



Non Residential Charging Questionnaire

Consultation on the impact of proposed changes to Kent County Council's charges for adult social care services (other than residential care)

Introduction

This questionnaire has been sent to you because, either:

- you currently receive a service, or
- you act on behalf of someone who receives services, or
- you represent a user or carer group, or
- you are known to adult social services and might need a service in the future or have received a service in the past.

The letter that comes with this questionnaire tells you why Kent County Council (KCC) needs to make changes to the financial contribution people make towards their care and support. The letter also explains that for some people charges will increase.

There are four proposals outlined in the letter and more detail is given later in this questionnaire. We value your views and comments about the impact of these proposals and encourage you to respond. You can do this by:

- completing this questionnaire and posting it back to us at the address on our website
- completing online at www.kent.gov.uk/fsccharging
- completing the questionnaire by phone or textphone
- attending one of three scheduled public meetings.

The consultation will close on **31 July 2011**.

Online: www.kent.gov.uk/fsccharging

Tel: 0800 298 6002 (Monday to Friday 9am to 5pm)

Textphone/Minicom: 08458 247 905

Email: fsc.consultation@kent.gov.uk

This questionnaire is available in alternative formats including easy read and can be provided in a range of languages. Please contact us on 0800 298 6002 (Monday to Friday 9am to 5pm).

Explanation of main changes

Proposal 1

Charge people who use mental health services in the same way as all other people in receipt of services.

At the moment, Kent County Council (KCC) does not charge mental health service users for social care services except for residential care. Some people are exempt from being charged if they are entitled to a free after care service under Section 117 of the Mental Health Act 1983, therefore these proposed changes will not affect S117 service users.

Under this proposal, mental health service users who are not exempt would be financially assessed to see if they should be charged for non-residential services in the same way as all other people who receive a service.

Example: Mrs B receives a care package of £85.50 per week. As she is receiving a mental health service she does not currently have to pay towards it.

Under the proposed policy, mental health service users will be treated in the same way as everyone else. They will be financially assessed to calculate how much, if anything, they will need to contribute.

Note: Proposals 2 to 4 will also impact on people who use mental health services.

What are your views about charging people who use mental health services and who are not exempt, in the same way as all other people who receive services?

Q1. Please tick one of the following:

Agree

Disagree

Neither agree nor disagree

Don't know

Proposal 2

Include day care and transport as part of the services that can be charged.

At the moment Kent County Council (KCC) does not charge people who attend day care centres.

Some voluntary sector day centres do charge people for the service. In order to be fair and treat everyone the same, it is proposed to include day care and transport as part of the services that can be charged.

On the whole, this will not affect those people who are charged directly by their day centres.

Examples: The only service Mr W currently receives from KCC is a day care service costing KCC £35.00 per week. Under the current policy he is not charged for day care as it is free. Under the proposed policy he will be financially assessed and may need to pay towards the cost of his day care.

Mr S also goes to day care as well as having home care support and in his case the cost of the services will be added together and will not affect the amount he pays unless the total cost of his package is less than his available income.

What are your views about including day care and transport within the services that can be charged, in the same way as other services?

Q2. Please tick one of the following:

- Agree
- Disagree
- Neither agree nor disagree
- Don't know

Proposal 3

Increase the amount of available income that is taken into account when working out a person's charge.

Government policy says that the income of people who receive non-residential care services should not fall below a minimum weekly amount (known as the Protected Income Level) as a result of charging. This is to make sure that everyone has some income to meet their basic cost of living. The income left after the basic cost of living is worked out is called the available income.

Local authorities, such as Kent County Council (KCC), work out a person's available income and then base any charges on this amount. At the moment KCC work out a person's charge based on 85% of available income. KCC is proposing to base charges on 100% of available income which is similar to many other local authorities.

