and out-of-the-box ideas. Use these questions as a jumping-off point to get the ball rolling. Once you know which questions to ask, you can begin to gather data.6 steps for conducting a needs assessmentA needs assessment is a great way to analyze and interpret relevant data that will influence your decision-making. To do this, you need to understand your team's baseline needs, as well as the process's overall desired outcome. Enlist the help of key stakeholders, funders, and decision makers and collect feedback through meetings or brainstorming sessions. However you choose to start, here are the four steps to follow when conducting a needs assessment. Create a strategic planning template1. Identify your team's needsTo determine the gaps between existing and ideal processes, you first need to understand what the ideal process looks like. Clear objectives are the best way to ensure you're creating a measurable, actionable, and results-oriented needs assessment. Before you can start collecting and analyzing information for your needs assessment, take some time to consider your desired outcomes. Set objectives and gather data on areas of opportunity to plan deadlines and understand the intended outcome. Your team members are probably closer to the process than you are, and they have valuable insight into potential process improvements. Gather feedback from your project team, or host a general brainstorming session to identify your team's biggest gaps. Work with your team to answer the following questions: What needs are you trying to solve? How is this process currently implemented? Where are the biggest opportunity gaps? What are your desired outcomes? Are you looking to solve a specific problem or a more general process? Do you have clear, measurable data sources? How will you measure success?2. Measure and allocate your resourcesBefore you start your assessment, decide exactly how much bandwidth your team has and how much you're willing to spend on the project. Also, determine how much time you're giving yourself to meet your goals. Do you want to fill the gaps in six months? A year? Knowing exactly how much bandwidth you have will allow you to take a systematic approach to your report. Your team's availability and organizational resources will impact the comprehensiveness of your needs assessment. If you allot more time to your needs assessment, you'll be able to spend more time on data collection. Read: If you like maximizing team impact, you'll love resource allocationNext, gather information and collect data on how to best solve the identified gaps. Remember that the goal of a needs assessment is to understand how to get from your current process to the desired outcome. Gather data from various departments and stakeholders who are closest to the process. At this point, you've already brainstormed with your close project team members, but it's also critical to understand what your cross-functional partners need from this process improvement as well. In order to create a good needs assessment, you need detailed information, so encourage stakeholders to share in depth data about their specific needs. The more information you have, the more likely your needs assessment is to succeed.Some questions to consider when gathering information include: Where are improvements needed?Why are current methods underperforming?Do we have enough resources to execute a more successful process?These questions will help you gather the necessary details to move on to step four.Once you've gathered information from your project team and from cross-functional stakeholders, all that's left is to gather information from external sources. Getting information from external sources, in addition to your internal collaborators, gives you a bird's-eye view of the process from start to finish. There are multiple ways to gather external information on your target group, including:Customer questionnaires: Used to gather quick, high-level customer data from multiple geographical locationsFocus groups: Used to gather in-depth information from a specific geographical locationIt's also a good idea to enlist a fresh pair of eyes to follow the process from start to finish to catch additional inefficiencies. While the type of needs assessment technique you use will depend on your situation, you should opt for the one that gives you the best chance of correcting inefficiencies.5. Get feedbackA needs assessment is all about corporate and community needs. Test your findings with diverse groups of people who might have varying perspectives (and biases) on your data. Share it with stakeholders and community members alike to gauge how both your higher-ups and target audience are going to react to any process changes. A few people who may want to see your assessment include: Project partnersCommunity membersInvestorsStakeholdersManagementColleaguesWith the feedback you receive, you can make any necessary adjustments to the report before you start making large-scale changes to your identified needs. 6. Use your dataAt this point, you've collected all of the information you can. The only thing left to do is to use your needs assessment results and insights to make a final report and an action plan.Use the information you gathered in steps one through five to transform your needs assessment data into a cumulative report. In addition to the notes, details, and observations you've made during your brainstorming sessions, add a summary documenting the next steps—in particular, the phases, technical assistance, training programs, and other components that will help you implement the process changes. Implementing the results of your needs assessment will take time. Make sure your team has an effective process in place to guide the improvement, like:Needs assessment examplesThere are many different data collection methods—from quantitative techniques like surveys to qualitative techniques such as focus groups. Your target demographic may influence your methodology, so take into account whose perspective you're looking for before you decide. Needs assessments provide crucial data on existing processes and help teams create more effective systems. Here are three of the most popular methods of collecting needs assessment data:QuestionnairesQuestionnaires and interviews are the most popular methods for collecting data. A questionnaire is a surface-level form with general yes or no questions. This is a great way to get quick information from respondents.Use for things like: Evaluating the effectiveness of your brand identitySurveysMany teams use surveys to collect external information around customer experience. Surveys often include open-ended questions, so they provide more in-depth information than questionnaires. This is a great way to find accurate but quick information.Use for things like: Evaluating the success of your post-purchase experience from the customer's perspectiveFocus groupsA focus group is an interview involving a small number of participants who share common traits or experiences. While they require considerably more time than the other two methods, focus groups provide extensive information around needs and customer experience. This is a great way to gather in-depth information.Use for things like: Evaluating how your customers experience your brand and what they think could be improvedIdentify your team's needs with an analysisPerforming a needs assessment is a great way to understand how current processes are being handled and how you can streamline tasks and communication. Knowing which needs are most important isn't always obvious. With a needs analysis, you can gather the data you need to make your team more efficient.