Example: Mrs S is an 85-year-old woman with a care package costing £85.50 per week. Her total income is £240.00 per week. Her available income after deducting certain amounts (see examples on pages 6-8) is £45 per week. Therefore under the proposed policy she would be expected to pay £45 per week towards the cost of her care package.

If Mrs S had no available income then she would not be expected to pay towards her care package under any of the above proposals.

The amount a person will be asked to contribute will be the lower of either the cost of the care package or their available income. What are your views about KCC increasing the percentage of available income taken into account from 85% to 100%?

Q3. Please tick one of the following:

- Agree
- Disagree
- Neither agree nor disagree
- Don't know

Proposal 4

Reduce the standard amount allowed for the Disability Related Expenditure Assessment (DREA) from £21 to £17 per week for everyone.

Disability Related Expenditure is the term used for some additional costs that people entitled to disability benefits have in their everyday lives because of their disability. Government policy says that these additional costs should be deducted before working out whether or not a person is able to pay something towards any service they receive.

At the moment Kent County Council (KCC) allows everyone £21 per week for these additional costs. This is so that people receiving a service do not have to keep and provide KCC with receipts or bills to show us what they have spent. It also means that you do not need an extra assessment (DREA) to work out what you should be allowed. We think it is simpler both for you and KCC, to allow everyone the same amount. The proposal is to reduce the amount allowed for additional costs to £17 per week. However, anyone who receives a disability related benefit can ask for an individual Disability Related Expenditure Assessment.

Example: Mr J is an 80 year-old man who uses a wheelchair and is entitled to disability benefits. He was just on the borderline of not having to pay a contribution towards his services. The reduction in DREA from £21 per week to £17 per week will mean that his available income is now assessed as £4 per week more. This will now be taken into account in assessing his contribution.

What are your views about KCC reducing the standard amount of DREA from £21 per week to £17 per week?

Q4. Please tick one of the following

Agree

Disagree

Neither agree nor disagree

Don't know

The following examples show how the proposals might affect three typical people.

Example 1

Mr A is an 85 year-old man who lives alone. He receives a State Retirement Pension topped up with Pension Credit and Attendance Allowance.

He has a care package that costs Kent County Council (KCC) £55 per week.

	Existing Policy	Proposed Policy	Note
Income	£241.95	£241.95	
Less Protected Income Level	£171.69	£171.69	This is the government recommended minimum amount for living costs for a person in these circumstances.
Less Standard DREA	£21.00	£17.00	This is an additional amount KCC allows to cover any extra living costs associated with having a disability.
Total Deductions Allowed	£192.69	£188.69	
Available Income	£49.26	£53.26	This is the maximum amount the individual can contribute towards their social care costs.
Charge	85% £41.87	100% £53.26	The actual amount the individual should contribute to the cost of their care.

NB: Mr A doesn't get any deduction for housing costs because he receives full Housing Benefit and Council Tax Benefit so has no rent or Council Tax to pay.

Example 2

Miss F is a 54 year-old woman who lives alone and has Multiple Sclerosis. Her income is made up of contribution based Employment Support Allowance, Disability Living Allowance and other private income. She also receives a Disability Living Allowance Mobility Component but this is disregarded from the calculation.

She has a care package that costs Kent County Council (KCC) £216 per week.

	Existing Policy	Proposed Policy	Note
Income	£210.00	£210.00	
Less Protected Income Level	£138.00	£138.00	This is the government recommended minimum amount for living costs for a person in these circumstances.
Less Housing/Council Tax	£15.00	£15.00	This is an additional allowance for people who have to pay certain housing costs (subject to certain rules).
Less Standard DREA	£21.00	£17.00	This is an additional amount KCC allows to cover any extra living costs associated with having a disability.
Total Deductions Allowed	£174.00	£170.00	
Available Income	£36.00	£40.00	This is the maximum amount the individual can contribute towards their social care costs.
Charge	85% £30.60	100% £40.00	The actual amount the individual should contribute to the cost of their care.

Example 3

Mrs P is a 50 year-old woman who lives with her husband. They are both disabled but only Mrs P receives services from Kent County Council (KCC). Mrs P receives Incapacity Benefit and Disability Living Allowance (DLA).

She has a care package which costs KCC £100 per week.

	Existing Policy	Proposed Policy	Note
Income	£157.35	£157.35	
Less			
Protected Income Level	£104.56	£104.56	This is the government recommended minimum amount for living costs for a person in these circumstances.
Less			
Housing/Council Tax	£12.00	£12.00	This is an additional allowance for people who have to pay certain housing costs (subject to certain rules).
Less			
Standard DREA	£21.00	£17.00	This is an additional amount KCC allows to cover any extra living costs associated with having a disability.
Total Deductions Allowed	£137.56	£133.56	
Available Income	£19.79	£23.79	This is the maximum amount the individual can contribute towards their social care costs.
Charge	85%	100%	
	£16.82	£23.79	The actual amount the individual should contribute to the cost of their care.

Note:

1. There will still be some people who will continue to pay the full cost of their care package and some people who have no available income and pay no contribution towards the cost of their care
2. Charges will continue to be limited to the person's available income or the cost of the care package, whichever is less.

Understanding how the proposed changes may affect you (or someone you act on behalf of)

Please tick one of the boxes in each section

Q5. Do you receive a bill for your care, or someone that you act on behalf of, from KCC?

Yes No

Q6. I (they) currently pay:

- Nothing
- Pay a charge
- Pay the full cost
- This does not apply to me
- I don't know

Q7. How would the proposed changes affect you (them)?

- Doesn't affect me
- Affects me a little
- Affects me a lot
- I don't know

Q8. Do you consider the proposed changes will make a difference to the number of people who receive care?

- More people can be helped
- The same number of people can be helped
- Fewer people will be helped
- Not sure

About You

I am a:

Please tick all that apply

- Service user
- Carer
- Other (Please specify) _____

Which age group do you fall into?

Please tick one box

- 18 - 64
- 65 - 74
- 75 - 84
- 85 or Over

Do you have any of the following?

Please tick all that apply

- Dementia
- A physical impairment or disability
- Sight or hearing loss
- A mental health problem or illness
- Problems connected to ageing
- A learning disability or difficulty
- Other
- None of the above

Which district/borough do you live in? _____
(i.e. who do pay your Council Tax to?)

The above information will be treated with confidence and not attributed to any individual. If you choose to return this questionnaire by email your details will be kept confidential and not passed on to a third party.

Do you have any other comments or ideas?

Thank you for taking the time to complete this questionnaire.

Please make sure it is returned to us in the enclosed pre-paid envelope by **31 July 2011**.

What happens next?

We will write a report to let KCC Members know what you think of these proposals. It will help them to come to a decision about changes to KCC charges for adult social care services.

We will put the report on our website at **www.kent.gov.uk/fsccharging**

If you would like a paper copy of the report:

Phone: 0800 298 6002 (Monday to Friday 9am to 5pm) or

E-mail: fsc.consultation@kent.gov.uk

You are welcome to attend one of the public consultation meetings.

To book a place at a meeting please phone 0800 298 6002 or Textphone/ Minicom 08458 247 905 (Monday to Friday 9am to 5pm) stating the venue you wish to attend and if you require British Sign Language (BSL) Interpretation. Places will be allocated on a first come, first served basis because of health and safety restrictions on numbers at venues.

Ashford Enterprise Centre
Towers School
Faversham Road
Kennington
Ashford
TN24 9AL

2 June 2011
2:30pm to 3:30pm

Dover Discovery Centre
Market Square
Dover
CT16 1PB

7 June 2011
7pm to 8pm

Lecture Theatre
County Hall
County Road
Maidstone
ME14 1XQ

22 June 2011
7pm to 8pm

All venues are accessible and will have a hearing loop.

PJ/14/4/11